

Point of Entry to Services in Illinois for Individuals With Developmental Disabilities

Transition Skills, Tips & Tools
Register for PUNS



PUNS is the point of entry to services in Illinois for individuals with developmental disabilities.

The **Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Developmental Disabilities** uses the PUNS database to identify who needs services and what services they need.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) website has a guide for understanding PUNS at www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=47620.

The state uses PUNS to select individuals for services **based on the urgency of their needs** as government funding becomes available.

Services available to individuals on the PUNS list include:

- ✓ In-home supports for independent living
- ✓ Respite care to provide temporary relief to caregivers
- ✓ Entry into day services, sheltered workshops or supported employment
- ✓ Training programs to teach life and work skills
- ✓ Job coaches to help with training and success in the workplace
- ✓ Emergency or long-term placement in residential living facilities
- ✓ Adaptive equipment to promote independence
- ✓ Other supports to improve quality of life

You can learn more about the state's Developmental Disabilities Services at www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=81789.

Children, teens and adults with developmental disabilities who need or want services or supports can enroll in PUNS.

To fill out the PUNS form, contact your local **Independent Service Coordination Agency (ISC)** and ask for an appointment to register for PUNS.

- ✓ To find your local ISC Agency, call DHS at 1-888-DD-PLANS.
- ✓ You can also find your local ISC and more details about how to sign up for PUNS services at www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=85196.

- ✓ Review these helpful brochures:

Understanding PUNS brochure: www.dhs.state.il.us/OneNetLibrary/27897/documents/Brochures/4313.pdf

- ✓ See the DHS office locator at www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12.

During your appointment with your local ISC agency, you will meet with a pre-admission screener. He/she will ask questions about you and/or your family's needs. The screener sorts needs into two categories:

- ✓ **Seeking Services** – These services are needed within the year. This first level of prioritization looks at the age of the caregiver and whether the situation is an emergency or critical (but not a crisis).
- ✓ **Planning** – Services may be needed or desired in the future. The next level of prioritization is individuals who have aged out of special education within the last five years along with the individual's amount of time on the PUNS list.

PUNS selections are based on a person's length of time in the Seeking Services category since turning 18. Note: *if you are not in the Seeking Services category and are currently in need of supports, you must request that your ISC Agency move you to the Seeking Services category.* Learn more about the PUNS selection process and needs categories at www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=41131.

You should update your PUNS information **yearly** or any time you needs change.

Crisis: Children and adults on the PUNS list who are experiencing a crisis (such as homelessness, abuse or neglect) can call their Independent Service Coordinator to request consideration of a crisis application for waiver funding.

For more information

If you want more information about PUNS or Developmental Disabilities Waiver services, **The Arc of Illinois** has several programs to help:

- **Family to Family Health Information Center** - www.thearcofil.org/about-us/programs/family-to-family-health-information-center-2/ - (866) 931-1110
- **Illinois Life Span Program** - www.illinoislifespan.org/ - (800) 588-7002
- **The Ligas Family Advocates Program** - www.thearcofil.org/about-us/programs/ligas-family-advocate-program/ - (708) 331-7370
- **Family Support Network** - www.thearcofil.org/about-us/programs/family-support-network/ - (708) 331-7370
- **The Arc Spanish Helpline** - Linea de Información en Español - (815) 464-1832, ext. 1025

We're here to help.

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children's programs and services, check out our website at: dscc.uic.edu

