



A Guide to DRS Home Services Eligibility Appeals

How eligibility is decided

- You meet with a DRS counselor
- They interview you and review your medical records to understand your need for support across 15 activities of daily life (ADLs)
- They use a Determination of Need (DON) tool to score:
 - how much help you need
 - how often you need it
- You need a total score of 29+ to qualify
- If your score is below 29 and doesn't reflect your needs, you can appeal



How Scoring Works

Each activity is scored in two parts:

Level of Need: How much help you need

0 (None) = No supervision and/or assistance needed

1 (Minimal) = Some supervision and/or assistance needed

2 (Moderate) = A great deal of supervision and/or assistance

3 (Severe) = Constant supervision and/or assistance

Unmet Need: How often your needs aren't met

0 (None) = Need is met 100% of the time

1 (Minimal) = Need is met at least 50% of the time; without assistance there is a risk to health and safety

2 (Frequent) = Need is met less than 50% of the time; without assistance there is moderate risk

3 (Constant) = Need is seldom or never met; without assistance there is extreme risk



Special Note for Children

The Home Services Program serves people ages 0–59, but:

- Children are often scored too low
- Sometimes needs are dismissed as “just part of being a child”

What should happen instead:

- Scores should reflect limitations from disability—not age alone
- A score of “0” should only be used if a need is due only to age
- If disability creates extra caregiver burden, that should be reflected in the score



Step 1: File the Appeal & Request Your Records

- Follow the instructions in your denial notice
- Submit your appeal in writing
- Pay attention to deadlines
- Request copies of:
 - Your DON report
 - All records used in the decision



Step 2: Review Your DON

Check for:

- Scores that seem too low
- Missing medical information
- Descriptions that don't match your reality



Step 3: Build Your Case

Gather support:

- Medical Records
- Therapy Records
- Letters from people who know your needs

Write a short statement explaining:

- Who you are
- What your daily life is like
- What was scored wrong and how the support you've collected shows that



Step 4: Informal Resolution Conference (IRC) (optional)

You can request an IRC. This is a chance to resolve things before a hearing.

What to expect:

- A conversation with DRS, likely the same person who assessed you and their supervisor
- A chance to explain what was missed
- An opportunity to share your evidence

Some cases are resolved here.



Step 5: The hearing

If it's not resolved, you can go to a hearing:

- Usually by phone or video conference
- You explain your needs
- You can share documents and bring support

You don't need to be perfect--just clear and organized and honest.

Remember: You are the expert on your own life!



After the Hearing

- You'll get a written decision, typically within 60 days
- If the appeal is not successful, you can apply for the DRS Home Services Program again at any time.

