



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Developmental Disabilities Administration * P.O. Box 45310 * Olympia, WA 98504-5310

DDA MANAGEMENT BULLETIN
D15-012 – Procedure
March 13, 2015

TO: Regional Administrators
Field Services Administrators
DDA Intake and Eligibility Supervisors and Staff
DDA Administrative Hearing Coordinators

FROM: *Don Clintzman*, Deputy Assistant Secretary
Developmental Disabilities Administration

SUBJECT: **Acceptance of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) for Determination of Eligibility**

PURPOSE: This management bulletin is intended to notify eligibility staff that diagnosis by a licensed physician of the conditions listed below, for which prenatal exposure to alcohol is contingent, meet the diagnostic criteria of Chapter 388-823-0600 WAC “another neurological or other condition similar to Intellectual Disability.”

Applicants who have a qualifying diagnosis with confirmed prenatal exposure to alcohol must also meet the criteria for substantial limitations.

BACKGROUND: Historically, DDA has accepted diagnoses of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), but not accepted other diagnoses indicating prenatal exposure to alcohol. Evidence indicates that prenatal maternal consumption of alcohol can cause intellectual and adaptive skills deficits.

Diagnosis of FASD is challenging for clinicians due to the variety of cognitive, physical, and behavioral outcomes that may result from alcohol exposure. Additionally, individuals may not have ready access to a clinic or multidisciplinary team qualified to provide a diagnosis falling under FASD. Changes to eligibility criteria will ensure that more individuals with prenatal alcohol exposure that also have qualifying substantial limitations can qualify as a client of DDA.

WHAT’S NEW, CHANGED, OR CLARIFIED: Effective immediately, diagnoses of a condition that is similar to Intellectual Disability and attributable to prenatal maternal consumption of alcohol may be accepted as an “another neurological or other condition similar to Intellectual Disability” under 388-823-0600. The diagnosis must be supported by evidence confirming prenatal alcohol exposure. This evidence may be found in medical records or other documentation.

ACTION: 1. New eligibility applications will be considered if the diagnosis by the physician is one considered to be caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol. Diagnoses indicating alcohol exposure that meet the

requirements of Chapter 388-823-0600 WAC are:

- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)
- Partial Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (PFAS)
- Neurobehavioral Disorder Associated with Prenatal Alcohol Exposure (ND-PAE)
- Static Encephalopathy due to Fetal Alcohol Exposure

Note: Diagnoses not on this list and relating to prenatal alcohol exposure shall be submitted to the Eligibility Program Manager by the Regional Eligibility Coordinator for consideration of inclusion in the list of diagnoses accepted as meeting the criteria of Chapter 388-823-0600 WAC prior to a determination of eligibility.

2. Qualifying diagnoses must be supported by evidence confirming prenatal exposure to alcohol. The report from the licensed physician may include statements such as those found below.

- Examples of confirmed prenatal exposure to alcohol:
 - Diagnostic report or clinician confirms prenatal exposure to alcohol
 - Birth mother self-reports use of alcohol during pregnancy
 - Reports document that sources close to the birth mother observed the birth mother drinking alcohol during pregnancy
 - Reports document the birth mother received alcohol treatment during pregnancy
 - Reports document a blood alcohol content during pregnancy (this may occur due to an emergency room visit or a DUI)
 - Birth mother was intoxicated at the time of delivery or amniotic fluid smelled of alcohol
 - Birth mother drank until she learned she was pregnant. Therefore, the mother drank from conception up until confirmation of pregnancy
 - The individual is diagnosed with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. A diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is confirmation of prenatal exposure to alcohol, as this must be confirmed as part of this diagnosis process.
- Examples of suspected exposures that do not confirm alcohol was consumed during pregnancy and do not meet the criteria for 'confirmed' prenatal exposure to alcohol:
 - Reports document birth mother is an alcoholic
 - Reports document birth mother received alcohol treatment
 - Reports document birth mother started drinking at a young age and is not known to have stopped

3. The individual must meet the criteria for substantial limitations as evidenced by impairment in both intellectual abilities and adaptive skills as identified in Chapter 388-823-0610 WAC.

Note: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is not a clinical diagnosis, but an umbrella term used to refer to a group of conditions that can occur in individuals exposed to alcohol prenatally.

**RELATED
REFERENCES:**

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/index.html>
<http://depts.washington.edu/fasdpn/htmls/fasd-fas.htm>

Chapter [388-823-0600](#) WAC and Chapter [388-823-0610](#) WAC

ATTACHMENTS:

None

CONTACT(S):

Beth Krehbiel, Eligibility/Social Services Payment System Program
Manager
360/725-3440
Beth.Krehbiel@dshs.wa.gov