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Applicability: Central Office; DSN Boards; Contracted Service Providers

The Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN) recognizes that families are the greatest resource available to people with disabilities. DDSN believes families should be supported in their role as primary caregivers and be assisted when needed to care for their family member(s) at home, if possible.

I. DEFINITION OF FAMILY

A “family” is an individual who is eligible for DDSN services, his/her parent(s), sibling(s), relative(s), or other caregiver(s) who reside in the same household as the DDSN eligible person.

II. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

The purpose of Individual and Family Support and Respite (IFS-R) funding is to provide, when needed, financial assistance to families who care for a person with an intellectual or related disability, autism, or traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury or similar disability in order to:

1. Provide relief from the responsibilities of direct, hands-on caregiving and supervision; or
2. Improve an unsafe, risky or dangerous situation.

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IFS-R funding is directed toward those families who incur additional expenses due to the person's disability. It is not intended to be used for typical expenses that are routinely incurred by families such as rent, utilities, childcare/babysitting for children under age 12, etc.

In accordance with state law, IFS-R funding is not an entitlement program or a general public assistance benefit. The receipt of IFS-R funding is intended to be limited, one-time or short term; it is not intended to be ongoing.

IFS-R funding should only be made available when needed goods or services cannot be funded by the family, other public agencies or community resources or through other DDSN services/programs. Consideration must be given to all of the resources available to the family, even those resources that cannot directly fund the needed goods or services. Priority must be given to those families with the greatest need.

PROHIBITIONS:

IFS-R funding shall **not** be available to:

- Those who are not DDSN eligible.
- Those who are enrolled in **any** Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver.
- Those who are eligible for DDSN services in the "At-Risk" category (children three (3) to six (6) years).
- Those who receive Residential Habilitation.
- Those who reside in an Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID) or a Nursing Facility.
- Those in SC Department of Social Services Foster Care or Therapeutic Foster Homes.
- Those residing in a Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF).
- Those receiving State Funded Community Supports may not also receive IFS-R funds for Respite.
- Those families with income above the threshold specified in Attachment A - Income Standards, of this Directive may not receive IFS-R funding for assistance to improve an unsafe, risky, or dangerous situation.

III. ADMINISTRATION

All boards/providers administering IFS-R funds are expected to do so fairly and equitably, allowing access to anyone who meets criteria and is considered part of their service area. Boards/Providers administering ISF-R funds do so without allocating administration costs from the award.

Each administering board/provider must develop a policy that aligns with this DDSN Directive and specifies the criteria and process to be used by the board/provider for the administration of IFS-R funds. The policy may include a maximum allowable amount per person as long as the limit applies equally to all. The methods for monitoring the administration of the funds should also be specified.

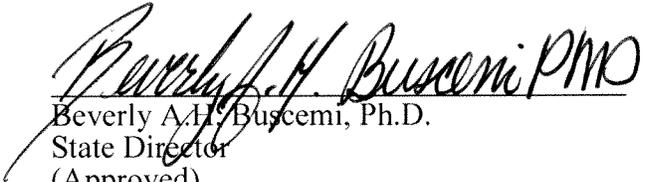
Each administering board/provider must have a process whereby information necessary to make decisions about requests for funding is obtained. Each administering board/provider may develop its own application forms or use the forms attached to this DDSN Directive. The information contained in the forms attached to this DDSN Directive is required and must be collected by the administering board/provider. Any forms to be used to apply for IFS-R funding must readily be available and easily accessible to anyone wishing to apply.

Boards/Providers administering IFS-R funds must maintain a log of all requests received. This log should include the name of DDSN eligible person, the type of request (family support or respite), the date of the request, the amount requested, whether or not the request was approved/denied, and the date the family was notified of the approval or denial.

When requests for IFS-R are not approved, the family must be notified of their right to appeal the decision. Families should follow the process outlined in DDSN's Directive 535-11-DD: Appeal and Reconsideration Policy and Procedures.



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To access the following attachments, please see the agency website page "Attachments to Directives" under this directive number.

- Attachment A - Income Standards
- Attachment B - Respite Application
- Attachment C - Family Support Application