Applying for Medicaid waiver, Community First Choice, and personal care services:

What to Expect from an SDS Assessment

The Division of Senior and Disabilities Services, or SDS, has programs to support Alaskans who need help with daily tasks, or who need the kind of care provided in a facility, like a nursing home or a facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Personal care services, also known as PCS, is for people who need help doing everyday things like getting dressed, bathing, cooking, eating, cleaning and doing laundry.

The Community First Choice program, or CFC, helps Alaskans with similar daily tasks in their homes if they would otherwise qualify to enter a facility.

Home and Community Based Waiver programs, or waivers, help Alaskans who need the level of support that would be provided in a facility. The waivers let them get that support in their homes and community instead of in a facility. Waivers can help with many things, including medical equipment, assisted living and respite care.

Our Mission
Senior and Disabilities Services promotes health, well-being and safety for individuals with disabilities, seniors and vulnerable adults by facilitating access to quality services and supports that foster independence, personal choice and dignity.

Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS)
Alaska Department of Health and Social Services
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Anchorage, AK
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Phone: (907) 269-3666
Toll Free: (800) 478-9996
To apply for CFC or a Medicaid waiver program, you start by contacting an Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) or a Developmental Disabilities Resource Connection (DDRC) agency. They will identify the types of programs you may qualify for. The waivers for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) have limits, so a DDRC can help you get on the waiting list to receive waiver services. To apply for personal care services, contact a Personal Care Services (PCS) agency.

Need help?  
Want to learn more?  
Call your nearest  
Aging and Disability Resource Center, (ADRC) 1-855-565-2017 or  
Developmental Disabilities Resource Connection (DDRC) 1-907-465-5810

Next, SDS needs to assess your need for services. Your PCS agency or care coordinator will help you gather medical and other records that the SDS assessor will need. This will help your assessor learn more about your health and related needs before meeting with you.

For most assessments, the SDS assessor may visit you at your home, or sometimes in the hospital or in a facility. The visit may also take place by videoconference. It takes about one to two hours.

You may have family members or friends with you for the assessment, but it is important that you are the one who answers questions, if you are able. They can talk to the assessor after the assessor talks to you.

If you have a legal representative, he or she must be at your assessment.

If you need an interpreter, SDS will get one for you.

The assessor will:
- talk with you,
- ask about your health and other needs, 
- observe how you move about, and 
- ask you to show and tell what you do to take care of yourself every day.

It is very important that you are honest. If you are not,
- you could lose your right to get help, 
- you may have to pay back the cost of any help you got, and
- you may be charged with a crime.

For people with IDD, the assessment includes talking with people you know and who know you well. Your care coordinator will help.

Whatever assessment tool and process is used, SDS staff will look over your assessment and send you a letter that tells you whether you can get help from one of the programs.

The letter will also share your assessment with you.

If you want to disagree with your assessment, you can. The letter will tell you how.

If you are getting help now but want to apply for more programs, you may need a new assessment.