

## SENIOR INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE

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### COPES (Community Options Program Entry System): How to Apply

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COPES is a Medicaid program funded through the Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) – Home and Community Services (HCS) office. COPES is intended to provide caregiver assistance to people who might otherwise be at risk of nursing home placement and includes the following:

- ❖ COPES personal care and services are provided in the home, congregate care or assisted living facilities, and adult family homes.
- ❖ COPES personal care services include help with activities of daily living such as ambulation, dressing, bathing, toileting, and certain household tasks.
- ❖ COPES recipients receive a Medicaid identification card, which may pay for other medical expenses including: physician services, home health services and Medicare premiums.
- ❖ COPES may also provide home delivered meals, Adult Day Health program, home safety improvements, and personal emergency response units.
- ❖ COPES recipients are assigned a case manager to help plan and monitor their care.

Below are the steps to applying for COPES

- ❶ Request a financial application by calling the DSHS-Home & Community Services office at (360) 416-7289 or pick up an application at the office at 900 E. College Way, #210, Mount Vernon.
- ❷ If you have questions regarding the application and would like assistance, contact Senior Information & Assistance at (360) 428-1301 to make an appointment.
- ❸ Answer every question on the application by checking “yes” or “no” and filling in appropriate blanks. Sign the application in the two places required, at top and bottom of form.
- ❹ You will need to submit documentation to verify your answers; copies of bank statements, picture ID, Social Security Card, etc. Refer to the checklist included in the application for specifics.
- ❺ Mail or return the completed application and documentation to the HCS office: 900 E. College Way #210, Mount Vernon, WA 98273.
- ❻ A financial worker will review your application and determine your eligibility. In some cases further documentation is requested. Be sure to send any requested documents to HCS in **one packet** or your application may be delayed.
- ❼ In addition to the financial application, a functional assessment will be completed. A social worker from HCS will call you on the phone and then assign a social worker to conduct the “CARE” assessment of the person needing care. This “CARE” assessment will take place in the home or facility. It will cover all the activities of daily living with which the person needs assistance, personal health information and more.
- ❽ Once the financial worker and the social worker determine eligibility, services are initiated. You will then receive a notice of approval or denial of the application. A service plan will be developed and approved by the recipient. At the time eligibility is determined, a Medicaid Identification Card will be issued to pay for medical services and other programs in the service plan.

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This handout outlines the COPES program application process. For financial criteria please see the following Columbia Legal Services handouts available at [www.washingtonlawhelp.org](http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org) ⇨ Aging/Elder Law, or from Senior Information & Assistance:

- *Questions and Answers on the COPES Program*
- *Estate Recovery for Medical Services paid for by the State*