

Frequently Asked Questions - Individual Care Grant (ICG)

Individual Care Grants for Severely Mentally Ill Children

1. **Question.** What is an Individual Care Grant (ICG)?
Answer. An ICG is a grant to assist parents or other private guardians in paying some of the costs of residential treatment or of specialized community mental health services for severely mentally ill children.
 - Parents/guardians maintain all rights and responsibilities for their child, even if the child is at a residential placement. The ICG program does not become guardian or custodian of the child.
 - Once awarded, the grant is good for one year. The grant must be renewed annually and is subject to eligibility criteria stated in Title 59 Illinois Administrative Code Part 135.
2. **Question.** What does the ICG pay for?
Answer. The ICG is a supplemental grant that provides some funds toward the total cost of care for approved clinical programs at residential placements or at community mental health agencies. Other types of funding, such as Social Security benefits, local educational funding or private trust funds, must be applied towards these costs first. The ICG does not pay for the tuition costs at residential placement. Also, while a child is in placement, the family remains responsible for certain costs, such as transportation, clothing, medical and dental care.
3. **Question.** Which children are eligible for an ICG?
Answer. The Illinois Administrative Code Title 59 defines which children are eligible for the ICG program. See the attached sheet labeled "The Request for Eligibility Determination" for that definition. Please note that the definition focuses on the severity of a child's mental illness and not on the severity of that child's behavior. There may be children with dangerous behaviors that could benefit from residential care who will not qualify for an ICG because they do not meet the Code's definition of severe mental illness.
4. **Question.** How is an application made?
Answer. A parent or legal guardian may call or write the ICG office for an application. When the parent or legal guardian receives the application it includes a series of forms to fill out and indicates what other information, such as clinical records, must be compiled and submitted by the parent. The parent is provided the phone number of the ICG Coordinator at the local community mental health agency who can assist the parent in filling out the application. The completed application is mailed to the ICG Office for determination of eligibility.
5. **Question.** How is eligibility determined?
Answer. As required by the Illinois Administrative Code, a licensed physician, licensed clinical psychologist or licensed clinical social worker who meet certain training standards (see the attached sheet labeled "Eligibility Determination Process for the Individual Care Grant") will review the materials and give a written decision. A decision will be made within 30 days of receipt of your child's application.
6. **Question.** If the child is found NOT ELIGIBLE, what may the parent / guardian do?
Answer. If a child is found not eligible, the parent will be sent a letter explaining the decision and the procedure for appealing that decision. The parent may also contact the local community mental health center that assisted in the application process to seek additional community mental health services.
7. **Question.** If a child is found ELIGIBLE, how does a parent use the grant?
Answer. If a child is found eligible, the parent will be sent a letter explaining the decision and instructing the parent to meet with the ICG Coordinator at the local community mental health agency to review the treatment options and draw up a service plan. Treatment options include residential placement, specialized community services or deferment of services. Please be aware

that services can only be deferred for a 12-month period from the eligibility date. After 12 months you must re-apply for the grant.

8. **Question.** What range of services is provided for by the ICG when a child is in residential placement?

Answer. The ICG covers the cost of room, board and the treatment program at a residential placement. When the parent chooses residential services, the placement must develop an initial treatment plan with the family. The placement sends a copy of this plan and quarterly reports to the ICG Office.

9. **Question.** What range of services is provided for by the ICG when a child is in specialized community services?

Answer. The ICG will not pay for outpatient psychotherapy or medication follow-up. The ICG will pay for four types of specialized community services.

- Behavior management interventions (time-limited, child and family training/therapy interventions focused toward the improvement or management of specific behaviors that jeopardize the child's functioning in the home / family setting. This intervention typically teaches/models techniques and skills that can be used by the parent / guardian and other family members).
- Child support services (time limited funding to cover costs that would otherwise be prohibitive to the parents for the child to participate in community activities when those activities are related to objectives in the child's current individual services plan).
- Therapeutic stabilization (a timely one-to-one relationship between the child and a contractual agent of the SASS agency for the purpose of facilitating age-appropriate, normalizing activities of the child).
- Young adult support services (time-limited funding for young adults to cover costs of services and supports, not included under other programs for which the person may be eligible, to aid the young adult in his or her transition to community living. These funds can be applied to the costs of a supported living arrangement or other appropriate transitional services that help to integrate the young adult into his or her adult roles in the community).
- When the parent chooses specialized community services, the child remains at home and the local mental health agency develops an initial treatment plan. The agency sends a copy of this plan to the Individual Care Grant Office for approval. The agency then sends semi-annual reports to the ICG Office.

10. **Question.** How does a parent renew the grant?

Answer. The grant must be renewed annually. The ICG Office will contact the parent and let them know what additional written materials are needed. The office should already have all previous materials plus the progress reports from the treating agencies, which are receiving, grant funds. The eligibility criteria remain the same. Part of the renewal process indicates that parents must be involved in the treatment and discharge planning.

11. **Question.** What happens when a child is no longer eligible for a grant?

Answer. When a child is no longer eligible for a grant, such as when the child reaches age 18 and completes high school, the grant funding stops. Discharge planning should begin at the time services are started at the residential placement or local mental health agency. The child may still be eligible for other services from the local mental health agency. If the child has turned 21 years old or graduated high school, the Office of Mental Health's adult network may provide services. The ICG Office can assist the family or residential placement in linking the young adult to the adult network and in identifying these service providers.

12. **Question.** What happens when a child is discharged from a residential facility?

Answer. That child may still be eligible for specialized community services through the ICG Program. Depending on the circumstances, the child may still be eligible for services from the local mental health agency. If the child has turned 18 years old, the Office of Mental Health's

adult network may provide services. The ICG office can assist the family or residential placement in linking the young adult to the adult network and in identifying these service providers. Again, discharge planning should begin at the time services are started at the residential placement and the family should stay actively involved in this planning.

13. **Question.** Can a child switch from specialized community-based care to residential care through the ICG?

Answer. Yes. The ICG will pay for some specialized community services. If the child is not responding, the family may switch to using the grant for residential care. When the child returns from residential, that child may receive community services again. As long as the child is eligible for the ICG, the parent may choose either community-based or residential care.