

You've Moved to Virginia

The Arc of Northern Virginia is often contacted by people new to the area from other parts of the country. There are lots of things to consider and navigate as you settle into the area. Many services do not move with you from another state or area, so this handout will review some key things to know, as well as first steps and contacts as you make Virginia your home.

Variance Across Virginia

Virginia tends to rank very low, in comparison with other states, in terms of funding for and inclusion of people with developmental disabilities. The Northern Virginia area (i.e. Arlington County, Fairfax County, Alexandria City, Fairfax City, City of Falls Church) sometimes have supplemental local funding options to support people with disabilities, but they are designed to be limited lifelines, not comprehensive services. This area of the state is also the most expensive, so the cost of living will be notably higher, but there are more service providers. You'll be striking a balance between what part of the state meets the needs for your whole family best.

What Supports May Have Moved with You

If you receive monthly **income from Social Security**, that should move with you. You must contact the Social Security office in your new home immediately to notify them of your change in address, update any leases or other paperwork they have on file relating to your home or cost of living, and update them on your job status. If you haven't applied before, once you are 18, you are likely eligible if your disability limits your ability to work. Read more at <https://thearcofnova.org/resource-library/#social-security>

If you have a **federal housing voucher**, like a Housing Choice Voucher, it may move with you if the housing authority in your new area agrees to accept your voucher. If you didn't contact them before your move, do that as soon as possible, and ask them about deadlines for submitting information on the new home you'll have in Virginia. To find your new local PHA, visit <https://www.hud.gov/states/virginia/renting/hawebsites>

If you currently have an **Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**, it will be effective in your new school district until you meet as an IEP Team and develop and sign a new plan. However, the support services available and team at the new school may be different and may not implement the plan exactly as the old school did. Services in your old IEP are not guaranteed once the new IEP is signed, so ensure the new IEP reflects all of the needs of the student. If you want to talk with SPED experts, visit <https://peatc.org/>

Special Needs Trust or ABLE Accounts can move with you from state to state. Ensure you still have a contact person with your account who can work with you on meeting your needs in the new state and that your contact information is updated. You may choose to move the money to an account with a group based near your new home if you find the option to visit in-person is important for you. Learn more, and sign up for free workshops and consultations at <https://thearcofnovatrust.org/>

What Will Not Have Moved with You

Virginia has adopted the Uniform **Guardianship** and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act (UAGPPJA), so if you're moving here from another state that has adopted that law, you can ask your attorney in your

www.TheArcofNoVA.org and ask questions at www.thearcofnova.org/answers

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home state to work on transferring guardianship to Virginia and getting the case heard in a Virginia court. Otherwise, you will need to create a new guardianship order by talking with a Virginia attorney, or explore other forms of legal authority and related options. For more information on attorneys, costs, and options, visit <https://thearcofnova.org/resource-library/#legal>

If you had **Medicaid** in another state, you may be able to get Medicaid in Virginia, but you must reapply and applications take 45 calendar days to process. Each state has a different application process and Virginia has strict financial eligibility criteria for adults and children. Virginia's Medicaid operates under a managed care system, and you must select a managed care plan in most cases. You can apply for Virginia Medicaid online at <http://commonhelp.virginia.gov> or the hotline on the site.

Though every state has a **Medicaid Waiver and Developmental Disability Service System**, Medicaid Waivers vary widely from state to state and Waivers do not move from state to state. So, now that you're in Virginia, you will need to apply within the Virginia system for Waiver (e.g, employment, residential, in-home) services. The waiting list is long, but based on urgency of need. Learn about Waivers at <https://thearcofnova.org/resource-library/#waivers> and find your local Community Services Board (CSB), where you'll apply for and navigate services, at <https://dbhds.virginia.gov/community-services-boards-csbs/>. Those CSBs are the hubs for DD supports, including supplemental local funding that can sometimes cover costs for employment/day services, crisis supports, and case management.

If you need **state job supports**, you will need to meet with the Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative services to get on the waiting list for job supports. Waiting times can vary from a few months to a few years. Job supports are generally not ongoing and in many cases, do not compare to the depth and breadth of supports in other states. Visit the DARS website for more at <https://vadars.org/>.

Private therapies will need to be reauthorized and you will need to find new service providers, unless your previous provider also operates in Northern Virginia and will work with the insurance plan you will use in Virginia. You can find options for providers at <https://thearcofnova.org/business-directory/>

Social and Recreation options are available throughout the state. All localities in Northern Virginia have an office of Therapeutic Recreation, which are great ways to find affordable activities. <https://thearcofnova.org/resource-library/#recreation> has ideas for lots of social connection options.

More Information

To learn more about service options across a lifespan in Northern Virginia, visit The Arc of Northern Virginia's Transition POINTS website at <https://thearcofnova.org/programs/transition/> where you'll find guidebooks and toolkits for people with DD at any stage of life in a variety of languages, including lists of service providers. <https://www.youtube.com/user/VideosatTheArcofNoVA> has much of the same information in video format.

You can always ask us questions at <https://thearcofnova.org/answers/> and we are happy to help.