



Program Guidelines

***Reminder: The former Merry Mittens holiday program at Aspire of WNY's Center for Learning was rolled into the Spirit of Giving program in 2025. Students and their families supported by this former program are encouraged to apply for the Spirit of Giving program. Please contact us if you need any support!**

ELIGIBILITY

- All applicants must have EITHER current eligibility with the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) OR receive a service from Aspire of WNY.
- Applicants may, but are not required to, receive a service from Aspire of WNY UNLESS they are not eligible for OPWDD.
- This is an **income and resource-based program** for people currently eligible for OPWDD services and those who receive services from Aspire of WNY. Family income details are required on the application.
- Only submit applications for individuals/families that could not provide holiday gifts without this assistance.
- Applicant's family members can be included in the application. However, they must live at the same address as the applicant.
- Spirit of Giving will use the updated "Poverty Guidelines: 48 Contiguous States" from the United States Department of Health and Human Services annually to assist in determining eligibility, which can be found on their website.

GIFT REQUESTS

- Eligible applicants and family members 21 years old or younger will be prompted to provide physical gift suggestions.
- Eligible applicants and family members 22 years old and over will receive gift cards and be prompted for suggestions.
- **CLOTHING REQUESTS:** Clothing and related materials (shoes, coats, hats, gloves, etc.) **MAY** be considered for gift requests for those 21 years old or younger. **Clothing will not be provided for those 22 years old and over at this time. We apologize for the inconvenience.**
- To receive clothing items, submitters will need to create EITHER an **online wish list** OR create **screenshots** to upload to the application. Wish lists/screenshots will only be accepted from one of the following retailers: **Walmart, Amazon, or Target.**
- Wish lists and/or screenshots **MUST INCLUDE** exact desired item, size, color, price, and any customizations.
- **A wish list or screenshots are required for EACH individual requesting clothing items.**
- Submitters are also encouraged to use wish lists or screenshots for gift requests for those 21 years old or younger but this is not required.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

- **Applications must be completed online at www.aspirewny.org/spirit-of-giving.** If you need support completing the application, please contact us at the email below.
- Applications may be submitted by the Care Coordinator, family, or other involved person. However, **the submitter will be responsible for uploading required documents AND arranging the pickup and delivery of gifts.**
- **IMPORTANT:** Aspire of WNY works to support as many people as possible through the Spirit of Giving program, **however, support from this program is not guaranteed.** Application submitters will be contacted as quickly as possible after application submission to confirm program acceptance. Submitters are highly encouraged not to confirm application acceptance with families until hearing from Spirit of Giving staff.
- **Submitters are also encouraged to apply AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE as program acceptance is first-come-first-served based on income eligibility.**

All applications must be received by Aspire of WNY no later than October 23, 2026.

Questions?

Please email spiritofgiving@aspirewny.org

