



## New SOAR Resources!

### SOAR is for Everyone

The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center has created a one-page infographic to illustrate how SOAR positively impacts the lifespan, diverse populations, and community systems.

This tool can be shared to illustrate the broad applicability of SOAR work!

[View and download this new resource!](#)

**SOAR WORKS | SOAR IS FOR EVERYONE**

SAMHSA Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) is a national program funded by the Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). SOAR provides free and confidential technical assistance and training to states, territories, and tribal organizations. SOAR is a part of SAMHSA's mission to reduce the burden of substance use and mental illness on the nation and to improve the lives of people with these conditions.

SYSTEMS	LIFESPAN	DIVERSE POPULATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education</li> <li>Employment</li> <li>Public Care</li> <li>Legal System</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children</li> <li>Trans</li> <li>Adults</li> <li>Older Adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LEGBTQ+</li> <li>Trans</li> <li>Native Communities</li> </ul>

For more information: [www.samhsa.gov/soar](https://www.samhsa.gov/soar) | 1-855-487-4141 ext. 2 | [soar@samhsa.gov](mailto:soar@samhsa.gov)

**Medicaid Waivers for Child Services**  
PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

State-specific Medicaid waivers can help expand access to services for children with disabilities. Programs and eligibility vary by state, and current information should be verified with your state Medicaid office. For more information about these waiver programs, visit [www.samhsa.gov/soar](https://www.samhsa.gov/soar).

**TEFRA/Katie Beckett**

- The Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act (TEFRA) of 1982 allows any state the option to extend Medicaid services to a child with a significant disability.
- States must adhere to the program's eligibility rules.
- Eligibility:
  - Based on the child's income and resources.
  - Does not count on deemed parental income.
  - The child must have a disability under SOAR rules that would require placement in a hospital, nursing facility, or intermediate care facility.

**1915 (C) Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waivers**

- HCBS allows other additional services that help provide with disabilities care services.
- Can be categorized for different disability types, including developmental disabilities, intellectual disabilities, serious emotional disabilities, and physical disabilities, among others.
- Three levels of care (custodial, nursing facility, or Intermediate Care Facility) define the level of services offered based on the diagnosed needs of the person with a disability.

**1115 Demonstration Waivers**

- States can use these flexible waivers to create state-specific programs or reform the state's Medicaid system. Some states have elected to use these waivers to provide home and community-based services for people with disabilities.

**State-Based, 1915(i), 1915(j), and 1915(k) Programs**

- There are state-based programs that are similar to the TEFRA option and can expand access to various services. These category-based programs can be identified with other state services:
  - 1915(i) Home and Community-Based Services, including respite and home and vehicle modification services.
  - 1915(j) Self-directed personal care services.
  - 1915(k) Personal assistance and in-home support.

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## Medicaid Waivers for Children

The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center developed a new resource to provide an overview of state-specific Medicaid waivers that can help expand access to services for children with disabilities.

Programs and eligibility vary by state, and current information should be verified with your [state Medicaid office](#). For more information about these waiver programs, visit [Kids' Waivers](#).

[View and download this new resource!](#)

## April Spotlights

### National Minority Health Month

April is [National Minority Health Month](#). Established in 2002, the resolution encourages “all health organizations and Americans to conduct appropriate programs and activities to promote healthfulness in minority and other communities experiencing health disparities.” It is an inclusive initiative that targets the health needs of African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, and others. It promotes action through health education and early management of disease complications.



This year's theme, **Be the Source for Better Health: Improving Health Outcomes Through Our Cultures, Communities, and Connections**, highlights the important role of diverse communities, organizations, and individuals in organizations in their strides to improve health equity.

Join us in observing National Minority Health Month as we continue addressing the barriers to equity in SOAR implementation by developing [resources, tools, and training](#).

### Celebrating the Month of the Military Child



In recognition of the [Month of the Military Child](#), we are highlighting resources for children and families in the armed forces community.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) [Supportive Services for Veteran Families](#) (SSVF) grant program is critical to preventing and ending homelessness for Veteran families. SSVF can provide Veteran families with time-sensitive, housing-focused interventions, such as linking to mainstream resources and income supports that promote housing stability.

The [SSVF and SOAR Integration Toolkit](#) provides detailed guidance from the VA about incorporating the SOAR model into services for Veterans and their families. The [SOAR Online Course: Child Curriculum](#) trains caseworkers to assist children (under age 18) who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a

serious mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder to apply for SSI. Children with disabilities living in military families may benefit from the additional income and health insurance available with SSI and Medicaid eligibility.

## See How SOAR Works



### Sharing Our Successes

#### ***SOAR Success in Georgia***

*The following SOAR success story was submitted by LaTarnesha Washington, a SOAR-trained practitioner from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities in Atlanta, Georgia.*

In late 2022, I received a referral for a participant who was experiencing homelessness and who had been working with a lawyer for a year before we initiated her case. After releasing herself from her lawyer, we started to work on her second appeal, and she chose the route of an ALJ hearing. As her appointed representative, I could advocate for her and obtain new records to submit a new testimony for her appeal.

During this process of waiting on a hearing date, we were able to get her connected to services through case management and medical services in one of our behavioral health agencies in the Georgia area. I followed up with the participant to stay updated on her disability.

After nearly two years of waiting and delays, the judge awarded her with SSI along with back payments granted to her. In the participant's words, "What a BLESSING!" The relief on her face was the joy in my heart. Using this model allowed me to represent the participant during her hearing and speak to the judge about what I had observed as her SOAR representative. Working with the applicant helped ensure she didn't have to experience this alone and had the support she needed during this process.

If I could give any advice to other SOAR practitioners, it is to have PATIENCE. We must have the ability to wait persistently until we reach our goal. Make sure you follow the SOAR model, and even when times seem rough or you get stuck or at roadblocks along the way, just continue to push through and keep encouraging your participant.

***Have a story of your own? [Submit your SOAR success!](#)***

*\*Sharing Our Successes stories are edited for brevity and clarity. All beneficiary names have been changed to protect anonymity.*



### **SOAR Tip: SOARWorks for Children!**

In this [video](#), SOAR Project Director Kristin Lupfer walks viewers through Getting Involved with SOAR for Children. In addition, the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center's [SSI for Children Information Sheets](#) present SOAR-

specific information about the disability application process for children in an engaging, easy-to-understand manner. Tips are provided for how each community system can contribute and assist in the application process.

## Upcoming Events



### **SOAR Webinar: Providing High-Quality SOAR Services in Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Programs**

*April 17, 2024, 3:00–4:30 p.m. ET*

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) combines affordable housing with supportive services to help people maintain stable housing and improve their overall well-being. It is designed for individuals who face challenges related to mental health, substance use, or other disabilities. Join us for an informative webinar where we explore the intersection of SOAR and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs.

On this webinar, SOAR providers will share how they have seamlessly integrated SOAR services into their PSH initiatives, ultimately enhancing services for individuals with disabilities experiencing or at risk of homelessness. An SSA representative will discuss how living arrangements and housing vouchers impact SSI eligibility and benefit amounts. We will also have an SSI/SSDI beneficiary join us to share their experience receiving SOAR and PSH assistance to navigate the SSI/SSDI disability determination process and connect to housing and supportive services.

**[Register for the Webinar!](#)**



### **SOARing Over Lunch Conference Call**

*May 14, 2024, 1:00–2:00 p.m. ET*

The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center holds informal monthly calls designed to help support SOAR efforts across the country. No registration required.

[Read more about SOARing Over Lunch](#)

## Federal Updates

### **SSA Monthly Information Packet**

Each month, the Social Security Administration (SSA) releases an electronic publication known as the [Monthly Information Package \(MIP\)](#) for distribution to local media outlets by Public Affairs Specialists, office managers, and other employees engaged in public information/public affairs activities. Each issue contains the latest information on SSA programs, services, and initiatives. The April 2024 MIP includes information on Social Security fraud scams, financial literacy, *my* Social Security accounts, and support for small businesses.

## SSA POMS of the Month: Low-Stress Jobs

The [Program Operations Manual System \(POMS\)](#) is a resource used by Social Security employees to process claims for Social Security benefits. It provides detailed instructions and guidance on various aspects of benefit administration. The public version of POMS is accessible to everyone, so check it out! This month we will review [POMS DI 25020.010-Mental Limitations](#).

### What are the mental abilities needed for any job and why does this matter to our work?

Perhaps you have read this on an applicant's denial notice: *"Your mental health impairment is not so severe that it would prevent you from working in a stable, low-stress environment. Despite your mental health impairment, you can perform low-stress jobs, which may include employment as a Store Greeter, Restaurant Dishwasher, and Receptionist."*

These jobs are not necessarily "low-stress" or calm work environments. So, why did SSA find that the applicant can do this work despite their impairment-related symptoms, and how can we strengthen the record to include specific examples of limitations experienced by the applicant to preclude these jobs and avoid a denial?

[Read more...](#)

## SSA Eliminates Overpayment Burden for Social Security Beneficiaries

Social Security [launched a comprehensive review](#) in October 2023 of agency [overpayment policies and procedures](#) to address payment accuracy systematically. As a result, in March 2024, [SSA announced](#) it will decrease Social Security beneficiaries' default overpayment withholding rate to ten percent (or \$10, whichever is greater) from 100 percent, significantly reducing financial hardship on people with overpayments. The change applies to new overpayments. If beneficiaries already have an overpayment with a withholding rate greater than ten percent and would like a lower recovery rate, they should contact SSA.

## Partner Updates

### NTTAC: Amplify Youth Voices and System of Care Summit

The National Training and Technical Assistance Center for Child, Youth, and Family Mental Health (NTTAC) hosts the [Amplify Youth Voice Collaborative](#) to recognize the power of creative writing as both a therapeutic tool and a way to center the voices and experiences of young people in systems of care by creating a platform for young people with lived experience of mental health challenges to express their unique stories in their own words.

In addition, NTTAC is holding a **no-cost** [System of Care Virtual Summit \(SOC Summit\)](#) on May 14-16, 2024. The SOC Summit is an opportunity for all children's mental health partners to reunite, renew, and re-energize their efforts to support children and young people with behavioral health needs, as well as their families.

### Medicaid Renewals and Homelessness: A Toolkit from Homebase

Due to the recently reinstated requirement for Medicaid members to renew their coverage every year, people experiencing homelessness are more at risk of losing coverage, as Medicaid members receive their renewal packets at their last known addresses. In response, Homebase developed [toolkits](#) to navigate the Medicaid

## HHRC: Treatment, Housing, and Outreach for Individuals with Psychotic Disorders Fact Sheet

With the appropriate support and treatment, people experiencing homelessness and psychosis can recover to live full and productive lives. The Homeless and Housing Resource Center (HHRC), published a [fact sheet](#) to provide an overview of psychosis and its treatment options, tips for outreach and engagement, including de-escalation techniques, and strategies for supporting people with psychotic symptoms in obtaining and maintaining housing.

## SOAR Jobs



**Michigan:** Community Housing Network - *PATH SOAR Specialist (Full-time)*: The PATH SOAR Specialist will be a team member in the Housing Resources Outreach department, assisting those who are experiencing homelessness with accessing housing and supportive services using a Housing First Model. This position focuses on assisting eligible Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) program participants using SOAR.

Learn more about these positions on the [SOARWorks website](#). Do you have a job posting you would like to share with the SOAR community? Please submit it to the [SAMHSA SOAR TA Center](#)!

## More From SOAR

A rectangular graphic for a webinar recording. The background is dark blue. At the top left is the SAMHSA logo (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration). At the top right is the SOAR Works logo. The main text in the center reads "Strategies and Considerations for Representing Older Adults with SSI/SSDI Claims". At the bottom left is a yellow checkmark icon. At the bottom center, a grey bar contains the text "WEBINAR RECORDING AVAILABLE". On the right side, the word "WEBINAR" is written vertically in white, bold, capital letters.



## State Directory

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## Library and Tools

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## Contact Us



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Technical Assistance (TA) Center is sponsored by SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

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