

## Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services Frequently Asked Questions

### General Program Questions

#### **What is the Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services?**

[The Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services](#) offers adults with ASD a one-of-a-kind support program with an emphasis on nurturing opportunities for community-based employment, recreation, and individual choice. In addition to providing a comprehensive day program that is designed to support adults with ASD through a wide range of support services specifically tailored to meet their individual needs, the RCAAS has a core mission of advancing research initiatives in the field of adult autism services. The RCAAS utilizes a model of service delivery that is directly informed by the science of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). An ABA model of service delivery provides the framework that allows for the design of learning and work environments that recognize and support individual competencies, encourage skill development, minimize the need for problem behavior, and respect an individual's right to make choices and have control over their life to the extent that this is possible.

#### **Where are you located?**

The RCAAS is located on the Douglass Campus of [Rutgers University](#) at 102 Nichol Avenue, New Brunswick, New Jersey (Middlesex County).

#### **What are your hours of operation?**

Operating hours of the RCAAS are 9:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Monday through Friday. Clinical staff are available 8:15 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. The RCAAS operates over 12 months a year, a minimum of 230 days a year.

### New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities

#### **What services does the RCAAS provide?**

The RCAAS is an approved provider in the "[Supports Program](#)" which is a fee-for service Medicaid-reimbursement program administered by the [NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities \(NJ DDD\)](#). As a provider within the NJ DDD Supports Program, the RCAAS is able to bill for a variety of support services that it provides to RCAAS program participants towards their achievement of meaningful outcomes in the areas of community-based employment, recreation, socialization, and independent living. The specific categories of services within the Supports Program that the RCAAS is approved to provide and the corresponding sections in the NJ DDD Supports Program Manual with detailed information about each category is as follows:

- Behavior Management
- Community Based Support
- Community Inclusion

- Career Planning
- Day Habilitation
- Natural Supports Training
- Respite
- Supportive Employment Group
- Supportive Employment Individual
- Transportation

More information about the NJ DDD Supports Program can be found in the [program's policy manual](#).

**How do I apply for support services through the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities?**

[The New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities](#) provides public funding for services to assist New Jersey adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, age 21 and older, to live as independently as possible. [Application information](#) can be found on the NJ DDD website at: <https://nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/home/>.

**What DDD tier levels do you accept?**

The RCAAS has no minimum or maximum budget/tier requirement. Among our program participants currently enrolled in the program, we have representation at every [budget tier \(A-E\)](#). You can view the NJ DDD Supports Program tier levels and related budget [here](#).

**Do you accept the community care waiver?**

The RCAAS does not participate in the Community Care Waiver, but is an approved provider in the ["Supports Program"](#) which is a fee-for service Medicaid-reimbursement program administered by the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (NJ DDD). NJ DDD has moved from a contract-based system of service reimbursement to a Medicaid-based Fee-for-Service (FFS) reimbursement model. Instead of reimbursing for 'bundled' services before they are provided, reimbursement is paid for each discrete service after it is provided.

**RCAAS Day Program/Support Services**

**Is transportation available to and from the program?**

The RCAAS is able to provide transportation services for participants residing up to 25 miles from the physical location of the program. Individuals residing further than 25 miles from the program must be prepared to arrange for their own transportation to the program in order to be considered for admission.

**What is the daily program schedule?**

Each participant's schedule is individualized according to factors such as their budget, approved services, program staffing, etc. Typically, participants will arrive at the center in the morning and then head to their work sites during the day. Depending upon their work schedule or preference, they may return to the center for lunch, or have lunch at one of the many eateries on campus. Participants have access to Rutgers' amenities such as gyms, tennis courts, and pools as well as activities such as sporting events, stage performances, and dining. At the end of the program day, participants arrive back at the center for check-in, small group activities and peer interaction.

**What kind of vocational opportunities are available and how are participants assigned to job sites?**

Participants work with a team of vocational experts to find jobs that match their unique interests and strengths. The center taps into Rutgers' vast network of facilities—from bookstores and libraries to offices, dining halls, sports facilities, and an operational farm— to find jobs for participants through job sampling and matching that align with who they are, what they like to do, and where their talents lie. Our program participants are currently employed in various roles throughout the university in food service, horticulture maintenance, university mail services, document/records management, Rutgers Athletics, and turf grass management/research.

**My son/daughter needs 1:1 assistance and constant redirection. Is there someone who will help them on their job site and with everyday skills?**

Our staff help to make an independent and fulfilling lifestyle attainable for adults with ASD by providing assistance and support in all aspects of participants' lives, from vocational and recreational support to life skills development. The center is staffed by a highly experienced team trained to provide the support needed for all participants to fully integrate into Rutgers and the surrounding community. All full-time RCAAS staff hold current certification in behavior analysis at various levels (e.g., [RBT](#), [BCaBA](#), [BCBA](#), [BCBA-D](#)) and are trained to work 1:1 with the individual needs of each participant.

**Are participants able to register and attend credit or non-credit classes on campus?**

Yes! The RCAAS creates an environment in which adults with ASD can enjoy full participation and inclusion in Rutgers campus life. Through formal programming or independent exploring, participants will have full access to all Rutgers has to offer, including employment, recreational and academic opportunities. Each participant's program is uniquely tailored to his/her individual needs and interests. The primary focus of our program is vocational, so enrollment into an academic program is not a requirement.

**Can we take a tour of the program?**

RCAAS program participants spend approximately 97% of program hours engaged in community-based employment and recreational settings throughout the Rutgers University campus. Consequently, program tours are not always practical, and having a group of people observe our program participants within their inclusive work and/or recreational settings can be disruptive and quite stigmatizing. The RCAAS can accommodate requests for meetings with parents of prospective applicants at the program's headquarters building which is located on the Douglass Campus of Rutgers University.

**Do you have BCBA's? Do you offer behavior and/or psychiatric support?**

The Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services utilizes a model of service delivery that is directly informed by the science of [Applied Behavior Analysis \(ABA\)](#). We are currently organized into two teams, each of which are overseen by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst/Team Leader. The Executive Director oversees the two team leaders and all other clinical staff. All full-time RCAAS staff hold current certification in behavior analysis at various levels (e.g., [RBT](#), [BCaBA](#), [BCBA](#), [BCBA-D](#)). "Behavior Management" is one of the NJ DDD services we are approved to provide. We do not offer Psychiatric services at this time.

## **Applying to the RCAAS**

### **What is the application process?**

Each year in March, the RCAAS opens its application process via the RCAAS website. This process is open to anyone age 21 and older who meet the basic criteria for admission, which is as follows:

1. Diagnosis of ASD
2. Approval to participate in the [NJ DDD Supports Program](#)
3. Possesses a desire and capacity for community-based employment

### **When will the application be available on the website?**

Our next open application window will commence in March 2019. Please check our website for the application and instructions at that time. The admission period will remain open and the application will be available for completion/submission via our website for a minimum of two weeks. Applications for admission to the program are reviewed in the order in which they are received during our application window. Following the initial application process, a limited number of applicants will be selected for further assessment related to the degree to which they are a good fit for the program.

### **What materials do I need for the application?**

No materials are needed. The application consists of open-ended questions related to an individual's skills, interests, educational/employment history, and support needs. Applicants do not need to attach or send in any special documentation or evaluations at the time of application.

### **I applied last year? Do I have priority consideration? Can I be placed on a waiting list?**

To keep our application process fair and balanced, we do not keep a waiting list or give any applicant priority consideration. If you submitted an application during a previous year's admission process and were not selected, you will need to submit a new application each year that you wish to be considered for admission.

### **How many applicants will you accept this year?**

We anticipate being in a position to accept 2-4 applicants during our March 2019 application period. The RCAAS will continue to accept a small number of applicants each year until the construction of our new headquarters facility is complete to accommodate a full program of 40-60 participants.

### **My son/daughter is non-verbal or "low functioning". Is s/he eligible to apply?**

We generally steer clear of using terms such as "[high-functioning](#)" vs "[low-functioning](#)" when describing a person with ASD, since there is no such diagnoses in the diagnostic manual. Anyone meeting the basic criteria mentioned above is eligible to apply. Among our program participants currently enrolled in the program, we have representation at every [budget tier \(A-E\)](#).

### **My son/daughter will be 20 at the time of application. Can s/he still apply?**

Yes, applicants *approaching* age 21 are able to apply at the time of application. Please see the NJ DDD resource entitled "[Graduates Aging out the System](#)" for the steps to take to begin the application process for NJ DDD services for graduates aging out the system.

**I am really interested in this program. Is there a way for me to guarantee acceptance into the program?**

Unfortunately, there is no way to guarantee acceptance into the program. Due to the unique nature of our program, we generate a lot of interest, but have very few available slots at this time. Once construction of our new buildings are complete, we will be able to accommodate more program participants.

**When will I know the results of my application?**

You will receive a confirmation notice once you have submitted your application. The time it takes to review all applications depends on the number of applications received. Once all applications have been reviewed, we will reach out to those applicants who are identified for an in-person meeting, usually within a month after the application period has closed. Regardless, all applicants will receive communication via email about the results of their application. The entire application process from start to finish takes approximately two months.

**When do program participants start the program after being admitted?**

After the application process is complete, the official start date for each participant can vary and is determined by a variety of factors such as when their approved budget year begins. We aim to have all participants begin the program no later than the start of the RCAAS calendar year which begins in September (after Labor Day).

**I live out of state? Can I still apply?**

The RCAAS does not currently have a New Jersey residency requirement. However, one of the criteria to apply to our program is “approval to participate in the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities” supports program. Per the [NJ DDD application website](#), to receive services funded through the New Jersey Department of Human Services’ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), an individual must establish that New Jersey is the applicant's primary residence at the time of application.

## **Fundraising**

**When will your new day program and residential program buildings be completed?**

We are currently in the planning phases of our new state-of-the-art RCAAS headquarters facility designed to accommodate 40-60 day program participants. We are hopeful that our fundraising goals for the construction of this facility will be met within the year and we will then be in a position to break ground. Once we have met our phase-one fundraising goal for the RCAAS day program headquarters facility, we will commence fundraising for the first on-campus residential building in phase-two.

**Can I make a donation to go directly to the RCAAS?**

The RCAAS provides unprecedented support for an underserved population while also generating cutting-edge translational research, transforming policy and best practices as they pertain to adults with ASD for years to come, and motivating scores of graduating students each year to pursue careers in support of this group. [Donations](#) of all levels will help the Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services reach its fundraising goals and open its doors. To learn how you can help, contact Andrianni Viscariello, Associate Vice President for Development, 848-932-2235.

## Other

### **Why aren't there more programs for adults aging out of the system?**

Unfortunately for most, services diminish greatly after high school, leaving adults with little support outside of their own families, and making it exceedingly difficult for them to achieve their potential. Simply put, there simply are not enough trained professionals to work with this booming population. Rutgers is committed to becoming a national leader in the areas of research, professional training, and practical service in support of adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). As part of this commitment, the Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services was created to offer adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) a one-of-a-kind support program that will make an independent and fulfilling life possible. Simultaneously, it will advance research and ensure that each year, a cadre of graduates leaves Rutgers prepared to enter careers in support of this underserved population.

### **Does the RCAAS conduct evaluations for autism or other developmental disorders?**

The RCAAS does not currently provide evaluations.

### **Where can I go to obtain a neuro-psychological or autism evaluation for an adult in New Jersey?**

See list of providers below. However, there is no guarantee that these providers provide the above services.

Daniel P Schneider, MD  
Rutgers Health/Robert Wood Johnson Medical School  
Department of Psychiatry/Department of Neurology  
Clinical Academic Building (CAB)  
125 Paterson Street, Suite 6100  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
(732) 235-7733

Jasdeep S. Hundal, PsyD, ABPP-Cn  
Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey  
195 Little Albany St, New Brunswick, NJ 08903  
(732) 235-8515

Alexander Road Associates (ARA)  
707 Alexander Road Princeton, NJ 08540  
(609) 419-0400

Alpine Learning Group  
777 Paramus Road Paramus, NJ 07652  
(201) 612-7800

Behavior Therapy Associates  
35 Clyde Road Somerset, NJ 08873  
(732) 873-1212

CNNH NeuroHealth  
2050 Voorhees Town Center Voorhees, NJ 08043  
(855) 852-8150

Koser Psychological Services  
1930 Marlton Pike East Cherry Hill, NJ 08003  
(856) 313-5619

## **Additional Resources**

[Rutgers Center for Adult Autism Services](https://rcaas.rutgers.edu/)

<https://rcaas.rutgers.edu/>

[New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities](https://nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/home/)

<https://nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/home/>

[New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities: A Family Guide to Navigating the New Jersey Service Systems for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders](https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/documents/Documents%20for%20Web/ThroughtheMazeReport_0511.pdf)

[https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/documents/Documents%20for%20Web/ThroughtheMazeReport\\_0511.pdf](https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/documents/Documents%20for%20Web/ThroughtheMazeReport_0511.pdf)

[NJ DDD New Jersey Resources 2018](https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dds/documents/final%20RD_18-Web.pdf)

[https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dds/documents/final%20RD\\_18-Web.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dds/documents/final%20RD_18-Web.pdf)

[2019 Graduates Aging Out of the School System: Steps to Accessing Services/Supports from the Division of Developmental Disabilities \(DDD\)](https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/documents/2019-graduates-aging-out-of-school-system.pdf)

<https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/documents/2019-graduates-aging-out-of-school-system.pdf>

[Autism New Jersey](https://www.autismnj.org/)

<https://www.autismnj.org/>

[Autism Speaks \(Resource Guide\)](https://www.autismspeaks.org/resource-guide)

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/resource-guide>

[State of New Jersey Department of Education: Autism](https://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/autism/)

<https://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/autism/>