

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FLEXIBLE FUNDING

**Q1: What is Flexible Funding?**

**A1:** Flexible Funding is a program funded by the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services (DBHDS). The goal of Flexible Funding is to remove financial barriers that prevent adults with developmental disabilities from transitioning to integrated, independent housing and from maintaining stability in integrated, independent housing. Flexible Funding provides financial assistance to offset one-time housing expenses.

Flexible Funding can assist adults with developmental disabilities who:

1. are making an initial transition from a less integrated, independent setting (e.g., nursing facility, intermediate care facility, assisted living, group home, sponsored residential, family home, etc.) to a home the individual owns or leases, OR
2. have transitioned to homes of their own and later experience temporary financial setbacks that jeopardize their housing stability and place them at risk of eviction or placement in a less integrated setting.

Flexible Funding does not assist with routine, recurring housing expenses such as ongoing rent, amenity fees, utility bills, or renter's insurance.

**Q2: Who administers Flexible Funding?**

**A2:** Six Community Services Boards (CSBs) administer the Flexible Funding program on a regional basis. See the chart below to identify the CSB that administers the program in your area.

DBHDS Region	Flexible Funding Administrator	Participating CSBs
1	Region Ten CSB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alleghany Highlands</li> <li>• Harrisonburg-Rockingham CSB</li> <li>• Horizon Behavioral Health</li> <li>• Northwestern CSB</li> <li>• Rappahannock Area CSB</li> <li>• Rappahannock-Rapidan CSB</li> <li>• Rockbridge Area CSB</li> <li>• Region Ten CSB</li> <li>• Valley CSB</li> </ul>
2	Fairfax-Falls Church CSB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria CSB</li> <li>• Arlington County CSB</li> <li>• Fairfax-Falls Church CSB</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loudoun County Department of Mental Health, Substance Abuse &amp; Developmental Services</li> <li>• Prince William County CSB</li> </ul>
3	New River Valley Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare</li> <li>• Cumberland Mountain CSB</li> <li>• Danville-Pittsylvania CSB</li> <li>• Dickenson County Behavioral Health Services</li> <li>• Highlands CSB</li> <li>• New River Valley Community Services</li> <li>• Piedmont CSB</li> <li>• Planning District One Behavioral Health Service</li> <li>• Southside CSB</li> </ul>
4	Henrico County Mental Health & Developmental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chesterfield CSB</li> <li>• Crossroads CSB</li> <li>• District 19 CSB</li> <li>• Goochland-Powhatan CSB</li> <li>• Hanover CSB</li> <li>• Henrico Mental Health &amp; Developmental Services</li> <li>• Richmond Behavioral Health Authority</li> </ul>
5 (Peninsula)	Hampton-Newport News CSB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colonial Behavioral Health</li> <li>• Hampton-Newport News CSB</li> <li>• Middle Peninsula-Northern Neck CSB</li> </ul>
5 (Southside)	Norfolk CSB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chesapeake Integrated Behavioral Healthcare</li> <li>• City of Portsmouth Department of Behavioral Healthcare Services</li> <li>• Eastern Shore CSB</li> <li>• Norfolk CSB</li> <li>• Virginia Beach Human Services</li> <li>• Western Tidewater CSB</li> </ul>

**Q3: Who is eligible to apply for Flexible Funding?**

A3: Applicants must be age 18 or older and have a developmental disability as defined in the Code of Virginia. In addition, applicants must be in one of the following categories:

- a. transitioning from a skilled nursing facility, an intermediate care facility, a state training center, a group home or other congregate setting and meet the level of functioning criteria for a Medicaid Waiver for persons with developmental disabilities; or
- b. receiving a Medicaid Waiver for persons with developmental disabilities (either the Building Independence, Family and Individual Support or Community Living Waiver)
- c. determined eligible for and currently on a waitlist for a Medicaid Waiver for persons with developmental disabilities

The applicant's household composition in the permitted housing setting cannot include his/her parents, guardians, or grandparents (e.g., individuals with developmental disabilities who are heads of their own households, not living with their parents, guardians or grandparents).

**Q4: What is a permitted housing setting for Flexible Funding?**

A4: Eligible applicants must be transitioning to or living in a permitted housing setting to qualify for Flexible Funding. Permitted housing settings include legal dwelling units that are integrated into the community (e.g., surrounded by units that house people with and without disabilities in natural proportions). Units that are integrated into the community include:

1. a unit in a multifamily apartment building
2. a single family home
3. a mobile or manufactured home that is intended to be a permanent dwelling
4. a unit in a single family home that has a separate, private entrance/exit; a separate bathroom and kitchen; and approval under the local building or zoning ordinance as an accessory dwelling unit
5. legal dwelling units owned, but not occupied by, parents, grandparents, siblings, children and grandchildren of the eligible family.
6. shared housing: a single legal dwelling unit occupied by an individual and another resident or residents, in accordance with state and local zoning ordinances. The shared unit consists of both common space for use by the occupants of the unit and separate private space for each occupant.

**Q5: What kinds of initial transition expenses are eligible for Flexible Funding?**

A5: Flexible Funding can cover the purchase of goods and services that are essential for the applicant to make the initial transition to a permitted housing setting. That is, without these goods and services, the applicant could not access, occupy and use the housing. Examples of eligible initial transition expenses include temporary rent assistance (in certain circumstances), security deposits, utility connection fees and deposits, rent arrearages, moving expenses, temporary hotel stays, essential furniture and household supplies, community housing guide assistance, shared living start-up expenses, and environmental modifications and assistive technology not funded by other sources. For detailed descriptions of allowable expenses in these categories, see the Flexible Funding Guidelines at [https://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/assets/doc/DS/housing/final-flexible-funding-guidelines-2.0\\_01.01.22.pdf](https://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/assets/doc/DS/housing/final-flexible-funding-guidelines-2.0_01.01.22.pdf).

**Q6: What kinds of housing stability expenses are eligible for Flexible Funding?**

A6: Flexible Funding can support eligible individuals who have transitioned into homes of their own and later experience temporary financial setbacks that jeopardize their housing stability and place them at risk of (1) eviction or (2) placement in a less integrated setting such as a nursing facility, intermediate care facility, assisted living facility, group home or sponsored residential program.

Examples of eligible expenses for maintaining housing include emergency rent payment and associated late fees, last resort utility assistance, housekeeping activities, unit repairs, temporary relocation, temporary hotel stays prior to being re-housed, community housing guide assistance, and subsequent housing transition services and supports (e.g., security deposits, utility connection fees and deposits, rent arrearages, and moving expenses).

Applicants who request funding to maintain housing are required to submit a Housing Stability Plan with the Flexible Funding Application UNLESS the request is solely for Subsequent Housing Transition Services and Supports.

**Q7: What are the funding limits for Flexible Funding?**

A7: One-time requests for Funding Option #1, Support to Obtain Housing, cannot exceed \$5,000 per person. Cumulative requests for Funding Option #2, Support to Maintain Housing, cannot exceed \$5,000 per person. Funding approval is based upon justification: applicants do not receive automatic approval for the maximum amount.

**Q8: How can I get an application for Flexible Funding?**

A8: Contact your CSB or CSB-contracted support coordinator or your regional Flexible Funding Administrator (see table below). Applicants who request Flexible Funding to move from one DBHDS region to another DBHDS region should submit the application to the Flexible Funding Administrator in the region to which the applicant is moving.

Region	CSB	Administrator	Phone/Email
1	Region Ten CSB	Amy Berry	434-422-6373 <a href="mailto:amy.berry@regionten.org">amy.berry@regionten.org</a>
2	Fairfax-Falls Church CSB	Stephanie Prior	703-313-6320 <a href="mailto:stephanie.prior@fairfaxcounty.gov">stephanie.prior@fairfaxcounty.gov</a>
3	New River Valley Community Services	Lauren Tate	540-961-8313 ext. 1182) <a href="mailto:ltate@nrvc.org">ltate@nrvc.org</a>
4	Henrico Mental Health & Developmental Services	Mary Beth Schutte	804-727-8526 <a href="mailto:MaryBeth.Schutte@henrico.us">MaryBeth.Schutte@henrico.us</a>
5 (west of tunnel)	Hampton Newport News CSB	Joy Cipriano	757-788-0066 <a href="mailto:joyc@hnnscsb.org">joyc@hnnscsb.org</a>
5 (east of tunnel)	Norfolk CSB	Zyariah Polite	757-630-5515 <a href="mailto:zyariah.polite@norfolk.gov">zyariah.polite@norfolk.gov</a>

Applicants must provide a written explanation of need for requested goods and/or services. Acceptable reasons include:

- a. the applicant could not move into or maintain occupancy of the unit without this good or service (e.g., he/she would remain in or move to a less integrated setting without it).
- b. the good or service is essential for the applicant's health and safety in the home (e.g., his/her health or safety in the home would be in jeopardy without it).
- c. the household item or service is essential for the applicant to maintain lease compliance (e.g., he/she would incur a lease violation without it).
- d. the good or service is essential to the applicant's ability to function in and/or use his or her housing (e.g., he/she could not use the housing without it).

**Q9: Can the applicant front payment for eligible expenses and be reimbursed?**

A9: Some Flexible Funding Administrators permit applicants to pay out of pocket for eligible expenses and submit required documentation for reimbursement (see Q11 below). Ask your Administrator if reimbursement is an option before making any purchases. If reimbursement is permitted, applicants should submit their application first and obtain the administrator's "pre-approval" prior to purchasing items. This will prevent applicants from purchasing items which may not be approved for reimbursement.

**Q10: What if an applicant does not have the resources to front payment for eligible expenses?**

A10: Applicants who do not have the financial resources to pay out of pocket for eligible expenses and get reimbursed can have a third party such as a parent or a service provider purchase items on their behalf and submit required documentation for reimbursement (see Q11 below). Again, we recommend applicants obtain pre-approval of their application before having a third party purchase items. This will prevent third parties from purchasing items which may not be approved for reimbursement.

**Q11: What documentation must be submitted with the application for reimbursement of eligible expenses?**

A11: All applications must include a copy of the applicant's lease or a welcome letter from property management and detailed invoices or itemized paid receipts showing descriptions of items purchased. If a third party is requesting reimbursement for eligible expenses, include a completed Reimbursement Request form and an Acknowledgement of Goods or Services Received form with the application submission. Documentation of eligible expenditures is required for all reimbursement requests (e.g., invoices or itemized paid receipts) and cannot include any items that are unrelated to the Flexible Funding request. See Attachment C of the application form for a detailed list of acceptable documentation for different types of expenses. Please note, credit card statements are not accepted.

**Q12: What is the deadline for submitting a Flexible Funding application?**

A12: Applicants must submit Flexible Funding applications for Funding Option #1 (Obtaining Housing) no later than thirty (30) days after the date the lease begins.

Applicant must submit Flexible Funding applications for Funding Option #2 (Maintaining Housing) no later than thirty (30) days after a written warning or violation notice is issued by the applicant's landlord or rental assistance program. Applicants requesting funds for a subsequent housing

transition must submit a Flexible Funding request for Funding Option #2 no later than 30 days after a new lease begins.

The applicant's support coordinator will submit the application to the Flexible Funding Administrator on the applicant's behalf.

**Q14: What if the good or service I need to be able to initially use and occupy housing or to maintain housing is not in an eligible expense category?**

A14: Flexible Funding can cover non-traditional transition and tenancy support expenses that are short term and temporary in nature and related to lapses in coordination of housing, benefits and/or services or other circumstances that place an individual at risk of eviction, homelessness or a move to a more restrictive setting (e.g., nursing facility, intermediate care facility, assisted living facility, group home, sponsored residential placement). The Administrator must provide a written request describing the proposed use to DBHDS and DBHDS must grant the Administrator authorization to the Administrator to approve the expense.

**Q15: What if I need a reasonable accommodation in order to access Flexible Funding?**

A15: An applicant may request a reasonable accommodation from the Flexible Funding Administrator if he/she requires a change to one or more Flexible Funding requirements because of his/her disability in order to access and use the program.

Applicants or their designated representative must submit a written request for a reasonable accommodation that responds to the following questions:

- what is the applicant's and/or designated representative's first and last name, address, phone number and email?
- what Flexible Funding requirement needs to be changed so the applicant can access and use the Flexible Funding program?
- how does the requirement need to change?
- why is this change needed?

The applicant must submit documentation from a qualified professional (which includes, among others, a physician or other healthcare provider, therapist, counselor, social service provider, clergy member, or other reliable source that is familiar with the applicant's disability-related needs). This documentation must verify the existence of a disability, the need for the requested accommodation, and what the accommodation will accomplish.

If the Administrator needs additional information to make a decision, the Administrator will contact the applicant or designated representative, identify the needed information, and set a deadline for the applicant or designated representative to provide this information.

**Q16: What can I do if my Flexible Funding request is not approved and I disagree with this decision?**

A16: If your regional Flexible Funding Administrator does not approve part of all of your application and you disagree with this decision, you can appeal the decision. Denial of assistance includes denials of applications in part or in whole because the Administrator (1) made a calculation

error when verifying whether the funding request exceeds the maximum amount allowed for a specific funding category or the maximum limit for the Funding Option, or (2) inaccurately applied the “justification of need” criteria.

The following decisions by a Flexible Funding Administrator **cannot** be appealed:

- a. the applicant does not meet eligibility criteria
- b. the housing setting for the funding request is prohibited
- c. the request does not fall within an eligible use or an allowable expenditure category
- d. the request (alone or in combination with other requests for the same applicant) exceeds the maximum allowable cap for Funding Option #1 or #2
- e. the request for a good or service exceeds the maximum allowed for a specific expenditure category

The applicant and/or the designated representative must submit a written appeal request via email to the Coordinator within ten (10) business days from the date of the decision ~~being~~ **appealed**. The appeal request must include the date the appeal is filed; the specific decision or action being contested; suggestions for possible ways to resolve the situation; and where and how the individual and/or the designated representative may be contacted. Include copies of any relevant documents that support the appeal request. Email the written request to the DBHDS Regional Housing Coordinator for the region in which the Flexible Funding Administrator is located (contact information for DBHDS regional housing coordinators is available at <https://dbhds.virginia.gov/developmental-services/housing/housing-team>).

**Q17: Where can I get more information about Flexible Funding?**

A17: For more information about Flexible Funding, please contact your support coordinator or your DBHDS Regional Housing Coordinator (contact information for DBHDS regional housing coordinators is available at <https://dbhds.virginia.gov/developmental-services/housing/housing-team>).