

A Beginner's Guide to SHARS

How to get Medicaid reimbursements for services you're already providing.

Is your district participating in SHARS and looking to get a basic understanding? If the answer is yes, this article is for you.

Let's get this out of the way: SHARS is complicated even by Medicaid standards. The good news is that it's well worth the effort to recoup funds for your school district.

What Is SHARS?

First, let's define SHARS.

Medicaid services provided by Texas school districts to Medicaid-eligible students are known as School Health and Related Services (SHARS). SHARS allows Texas school districts to get Medicaid reimbursement for certain health-related services documented in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

SHARS is overseen through a cooperative effort between the Texas Education Agency and Texas Health and Human Services Commission (THHSC).

Does Your District Qualify?

Probably. Currently, about 950 out of roughly 1,024 eligible school districts in Texas are enrolled in SHARS. Participation is voluntary, but why not recoup some of the funds for services your district is likely already providing?

What Are the Requirements?

SHARS reimbursement is provided for students who meet all the following criteria:

- Are 20 years old or younger
- Medicaid eligible
- Meet eligibility requirement for special education as described in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- Have IEPs that prescribe the needed services

Students can access services based on a qualifying medical condition. The services must be provided by qualified or licensed personnel who are under contract with or employed by the school district. Services covered by SHARS include:

- Assessments
- Audiology
- Counseling
- Nursing services
- Medical services
- Occupational therapy
- Personal care services
- Physical therapy
- Psychological services
- Special transportation
- Speech therapy