



# Things to Think About!

## How to Apply for Private Funding

By Linda Jorgensen



By Brandan Atkin

For more help finding funding please visit the following:

Newsletters:

<http://www.snproject.com/newsletter.html>

[2009 July](#) - "What to do if an Application is Denied"

[2009 September](#) - "Medical Sufficiency Letters Simplified"

Resource Links:

Advocacy and Agencies/Assistance Programs~Private

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Generally little information is available for those attempting to obtain funding for needed goods and services. Finding a program or foundation is the first hurdle. The second? Making the application and then following through to its conclusion.

Be sure to apply to available public programs first. Applications generally must be made for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), traditional Medicaid or Medicare (depending on age) and to your state's Health and Human Services programs for the disabled.

Generally individuals must apply for public/government programs first and either declined or granted limited funds before being considered for further assistance. For instance, many Medicaid Waiver programs require applicants to be ineligible for Supplemental Security Income. Other programs may require an individual be medically qualified for SSI but financially ineligible (fail to meet SSI income limits). Be sure to retain any paperwork you may be given by those agencies.

### Who to Contact

Every program has an individual assigned to work with the public and provide program information. Contact your target foundation and ask for an application. Be sure to ask regarding eligibility requirements and the documentation needed to prove eligibility. A program outline with basic eligibility criteria and a list of required documentation would be helpful as well. It is important for the foundation to receive all the documentation they need in considering your request.

### Eligibility Requirements

Each private foundation has its own target population and service goals. They set the requirements and limitations for what they will, or won't, fund. For instance, a local corporate foundation may be set up to serve children within the local community who have been denied Medicaid coverage by purchasing wheelchairs for school use. They set the requirements and limitations applicants must meet. This would NOT be the foundation to apply to for assistance with a bathroom remodel in the next county. You must fit the requirements of the population served by that foundation. Be sure you know what you are applying for and you are applying to the right program.

## Proper Language

As with all agencies, public or private, there are specific terms and phrases that reflect the needs of the individual and help the individual meet the basic requirements of the program being applied to.

For example, medical sources will watch for phrases such as “medically necessary” or “medical necessity”, “provides prevention of...”, “basic medical need”, etc. Educational programs will watch for words such as “integrate”, “perform”, or “improve access”, while Employment/Vocational Training programs will look for “improve employability”, “self-sufficiency”, “productivity”, and “increase independence”. Be sure the language and terminology you use in your application matches the need you are attempting to meet with the acquired funding.

## File Your Application

Once you have identified a program, received an application and a list of required documents it's time to build your application package. Be sure all information has been reviewed for accuracy and completeness, contains the proper language, and carried the appropriate signatures. Letters from doctor's offices should be complete and have supporting notes, if requested.

Be sure to photo copy the entire contents of your application BEFORE you submit it. Ask the agency or foundation how long it may take for you to receive a reply. If the allotted time has passed and you have not heard from them it is perfectly acceptable to call and ask regarding the status of your application. Be polite, don't pester, but follow up.

## Track Your Application

Be sure to keep track of all your pertinent information. A portable file box or notebook is very helpful for this purpose.

\*When making phone calls note date, time, the individual you talked to and a short synopsis of the conversation.

\*Copy all submitted documents and keep on file.

\*Note all requests for further clarification or information from the agency or foundation and follow up! Note deadlines and keep track of them!

\*Submit an application package that is as complete as you can make it. Pay attention to detail. Now is NOT the time to leave something out.

## Application Denied

Your application has been reviewed and returned to you denied for services. Don't panic! If an explanation has not been furnished with the denial contact the foundation and enquire as to why your application was denied. Missing or inconsistent information is one of the most common reasons an application may be denied. If your application was in order and you are still rejected your next step is to appeal the decision. Each funding source has its own legal and administrative procedures for appealing a decision. Be sure to find out what the approved process is before launching your appeal.

## Need Help?

If you are having difficulty working with agencies and foundations on your own you may wish to contact an advocate to assist you in the process. Some states have advocacy groups or coordinators set up to assist individuals in their quest for funding through health and human services. Case managers assigned through state programs may be able to refer you to an advocate, public charities or University Disability Services Programs may have coordinators, advocacy groups and other professionals may also be available to assist you.

It is important to note that you will not obtain funding unless you apply for it and even more important to follow up, once you do. Still need help? Do not be discouraged! Contact your local advocacy group or state program case manager for a referral and appeal. The effort will be worth it in the long run.