



Developmental Disability Determination

General Descriptions of Life Areas from AS 47.80.900(6)(D) Assessed for Functional Abilities

“Substantial functional limitation” means consistently functioning at or near a level that is two standard deviations delayed, or 25% delayed, or functioning at or below the 2nd percentile compared to the typical functioning of chronologically same aged peers. Substantial functional limitation must be demonstrated globally in areas of major life activity, as defined in AS 47.80.900 (6) (D). Behavioral reluctance or refusal to perform tasks in an area is not considered a limitation of a person’s ability in an area, but rather, a component in the area of self-direction.

Self-care: A person’s ability to perform such tasks as eating/drinking, toileting, dressing, grooming. Factors that are considered include (but are not limited to) the level at which a person performs the following tasks through standardized assessment:

- chew and swallow
- lift food and drink to their mouth
- anticipate the need to toilet
- utilize toilet facilities for voiding
- perform toileting related hygiene
- select and don attire
- wash self in shower or tub
- shampoo and rinses hair
- perform oral hygiene
- brush or comb hair

Receptive and Expressive Language: A person’s ability to understand the communication of others and to communicate with others. Receptive language involves comprehension of communication presented to an individual in any combination of spoken words, signs, or images that may be printed or electronic. Early expressive language consists of sounds, gestures, body posture, and facial expression. Verbal language involves the use of words through any combination of speaking, producing words with an electronic device, signing, and using images that may be printed or electronic. Ability to understand and use social language (pragmatics) is considered a component in this category, but alone does not constitute the entirety of the delay. Factors that are considered include (but are not limited to) the level at which a person performs the following tasks through standardized assessment:

- Express themselves in their primary language to be understood by the listener without repetition or interpretation by a familiar person
- Understand the communication of others who are expressing in their primary language
- Have reciprocal conversation

Learning: A person’s ability to acquire knowledge or skills through experience, study, or being taught. Factors that are considered include (but are not limited to) the level at which a person performs the following tasks through standardized assessment:

- Demonstrate cognitive ability or intellectual functioning
- Demonstrate acquisition of pre-academic or academic skills

Mobility: A person’s physical ability to move their body from place to place, control and coordinate gross motor movement. Factors that are considered include (but are not limited to) the level at which a person performs the following tasks through standardized assessment:

- Hold up head, roll, sit, crawl
- Walk
- Navigate uneven surfaces, such as stairs

Self-direction: A person's ability to establish and maintain interpersonal and social relationships, manage emotional responses, display socially appropriate behavior, focus and attend appropriately, use judgment, make decisions, solve problems, plan and execute tasks, and direct behavior toward goals. Factors that are considered include (but are not limited to) the level at which a person performs the following tasks through standardized assessment:

- Seek social interaction with others
- Behave in a way that does not cause harm to self or others
- Pay attention and focus
- Generalize information gained through learning toward novel situations
- Manage stress and emotion
- Avoid victimization
- Willingly engage skills demonstrated in other life areas

Capacity for Independent Living: This area is considered for people aged 16 and older, as a person's ability to maintain a household and access necessary community resources. Factors that are considered include (but are not limited to) the level at which a person performs the following tasks through standardized assessment:

- Perform housework and basic home maintenance
- Access transportation,
- Shop
- Prepare meals
- Manage money
- Use devices (e.g. telephone) to communicate

Economic self-sufficiency: This area is considered for people aged 16 and older who are not enrolled in educational programs, as a person's ability to financially meet their needs such as food, clothing, housing, utilities, and transportation. Factors that are considered include (but are not limited to) the level at which a person performs the following tasks through standardized assessment:

- Complete job applications and interviews
- Work at a community-based job



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Supporting Documentation

Completed DDD applications should include evaluations and/or assessments that document current functional levels and/or delays in the life skill areas of self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, and independent living (for people age 16 and older) and economic self-sufficiency (for people age 16 and older who are not enrolled in educational programs).

Alaska does not perform individual assessments for developmental disability determinations, but relies on submission of standardized assessments completed by other professionals which, in determining standardized scores and ratings, may take into account

- Frequency of functional limitation
- Effort needed to complete the task
- Adequacy of task completion
- Safety in completing the task
- Time needed to complete the task (FEAST)

For children age 7 and older, supporting documents should be current within past 36 months.

For children younger than age 7, supporting documents should be current within the past 12 months. For adults, supporting documents should be as current as possible and also speak to the existence of mental or physical impairment and functional limitations prior to age 22. Given the lack of professional services available in rural areas and the lack of available records for some adults, the reasonable person standard will be used when evaluating information for evidence of the FEAST components above to determine the existence of functional limitation prior to age 22.

Examples of supporting documentation include, but are not limited to:

- a. Developmental assessment by Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program,
- b. School district special education evaluations and evaluation summaries, known in Alaska as the Evaluation Summary & Eligibility Report (ESER),
- c. School district Individual Education Plan (IEP),
- d. Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP),
- e. Psychological assessment,
- f. Neuropsychological assessment,
- g. Evaluations from specialists (e.g., occupational, physical, or speech therapy), and
- h. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) assessments and evaluations.

Documentation of the disability prior to age 22 includes, but is not limited to, school records, health aide records, Social Security records, and current records which document the history of the disability.

All evaluations and assessments submitted as supporting documentation must be dated and signed by the professional clinician who administered the evaluation or assessment.