

Gateway to Community Living Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is Gateway to Community Living?**

Gateway to Community Living describes the Alabama Medicaid Agency's initiatives to expand home and community-based resources for Alabamians who are aging or have disabilities. As the population ages, the demand for all long-term care services is expected to soar. Because many people prefer to get these services in their own homes, and because home and community-based services can be the most cost-effective alternatives, these initiatives will help our state better meet the demand. Activities include the Gateway to Community Living Rebalancing Demonstration funded through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) Money Follows the Person (MFP) program. This Demonstration supports individuals to successfully transition from nursing homes and institutional settings to community living. Additionally, it will allow for continued enhancements to the State's infrastructure for home and community-based services that support community living for all Alabamians regardless of disability. The Gateway to Community Living Demonstration uses the State's existing long term care system as a foundation, allowing individuals currently living in institutional settings to enroll in one of seven Home and Community-based Waiver programs.

- **Does Money Follows the Person mean participants can receive cash grants if they transition from an institutional setting?**

No. Money Follows the Person simply means that Medicaid funds can be used to provide needed supports and services in an individual's preferred setting – either the community or institutional care – as long as their health and safety needs can be adequately met in that setting. There is no cash benefit associated with MFP and Gateway to Community Living.

- **What services can a person get through a Home and Community-based Waiver program?**

Alabama has a comprehensive array of waivers, each of which offers a set of services designed to meet the needs of different target populations ([HCBS Waivers](#)). A trained Transition Coordinator will help people, who are interested in transitioning, examine the waivers they may be eligible for so they can decide which one will best suit their needs for community living.

- **Are there any other services that will help with making a successful transition to community living from an institutional setting?**

Yes. People who want to return to community living often have some additional needs, such as help with planning the move, obtaining housing or even just some one-time financial assistance to make utility deposits or purchase basic home-making supplies. Services and supports for individuals who choose to transition will include:

- A dedicated transition coordinator who will assist participants with developing and implementing an individualized transition plan;
- If needed, assistance for costs related to transition such as rental and utility deposits;
- If needed, assistance to locate and obtain accessible and affordable housing;
- If needed, assistance in exploring employment opportunities;

- **Who is eligible for Gateway to Community Living assistance to return to community living?**

To enroll in the Gateway to Community Living Rebalancing Demonstration, a person will need to meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Live in a nursing home or state-operated psychiatric facility for at least 90 consecutive days;
2. Be a Medicaid beneficiary for at least one day prior to transition;
3. There is a reasonable expectation that transition can be successfully accomplished within 180 days through available home and community-based services;
4. Participate in and complete the Gateway to Community Living Transition Planning Process;
5. Move to a qualified residence, which includes a home or apartment, or a group setting with four or fewer unrelated adults. Some Assisted Living facilities may be considered qualified residences under certain circumstances.

- **What if I don't have Medicaid but am interested in returning to community living?**

The nursing home and/or a Transition Coordinator can help you determine if you might be eligible for Medicaid in the community. If it turns out you are not going to be eligible, you may still receive some assistance to transition from non-Medicaid resources such as an [Independent Living Center](#) or an [Aging and Disability Resource Center](#).

- **How can someone make a referral for Gateway to Community Living transition assistance?**

There are several ways to make a referral. Alabama's nursing homes are already required to make a referral if an individual indicates a desire to return to community living in response to Section Q of the nursing home Minimum Data Set (MDS) assessment processes. In addition, individuals who are interested can self-refer using the on-line referral system or by submitting a referral by email, fax or regular mail. The on-line system is available at the [Gateway to Community Living Portal](#) (or [click here](#) for the referral form). Individuals may also ask a family member, friend, legal guardian, or an advocate to assist them with making the referral.

- **How can someone get more information about Gateway to Community Living?**

Information is available on the Alabama Medicaid Agency website [Gateway to Community Living](#) page. You may also contact the Gateway to Community Living staff at any of the following:

By Phone (Toll Free): 855-236-6341

By EMail: gclportal@medicaid.alabama.gov

By Fax: 334-353-3642

**Mailing Address: Alabama Medicaid Agency
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