



Understanding DDD Goods & Services

September 24, 2026

Agenda

- Good & Services Overview
- Vendor Requirements and Payment
- Goods & Services Examples and Exclusions
- Community Classes and Programs
- The Goods & Services Request Process
- The Reasons for and Importance of DDD Routinely Auditing Goods & Services
- Questions

Goods & Services Overview

What are Goods & Services?

The service category, Goods & Services, refers to an “item” a person would use or an “activity” a person would attend or participate in that meets one or more of their assessed needs and is not otherwise available through any of the following:

- A Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) waiver program service
- The Medicaid State Plan
- A natural support or community resource
- Use of their own personal funds or another funding source

The item or service must also do one or more of the following:

- Reduce the person’s need for other Medicaid services
- Promote inclusion of the person in the community
- Increase the person’s safety at home

Goods & Services Overview

What are Goods & Services?

- Goods & Services are intended to:
 - Expand the types of daily activities a person receiving DDD services can participate in
 - Make it possible for a person to use their DDD budget to attend or participate in a class, activity, or program that is offered and provided to the public by a business or vendor in the community (for example, taking a swim class at the YMCA)

Goods & Services Overview

Vendor Requirements

- One of the Requirements to be a Goods & Services vendor is that the vendor must primarily serve the general public.
- A business that primarily serves people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and/or people receiving services through DDD must:
 - Apply to become a DDD/Medicaid provider of the service(s) (activities) they are providing and, if approved, accept the associated Medicaid service rate
 - Submit claims to Medicaid for the service(s) and adhere to all federal, state, and DDD policies, rules, and requirements for the service(s)

Goods & Services Overview

Vendor Requirements

- A vendor that primarily serves the general public and is seeking payment through Goods & Services must also:
 - Follow the standards outlined in DDD's [policy manuals](#) (Section 17.8.3 of the Community Care Program manual and Section 17.9.3 of the Supports Program manual)
 - Ensure that vendor staff who provide the service (class, program, activity) meet the standard training and qualification requirements specific to the field or industry

Goods & Services Overview

Goods & Services Rates and Billing

- DDD uses two fiscal intermediaries (FI) to process vendor payments:
 - Easterseals NJ for people enrolled in the Agency with Choice (AWC) Self-Direction Model ([Agency With Choice](#))
 - Acumen Fiscal Agent for people enrolled in the Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA) Self-Direction Model ([Acumen | New Jersey](#))
- If a person approved for Goods & Services is not already enrolled in a self-direction model with one of the fiscal intermediaries, Acumen is automatically the assigned FI
- Before entering Goods & Services to a person's service plan, their support coordinator must confirm that the vendor understands and will adhere to the FI billing process

Goods & Services Vendors

Goods & Services vendors *are not required* by DDD to do the following:

- **DDD training** – Vendor staff are not required to complete DDD trainings (e.g., Life-Threatening Emergencies, Komninos’ Law, Preventing Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation) and do not need to be certified in CPR or First Aid
- **Background checks** – Vendors are not required to conduct annual or biannual criminal history background checks for staff
- **Offender registry checks** – Vendors are not required to verify whether their staff appear on the Central Registry of Offenders Against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

Goods & Services Vendors

Goods & Services vendors *are not required* by DDD to do the following:

- **Child abuse registry checks** – Vendors are not required to verify whether their staff appear on the Child Abuse Registry
- **Drug testing** – Vendors are not required to conduct pre-employment and random drug testing of staff
- **Incident reports** – Vendors are not required to complete incident reports regarding unusual events or allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- **Driver records** – Vendors are not required to check the driving history (abstract) for staff who transport DDD consumers

Goods & Services Examples

Examples of Goods & Services (not all-inclusive)

- Job-related costs, such as fingerprinting or drug tests, when not covered by DVRS
- A garage door opener needed for access to and from the home
- A microwave that supports independent cooking
- Classes that primarily serve the general public and are provided in an integrated setting
- Activity fees for museums, cultural events or educational workshops
- Flat rate or boarding fees for transportation
- A housing security deposit
- A monthly gym membership fee that is comparable to gyms serving the general public

Goods & Services Exclusions

Goods & Services Exclusions – these items can never be paid through G&S

- **Pure entertainment** – Anything that is only for fun or recreation
- **Political activities** – Anything related to politics or trying to influence laws or policies
- **Personal items or services** – That are not related to the person's disability
- **Gift cards** – Of any kind
- **Vacations** – Travel or expenses for personal trips
- **Basic necessities** – Everyday food, drinks, or clothing
- **Room and board** – Regular living or housing costs
- **Places to stay** – Hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, or similar lodging
- **Personal training** – One-to-one fitness or exercise coaching
- **Cash** – Money given directly to a person
- **Gambling, alcohol, or tobacco** – Products or activities in these categories
- **Experimental or banned treatments** – Medical treatments that are not approved or are prohibited
- **Service animals** – Costs related to service animals
- **Utility bills** – Such as electric, gas, water, or phone bills
- **Warranties or service contracts** – Extended coverage or repair plans for products or equipment

Goods & Services Request Process

- DDD's Service Review Unit evaluates all requests to ensure they meet the definition of Goods & Services as outlined in DDD's policy manuals.
 - Requests must be fully completed, comply with all service rules and requirements, and include all related invoices and supporting documentation.
 - Requests must be suitable for the person's age, benefit the person directly, and align with the assessed needs of the individual.

Goods & Services Request Process

Standardized Criteria

- Each item or service is reviewed against the following standard criteria:
 - **Related to disability** – item/service must be needed because of the person's disability
 - **Meets an identified need** – item/service must address a specific need that has been documented
 - **Reduces the need for other services** – helps the person be **more involved in their community** and/or **makes the home safer**
 - **Not available anywhere else** – item/service cannot already be available through family or other people in the person's life, or through other programs or community resources

Goods & Services Request Process

Standardized Criteria (continued)

- **Related to employment** – if item/service is for work, it must be directly connected to obtaining or maintaining a job
- **Sole benefit**– item/service must be for the person and no one else
- **Available to everyone** – item/service must be something available for anyone in the general public to access or purchase
- **General-public business** – The item/service must be purchased from a business whose **primary consumers are the general public**

Goods & Services Request Process

Standardized Criteria (continued)

- There is a distinction between **goods** (an item that can be purchased/obtained for use) and **services** (class, program, or activity that a person attends or participates in), and between a **goods vendor** (vendor or business that sells/provides items) and a **service vendor** (vendor or business that provides a class, program, or activity that a person attends or participates in).
- When assessing whether a **service vendor** serves the general public, the service vendor's business model and revenue sources are relevant factors.
- If the majority of the service vendor's revenue comes from DDD or Medicaid, this generally indicates that it primarily targets DDD beneficiaries rather than the broader public, even if non-DDD individuals are technically permitted to enroll. Such vendors would not meet the criterion of being a general-audience business.

Goods & Services Request Process

Prior Authorizations

- Services must not be rendered without prior authorization from DDD.
- All requests must be submitted and approved before the person can attend or participate in the service (class, program, activity) or can obtain/purchase the item.
- The FIs must receive a prior authorization from DDD before they will remit payment for a claim.
- Services provided without prior authorization or outside the scope of the prior authorization will not be reimbursed by the FI or DDD.

Goods & Services Request Process

Final Denials

- A request for missing/additional information is not a denial. If information is requested by DDD, the support coordinator must submit it.
- If a specific **vendor** is denied (for example, because the rate is not reasonable and customary), the denial will instruct the support coordinator/consumer to identify a new vendor.
- If a specific **service** is denied, a final denial will be issued that includes Fair Hearing information for the consumer.

Goods & Services Request Process

Important Reminders

- To make a determination regarding a request, DDD's Service Review Unit may ask additional (follow-up) questions.
- Please allow the Service Review Unit staff 10 business days to review requests.
- Natural, generic, and community resources should be considered for funding before submitting a Goods & Services request.
- The most cost-effective entity that can meet the identified need should be used.
- As with any community business or vendor, Goods & Services vendors determine the rates for their program or class.
- State and federal funds cover approved Goods & Services. Providing false or incomplete information in a request may constitute fraud.

Goods & Services Request Process

Important Reminders

- Once a Goods & Services Request is approved by the DDD service review team, the person's support coordinator will enter it into the person's annual service plan and get the plan approved. After the plan is approved:
 - A Medicaid "prior authorization" (PA) is generated and electronically transmitted to the appropriate fiscal intermediary.
 - The support coordinator sends a Service Detail Report (SDR) to the vendor. The SDR has the service details and, at the bottom, the Medicaid prior authorization number.

Important Note for Vendors: If you do not receive the SDR, contact the person's support coordinator and ask them to send it to you – you will need the SDR to bill correctly

Goods & Services Request Process

Important Reminders

- The person's support coordinator is the primary point of contact for all communication with DDD about the person's services.
- This includes but is not limited to:
 - Service requests, approvals, and/or denials
 - Changes to services
 - Questions or concerns related to the person's services
- Goods & Services vendors should communicate directly with the support coordinator.

Using Goods & Services for Classes

Community Classes and Programs

- To be approved, there must be no other funding available to pay for the class or program, and it must meet the following criteria:
 - Primarily serve and is attended by the general public
 - Have no more than 12 people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD) participating/attending at one time
 - Occurs in an open, community (aka “integrated”) setting where the individual can interact with people from the general public

Using Goods & Services for Classes

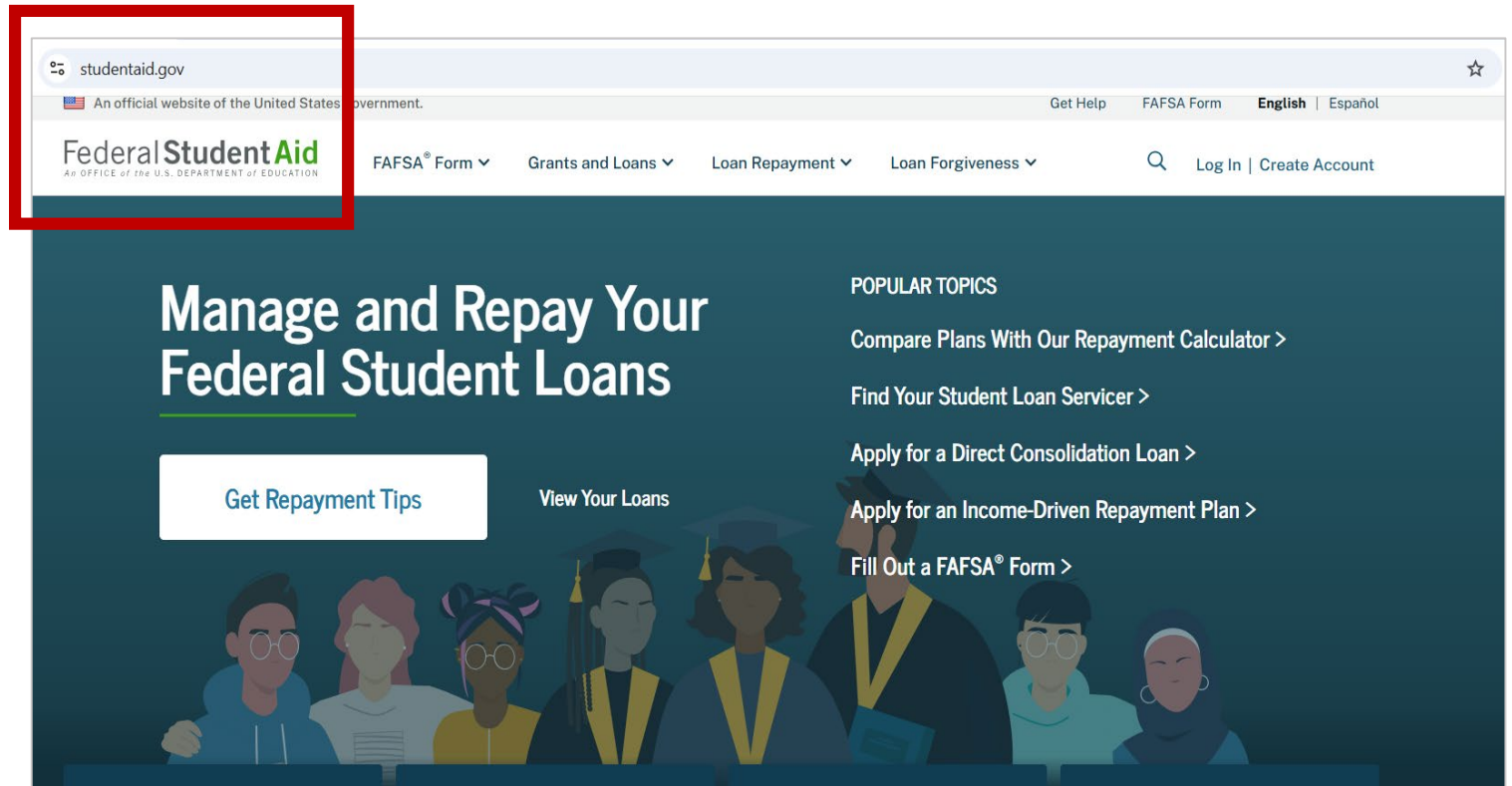
Community Classes and Programs (continued)

Additional requirements:

- Individuals may not be approved to attend more than 12 hours of classes/programs per week in total.
- The class must address an identified need through assessment (NJCAT, ISP/PCPT).
- The class must do one or both of the following:
 - Lead directly to employment in a specific career
 - Support skill development for community living, such as personal care, social skills, or everyday adaptive skills

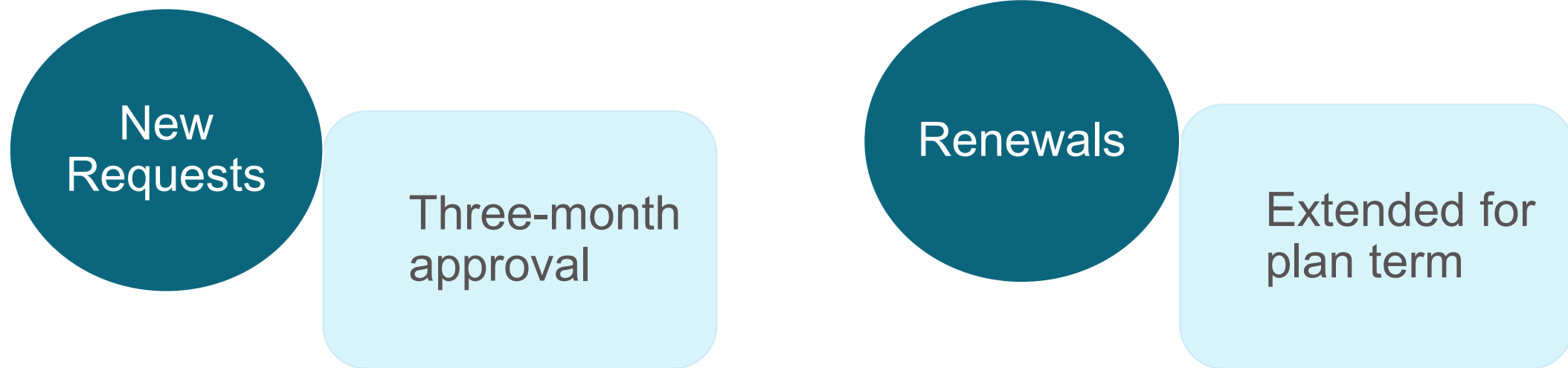
Using Goods & Services for Classes

- For college courses taken for credit, the person must first apply for federal student aid through FAFSA.
- The support coordinator must submit the FAFSA results together with the Goods & Services Request.



Using Goods & Services for Classes

- Approvals for new classes are typically issued for three months to allow the individual time to participate and make an informed decision about continuing long-term.



DDD Audits of Goods & Services

Purpose of Audits

DDD is responsible for ensuring that federal and state funds used to support home and community-based services are spent appropriately. As part of this responsibility, DDD conducts both routine and focused audits of Goods and Services vendors to confirm that services are delivered in accordance with all applicable federal and state program rules, policies, and requirements.

Audits:

1. Ensure compliance with Medicaid and DDD standards
2. Verify that vendors primarily serve the general public
3. Confirm that services meet Goods & Services definition

Audit Cycle

1. **Annual Review** – Routine monitoring of all vendors
2. **Focused Review** – Initiated when specific concerns arise, including but not limited to:
 - Significant increases in billing or high overall DDD billing volume
 - Rates that fall outside market standards
 - Referrals or concerns about potential alignment with other Medicaid waiver service definitions

Vendor Elements Reviewed During Audit

1. Billing patterns
2. Marketing materials and website content
3. Population served (general public vs. specialized programs)
4. Service descriptions and schedules
5. Comparison of vendor rates to market standards

Red Flags

Services That Don't Qualify:

- Services that resemble Day Habilitation or other Medicaid services
- Services marketed exclusively or primarily to individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities
- Rates that are significantly higher than typical market prices
- Services not accessible to, or not actively used by the general public

Red Flags

- When assessing whether a service vendor primarily serves the general public, both marketing practices and revenue sources are important considerations.
- Service vendors that advertise themselves as "DDD-approved" or derive most of their revenue from DDD or Medicaid are generally oriented toward DDD beneficiaries. In these cases, the vendor may not meet the criteria for a general-public business and may instead need to operate as a DDD/Medicaid-authorized provider subject to all applicable program rules.

Q&A

