

# Family Support Services

# 2024 Handbook

## Family Support Services

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[familysupport@fairfielddd.com](mailto:familysupport@fairfielddd.com)

<https://www.fairfielddd.com/family-support>

Specific policies and procedures governing Family Support Services  
are available upon request.

## Family Support Services (FSS)

Family Support Services (FSS) is a program designed to assist families who are caring for a family member with a developmental disability when that person resides in the family home. A family member means parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, spouse, children, aunts, uncles, or guardians. Family support services cannot be used in paid foster homes or paid kinship arrangements.

## Important Deadlines

**October 2<sup>nd</sup>** Last day to submit Taxable Income Verification Forms (annual requirement). This form **MUST** be submitted before any expenses are approved.

**October 31<sup>st</sup>** Last day to submit requests for consideration during the current FSS year.

**New requests received after October 31, 2024, will not be processed.**

## Allocation Calculation

Submission of the Taxable Income Verification Form is required to determine your annual allocation amount. This is the taxable income of the family/household with whom the individual lives, including income of the individual with the disability. Taxable income is based on the federal taxable income **after** deductions. This is not gross income, adjusted gross income, or taxable interest. **Taxable income** will be in bold letters on your federal income tax form filed in the current year.

**To utilize funds, the Taxable Income Verification Form must be provided to the FSS Coordinator.**

The following chart shows the family's percentage of the annual allocation amount.

<u>Taxable Income</u>	<u>FSS Allocation</u>	
\$39,400 or less	100%	\$630.00
\$39,401 to \$49,300	75%	\$472.50
\$49,301 to \$64,090	50%	\$315.00
\$64,091 to \$83,810	25%	\$157.50
\$83,811 and over	0%	\$0.00

For example: If your percentage from the Taxable Income Verification Form is 50% and our annual allocation is \$630.00, then you will receive \$315.00.

If your taxable income is over \$83,811 you do not qualify for the FSS allocation.

## Approval Process

Prior approval is not required if the request is on the preapproved list. If the item or service is not listed, please contact the FSS Coordinator prior to purchase to ensure approval.

### Using FSS dollars

1. Submit the Completed Taxable Income Verification form to the FSS Coordinator at [familysupport@fairfielddd.com](mailto:familysupport@fairfielddd.com).
2. If deemed eligible, you will receive a letter outlining your allocation amount for the year. If ineligible, you will be notified as well.
3. Review the list of pre-approved expenses. If your expense is on the list, and plan on using funds through reimbursement, make plans to purchase.
4. When purchasing, please ensure that **only expenses that you are submitting appear on the receipt**. This may mean you ask the cashier to ring up 2 separate orders.
5. Submit the request for payment form along with the receipt and any other documents to the FSS coordinator so the reimbursement process can begin. Please keep in mind that processing takes place through the Fairfield County Auditor and takes time to complete.
6. The FSS coordinator may request additional information or clarification to process your request.

If there is any question about if an item is approved, reach out to the FSS Coordinator **Prior to purchase**.

### Reasons Request May Be Denied

- The required Taxable Income Verification Form was not provided.
- The request form was not received by the October 31st deadline. This deadline is required to meet the Fairfield County Auditor's Office end-of-year processing.
- If Family Support Services funds become limited, families requesting services will be placed on a waiting list in chronological order according to receipt of the tax verification form.
- Your request is not related to assisting the family member who has a disability.
- If moving out of county, funding may be pro-rated per date of leaving Fairfield DD.

You have the right to appeal any denial of services. A copy of the resolution of complaints process will be provided.

### Monitoring of Family Support Services

Fairfield DD may contact individuals and families to determine their satisfaction with the services they receive, including Family Support Services. Please notify the FSS Coordinator if a family member with the disability moves out of the home.

### Using Allocation for Respite

Respite care is processed as a reimbursement.

1. Contact the FSS Coordinator to obtain the monthly service form prior to the start of services.
2. Respite requests are processed on a month-by-month basis.
3. The provider completes the monthly service form with the number of hours worked and signs the monthly service form.
4. Then, the family member signs and dates the purchase order verifying the number of hours provided and returns the completed purchase order to the FSS Coordinator.

### Important Procedures for Reimbursement:

1. Families may not exceed the allocation amount awarded for the year. Any overages would need to be covered by the family.
2. Family Support Services funding is not to be used for purchasing Christmas, birthday, or any other type of gifts or presents.
3. Adaptive equipment, educational and therapeutic tools require confirmation from a licensed professional with an explanation on the request form that ties the confirmed item to the developmental delay(s) or disability.
4. Catalog orders must have signed confirmation and an explanation of how items will benefit the individual with the request form. It must also have a complete catalog vendor address, phone, and fax number. Incomplete requests will be returned to the family for the appropriate signatures, information, and required confirmations.
5. All requests for payment of utility bills must be brought into the Family Support Services Office or the Pickerington Regional Office along with the current bill and disconnect notice. The FSS Coordinator or ISC Assistant will make a pledge of payment toward the bill on the family's behalf, if approved.

**Note:** A disconnect notice is required and that payment on utilities can occur only once per program year.

6. Gift cards, internet service, service plans and/or warranties for devices of any kind are not acceptable purchases and will not be honored by the FSS Program. These items are not a traceable purchase, and we are accountable to the Fairfield County Auditor's Office for expenditures. The family is responsible for these expenses (and may not be reimbursed).
7. Mortgage, Rent, Family Vacations, Electronics like TVs, DVD Players, Video Game Consoles, Video Games, Cable, Internet, Pools, Trampolines, Appliances, and Birthday, Christmas, or other types of gifts CANNOT be purchased with FSS dollars.

### Items approved for 2024

#### Approved FSS items:

- **Clothing:** can be purchased anywhere for reimbursement.
- **Therapies** (ST, OT, PT, Horseback, or aquatic therapy)
- **Personal Care Items** such as diapers, hygiene items, cleaning supplies, etc.
- **Educational Tools**
- **Sensory Items**
- **Specifically Modified Equipment** such as helmets, braces, car seats, eyeglasses, feeding equipment, etc.
- **Medical Supplies** such as catheter supplies, stoma seals/rings, and medical pads
- **COSI, Zoo, Swim Memberships**

#### **Memberships**

- **COSI**

1. Submit the request form to the FSS Coordinator
2. Obtain application from FSS Coordinator

- **Zoo**

Request form and submit to the FSS Coordinator

**Please Note:** Memberships can only be purchased with FSS allocations. Membership is no longer an eligible Summer Scholarship expense.

#### Items that may be approved:

**Note: Please Contact the FSS Coordinator, Cassie Richardson, at 740-652-7230 to discuss any listed below.**

- **Specialized Diets:** Special diets would be an extraordinary cost of food that is necessary for a medical, behavioral, or disabling condition of an individual. A physician or a graduate of an approved dietary program must recommend special diets.
- **Respite Care:** in-home care, out-of-home care, family selected provider, board approved provider. Respite care is temporary care which helps maintain the family structure or assist in meeting planned or emergency situations.

#### **Family-Selected Providers:**

Family-selected providers are chosen by the family. The provider may be members of the same household as the individual served but may not be a primary caregiver. Fairfield DD recommends the respite provider be age 16 or older and receive individual specific training from the family on the needs and supports of the person.

- **Accessibility Equipment**
- **Car Repairs-** must have insurance card or registration information attached.
- **Utility Disconnect Notices-** must have attached bill.
- **Assistive Technology**

### Unapproved Items:

- **Mortgage, Rent, or Any Downpayments for Housing**
- **Electronics such as TVs, Video Game Consoles, DVDs/Blu-Ray, or other digital content**
- **Gift cards of any kind**
- **Pools or any associated pool items**
- **Trampolines**
- **Internet/cell phone services**
- **Birthday/Christmas gifts**
- **Home modifications** that are not of direct medical or remedial (intended to correct or improve one's skills) benefit to the individual, are of general utility, or add to the total square footage of the home cannot be approved. There is no all-inclusive list, however, there are some predictable exclusions including, but not limited to: carpeting, flooring, roof repair, cosmetic changes, sidewalks, driveways, fencing, patios, decks, central air conditioning or HVAC items, security systems, and additions that add to the total square footage of the home.

**Commonly used stores and catalog vendors** (subject to change):

**Educational Tools: (Catalog Vendors)**

ABC School Supply  
Kaplan  
Beyond Play  
Play with A Purpose  
Achievement Products  
Lakeshore Learning  
Flaghouse

**Furniture: (all in Lancaster)**

Don's Furniture  
Original Mattress Factory (AHMF)

**Adaptive Equipment: (Catalog Vendors)**

Abilitations  
Alimed  
Flaghouse  
Enabling Devices

**Car Repairs:**

R&S Automotive (Lancaster)  
Huddle's (Lancaster)  
B W Tire (Pickerington)