

Overview of Companion and Residential Services

"Companion services" means nonmedical care, support, and socialization provided to an adult individual age 18 years and older in accordance with a therapeutic goal in the individual support plan. Companion services are not purely recreational in nature and shall not provide routine support with ADLs. [12VAC30-122-20]

As with all waiver services, Companion services requests must be based on the individual's documented need. The person's need, as well as outcomes, key steps, support activities, and support instructions must be documented in the ISP. Companion services are not for the convenience of, or staffing support for, the residential provider.

If a person residing in a 24 hour residential program (Group Home, Sponsored Residential or Supported Living setting) expresses a desire for Companion services, it is the role of the Support Coordinator to discuss eligibility for the service, the person's needs and preferences, and to offer a choice of all available providers. Residential providers may not require people who live in the home to have Companion service, nor may they require a particular provider. Additionally, per regulation **the residential provider may not also be the Companion provider.**

Both DMAS and DBHDS Licensing regulations require Group Home and Sponsored Residential providers to provide supports that include activities of daily living (ADLs), instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs), skill-building, community participation opportunities, medical appointments, and routine and safety supports. DD Waiver Companion Services cannot duplicate or supplant supports that should be provided by the 24-hour residential service.

Companions may not provide routine supports for ADLs. "Routine supports" is defined as: "supports that assist the individual with ADLs and IADLs, if appropriate." [12VAC30-122-20] this means that if a person needs supports with eating, using the restroom, or transferring/ambulating; Companion is not likely to be an appropriate service.

When multiple people living in the same residential setting request companion services from the same provider, one companion may support up to two individuals at the same time. In these situations, the needs of each individual, as well as shared needs, must be clearly documented on the ISP. Companion providers shall not bill for more than one individual at the same time, and they shall not bill for more hours than they actually worked.

Regulatory References

Reference	What does this mean?
DD Waiver Manual: Individuals who receive group home residential services may also receive agency or consumer directed companion services;	People have a choice of service providers, however when living in a group home, neither the group home provider nor an immediate family member

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<p>however the group home provider may not also be the provider of Companion services, as this is duplicative. Furthermore, Companion services must not occur inside the group home. For Individuals receiving group home services, Companion services may not be provided by an immediate family member.</p>	<p>may be the companion provider. People should work with their Support Coordinators to choose from a list of available providers.</p>
<p>DD Waiver Manual:</p> <p>Companion services may be approved for Individuals who are living in a residential setting such as group home, supported living or sponsored residential setting if the service need is documented in the plan for supports and must not duplicate services which are required to be provided by the residential agency.</p>	<p>Per regulation, residential providers support people with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Skill-building and routine supports related to ADLs and IADLs.-Skill-building, routine, and safety community resources, such as transportation, shopping, restaurant dining, and participating in social and recreational activities;-Behavioral Support-Monitoring health and physical condition.-Routine and safety supports with transportation to and from community locations and resources.-Providing general supports-Ensuring the Individual’s health and safety

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Can the Companion provide support with this activity when there is a 24-hour residential provider?		
Activity	In the community	At the 24-hour residential program
Bathing or showering, support with using the restroom, routine personal hygiene skills, dressing, transferring, etc.	NO	NO
Support with monitoring health status and physical condition	NO	NO
Support with any medical needs	NO	NO
Support with bowel/bladder programs, range of motion exercises, routine wound care that does not include sterile technique, and external catheter care when properly trained and supervised by an RN	NO	NO
Cleaning common areas or individual's personal space	NO	NO
Meal preparation	YES	NO
Community access	YES	NO
Recreational activities	YES*	NO
Support with medication that is not self-administered (Anything other than reminding individual to take their medication themselves)	NO	NO
Behavior support interventions with regards to the written behavioral support plan	YES**	NO
Behavioral support monitoring to ensure safety	YES	NO
Line of sight monitoring	YES	NO
ADLs	NO	NO
IADLs	YES	NO
Skill Building/Learning/Education	NO	NO
Communicating with others	YES	NO
Safety Supports	YES	NO
Transportation	YES	NO
Accompanying the individual to non-medical appointments or meetings	YES	NO

*Companion services may not be solely recreational in nature.

** If a person has a new behavior supports plan or has behavior support needs that, without skilled intervention, would place their health and safety at risk; consider if Companion is the appropriate service for them.

***Service authorization requests that do not meet the criteria or include activities that are not allowable for companion services may be denied, and appeal rights shall be issued.

Some examples of appropriate use of the Companion service by someone who resides in a 24 hour residential service:

a. Rob attends weekly Al-Anon meetings on Mondays at 7pm and needs someone to walk with him to the bus stop and ride the bus to the correct stop. He also needs assistance with safety supports and communication, as others who do not know him well sometimes have difficulty understanding what he says. Rob chooses to hire a Consumer Directed Companion in order to protect his privacy from group home staff and housemates.

b. Jeannette is taking an art class at a local art studio a few blocks away two evenings a week, and she needs someone to walk with her there and back for safety, as well as to support her socialization with her teacher and classmates. She also has to take her medication during the class time, so the companion reminds her to take the medicine the group home packed for her to take with her (but does not administer the medication). Jeannette would prefer whoever supports her to go to the art class also has an interest in art so that they can discuss art and artists on the walks. None of the staff in her group home are interested in art. When offered a choice of companion providers, an interest in art was one of her interview questions.

c. Makiyah serves on the board for her local Arc chapter. She needs rides to the monthly board meetings and events, as well as safety supports during fundraising and advocacy events. She needs reminders to drink water and take her medication during events that sometimes last several hours. Often she needs support for community members and legislative members to understand her speaking voice. When offered a choice of providers, Makiyah learned that one companion agency employs a Companion who is also on the Arc board, so she chose that agency companion.

d. Bill likes to play pool at BJ's Billiards every weeknight after dinner; however, he has a hard time knowing when his friends at the bar have had too many beers and it is time to leave. Bill has a companion who takes him to BJ's, plays pool with him, helps him recognize when his friends are becoming intoxicated, and brings him back home safely. Bill is someone who is truly involved in his community and likes to "look cool." He wants someone who would fit in at a "Country Bar" to support him so that it doesn't look like he is a person who has a disability with his staff at a bar. He doesn't feel like his group home staff "look cool enough," so he hires someone who knows how to play pool to be his companion.