

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | June 1, 2020

Autism Spectrum Disorder Voucher program annual application period starts today; Parents are encouraged to apply early

BISMARCK, N.D. – Families of children ages three to 17 who have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can apply starting today, June 1, for autism voucher program services for the upcoming state fiscal year that begins July 1, 2020. New and participating families are encouraged to apply during the annual enrollment period.

Participation is currently limited to 53 children per year. Families are served on a first come, first served basis, and must apply annually.

Vouchers help pay for respite care for family caregivers, assistive technology such as sensory or safety equipment, caregiver training and other support services such as tutoring. The purpose of the voucher program is to enhance the quality of life of qualifying children and to meet the unique needs of their families. It also fills a gap by providing resources for non-therapy related services for families who do not qualify for other help.

The program can provide vouchers totaling up to \$12,500 per year, per participating child. During the 2019 state fiscal year, the average voucher expenditure was \$3,030 per child.

To qualify, household income for a family cannot exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty level, which is currently \$4,367 a month for a family of four. Children who are receiving services through a Medicaid waiver do not qualify for the autism spectrum disorder voucher.

To apply, families must complete the application, which will be available online at www.nd.gov/eforms/Doc/sfn60611.pdf or by contacting the North Dakota Department of Human Services at 701-328-4630, toll-free 800-755-2604, 711 (TTY) or dhsautism@nd.gov.

Families should submit the completed application and required documentation by mail, email or fax to the department's Medical Services Division, attention Katherine Barchenger, at 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 325, Bismarck, N.D. 58505-0250, dhsautism@nd.gov or fax 701-328-1544.

Interested individuals can find more information about the department's autism spectrum disorder services online at www.nd.gov/dhs/autism/index.html.

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CONTACT:

LuWanna Lawrence | 701-328-1892 | Heather Steffl | 701-328-4933
lklawrence@nd.gov | hsteffl@nd.gov