



# Autism Care Demonstration Welcome Guide



This guide helps TRICARE families learn about eligibility and requirements of the ACD.

TRICARE offers comprehensive health benefits and supplemental programs to address the needs of all TRICARE beneficiaries with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The ACD provides TRICARE reimbursement for Applied Behavior Analysis services to TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries diagnosed with ASD. In addition, all those enrolled in the ACD receive care management services with an Autism Services Navigator.



**EAST REGION**

# Eligibility Requirements:

## Exceptional Family Member Program Enrollment and Extended Care Health Option Registration



### Who is required to register in ECHO?



Active duty family members must be registered in ECHO to receive services in the ACD.

To register in ECHO, ADFMs must also enroll in EFMP.

To learn about the ECHO registration process, visit [www.tricare.mil/ECHO](http://www.tricare.mil/ECHO)

### Who is eligible for the ECHO program?

Beneficiaries who qualify for ECHO must be:

- Diagnosed with moderate to severe Intellectual Disability; or
- A severe physical disability(ies)

ASD is a qualifying condition for ECHO. An associate from the ACD will work with you to ensure you are aware of the required paperwork to enroll in EFMP and register in ECHO and understand the enrollment process. In addition to contacting the sponsor/guardian by phone, TRICARE East gives the sponsor/guardian written notice of registration.

\*In certain cases enrollment to EFMP may be waived, for example, when the sponsor's branch of service does not provide EFMP. Consult with TRICARE East with questions about enrollment.

### What are the steps to enroll in EFMP?

ADFM's must obtain paperwork from the EFMP medical point of contact at their local military hospital or clinic. Find your service branch's EFMP representative by visiting installations. [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil)

### Is ECHO registration required before ECHO services or ABA services can start?

No. TRICARE East can grant a 90-day provisional period while families complete the EFMP and ECHO registration process. However, after 90 days, no extensions are allowed and ECHO will be terminated if registration is not completed to include ABA services.

### Under what circumstances might beneficiaries be determined no longer eligible for the ECHO program?

- The beneficiary has lost TRICARE eligibility.
- The beneficiary no longer has a qualifying condition.
- The beneficiary does not otherwise meet eligibility requirements of the ECHO program.

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# Eligibility Requirements:

## ACD Enrollment



### How can I (or my child) become eligible for the ACD?



To qualify for the ACD, your dependent must have an ASD diagnosis. You must also have the following:

- Referral from your approved ASD diagnosing provider
- A DSM-5 checklist including the severity level of ASD
- A validated assessment tool supporting the diagnosis of ASD

To learn about how to participate in the ACD, visit [www.tricare.mil/ACD](http://www.tricare.mil/ACD).

### Who is authorized to make an ASD diagnosis and refer a beneficiary to the ACD?

A primary care manager or specialized ASD-diagnosing provider may diagnose and refer to the ACD. Referring providers must include the DSM-5 diagnostic criteria in a Defense Health Agency approved checklist and include the severity. The validated assessment tool used to diagnose ASD must also be submitted with the referral. For beneficiaries first diagnosed with ASD at age eight or older, and requesting ABA services, a specialized ASD diagnosing provider evaluation (not a PCM) is required as part of the referral for ABA services.

### What validated assessment tools are accepted to diagnose ASD?

- *Screening Tool for Autism in Toddlers and Young Children*
- *Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule –Second Edition*
- *Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised*
- *Childhood Autism Rating Scale-Second Edition*
- *Gilliam Autism Rating Scale, Third Edition*

### What if a beneficiary has trouble meeting all these requirements?

TRICARE East assigns an outreach coordinator to every family entering the ACD. They will assist with explaining the eligibility process and addressing any barriers families may have in obtaining documents needed for eligibility. Families have 180 days to work with the ORC to obtain the required information.

The beneficiary can enroll with the ACD at any time when eligibility is met. Ineligibility for the ACD does not exclude eligible beneficiaries from receiving otherwise allowable services under TRICARE.

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# The ACD Team and ACD Enrollment

## The ACD Team



You may have contact with ACD team members such as the ORC and an ASN. When enrolling in the ACD, the ORC may be your first point of contact. The ORC will assist you to review and understand eligibility requirements. You may also talk to them about outcome measures, provider placement, ECHO eligibility, and possible resource needs before you talk to your ASN. The ORC may also assist you with needs if you transfer to another area while you are enrolled in the ACD. You will be assigned an ASN once you meet eligibility for the ACD. The ASN will complete enrollment and complete your comprehensive care plan every six months. The ASN and ORC will work closely together during your enrollment in the ACD to make sure your needs are met.



## ASN Collaboration



As the guardian for an eligible beneficiary, you must collaborate with your ASN to complete an initial assessment to review and identify needs or resources for the child and develop a comprehensive care plan. The CCP must be completed within 90 days of being assigned your ASN and will be updated every six months. It is important you collaborate with your ASN on the CCP to continue enrollment in the ACD and receive ABA services. Your CCP will allow your ASN to assist you in coordinating any services and support to improve access to care. Your ASN will serve as a single point of contact to assist with coordination of services, provide needed resources and facilitate continuity of care if you move, the sponsor retires, or a provider becomes unavailable.



### How to Contact the ACD Team:

**ABA Phone Line: 866-323-7155**

**Secure Messaging: Log in to your [beneficiary self-service account](#) and send a secure message to the ACD team.**

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# ABA and the Treatment Team



## Where is treatment delivered?



ABA services may be delivered in a physical space of an office clinic, or home.

Billing for services outside of the allowed locations are excluded. Certain community settings such as sporting events, camps and other settings as determined by the contractor are also excluded. Any community setting must be included in the treatment plan submitted by the ABA Supervisor for clinical necessity review.

Services rendered in a school must be provided by the treating BCBA who is targeting a specific behavior excess or deficit and is for a limited duration. Services must be specifically requested in the treatment plan for clinical necessity review.

## Who may be included in your treatment team?

The treatment team may include providers involved in the child's care and the guardian(s). Treatment team members may include but are not limited to the family/caregiver, PCM, specialized ASD- diagnosing provider, behavior analyst, behavior technician (BT), and assistant behavior analysts.

## How are ABA treatment goals and objectives determined?

Treatment goals and objectives are determined by the ABA treatment team and are based on multiple data sources (i.e., assessment results, family/caregiver, and other support services received, etc.). Goals must be clinically necessary and appropriate and target the core symptoms of ASD.

## How is progress monitored?

The treatment plan reports if goals and objectives are being reached each authorization request.

Outcome measures such as the PDDBI are completed and reported to help determine the effectiveness of care. All outcome measures must be completed using norm- referenced, valid and reliable evaluation tools. These measures are due at regular intervals to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of ABA and to determine the other necessary goals not addressed.

## What is the format of the ABA Assessment?

Conducted by an authorized ABA supervisor, methods used include direct observation, the measurement and recording of behavior, parent/caregiver interview(s) and parent/caregiver rating scales.

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# ABA and the Treatment Team (cont.)



## **Can a beneficiary see more than one authorized ABA supervisor?**

Yes, a beneficiary is authorized one primary ABA supervisor to provide ABA services for a beneficiary at a time. The primary authorized ABA supervisor is responsible for the treatment plan and is the sole provider authorized to bill for ABA services. If other BCBAs within the clinic see the beneficiary, the clinic should ensure they are TRICARE-certified. However, the beneficiary may not see a BCBA in any other group at the same time.

A beneficiary may obtain a second opinion but there may not be two authorizations for treatment at the same time.

## **Can a beneficiary choose their ABA Supervisor?**

Yes. A beneficiary chooses their supervisor after they meet eligibility. After the initial visit or during treatment if they want

to choose a different one, the beneficiary may contact their ASN to notify TRICARE East of their request.

## **What kind of services should I have during ABA treatment?**

ABA services are typically direct 1 to 1 with monitoring sessions in which authorized ABA supervisor provides proper oversight on evaluation of treatment effectiveness. In addition, there are parent training sessions. Some options are available for group settings in direct services with your child and parent training.

Services may begin once the TP has been submitted and approved by TRICARE East. Parent training should occur monthly to ensure interventions can be implemented in the home. At the onset of treatment, parent training must occur within the first 30 days and then six sessions must occur within each six-month authorization period.

# Outcome Measures



Outcome measures are standardized assessments

TRICARE requires to be completed at required intervals that coincide with a beneficiary's ABA authorization. The different measures look at progress in developmental areas to promote the provider to make referrals and provide resources when appropriate.

Beneficiaries who need assistance with outcome measures will be assisted by TRICARE East staff. The outcome measures must be completed to receive an authorization.

Authorized specialty ASD-diagnosing providers who can complete these measures include TRICARE-authorized physicians

board-certified or board-eligible in developmental-behavioral pediatrics, child neurology, neurodevelopmental pediatrics, child psychiatry; doctoral-level licensed clinical psychologists, or board-certified Doctor of Nursing Practice.

Your BCBA may request to complete the measures. If they do, they must request pre-authorization before completing any measure. All measures are to be completed within 90 days of due dates for acceptance.

Outcome Measure	Approved Form Type	When to Complete	Who can Administer
The <i>PDDBI</i> is an informant-based rating scale designed to assist in the assessment (for problem behaviors, social, language, and learning/memory skills) of children (2-18.5 years) who have been diagnosed with ASD.	Standard or extended form (the parent form is due at baseline and the parent and teacher form must be completed every six months thereafter)	Must be completed before receiving ABA services, and every six months thereafter	Authorized ABA supervisors
<i>Social Responsiveness Scale, Second Edition</i> : The SRS-2 identifies social impairment associated with ASD and quantifies its severity (2.5-99 years).	Parent form	Must be completed before receiving any service, and every year thereafter	Specialized ASD-diagnosing providers, TRICARE-authorized independent provider
<i>Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, Third Edition (Vineland-3)</i> : The <i>Vineland-3</i> measures adaptive behavior for individuals diagnosed with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including ASD (birth-90 years).	Parent, teacher, or interview form	Must be completed before receiving ABA services, and every year thereafter	Specialized ASD-diagnosing providers, TRICARE-authorized independent provider
<i>The Parenting Stress Index</i> (0-12 years) or the <i>Stress Index for Parents of Adolescents</i> (11-19 years): The measure evaluates the parent system and identify issues that may lead to problems in the child or parent's behavior.	<i>PSI</i> : Short form <i>SIPA</i> : Profile form	Must be completed before receiving any services, and every six months thereafter.	Administered by a specialized ASD-diagnosing provider or ABA supervisor, if prior authorized

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# What to Expect the First Two Years

Provider Type	Eligibility for Initial Assessment	Initial Request for ABA Treatment Authorization	Every Six Month Reauthorization	Annual Reauthorizations	Two-Year Referral for Reauthorization
Primary care manager or specialized ASD-diagnosing provider	<p>Referral to include Defense Health Agency (DHA) approved checklist to include DSM-5 criteria</p> <p>Children under eight years old: Confirmed ASD diagnosis with level of support diagnostic checklist and a validated assessment tool</p> <p>Children age 8 and above, Documents must be completed by a specialized ASD-diagnosing provider</p>				DHA approved checklist to include DSM-5 criteria and severity level
Specialized ASD-diagnosing provider or ABA supervisor, if pre-authorized		<p><i>Vineland-3</i> (parent, teacher, or interview form)</p> <p><i>Social Responsiveness Scale Second Edition</i> (parent form)</p> <p><i>Parent Stress Index Short Form</i> or <i>Stress Index for Parents of Adolescents</i></p>	<i>PSI short form</i> or <i>SIPA</i>	<p><i>Vineland-3</i> (parent, teacher, or interview form)</p> <p><i>Social Responsiveness Scale Second Edition</i> (parent form)</p> <p><i>PSI Short Form</i> or <i>SIPA</i></p>	<p><i>Vineland-3</i> (parent, teacher, or interview form)</p> <p><i>Social Responsiveness Scale Second Edition</i> (parent form)</p> <p><i>PSI short form</i> or <i>SIPA</i></p>
ABA Supervisor		<p>Initial assessment and treatment plan</p> <p><i>Pervasive Developmental Disorder Behavior Inventory</i> Parent Form</p>	<p>Treatment plan</p> <p><i>PDDBI</i> (parent and teacher form)</p>	<p>Treatment plan</p> <p><i>PDDBI</i> (parent and teacher form)</p>	<p>Treatment plan</p> <p><i>PDDBI</i> (parent and teacher form)</p>

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