

OASIS · AT A GLANCE

MiNavigator and other Michigan navigation supports

Somewhere in Michigan's state government sits a program built specifically to help families like yours find their way through the maze. Most families reach the maze first.

BY JIM PALASTY · 9 MIN READ · SIX NAVIGATION RESOURCES WORTH CALLING BEFORE YOU GIVE UP

6

MICHIGAN NAVIGATION RESOURCES WORTH KNOWING BY NAME

MiNavigator, CMH supports coordinators, Michigan Alliance for Families, Arc Michigan chapters, Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service, and Centers for Independent Living. Six doors into the same system.

How it works

THREE STEPS

STEP 1

You don't know where to start

Michigan's disability service system has dozens of entry points and almost no clear map of which one applies to your situation.



STEP 2

MiNavigator exists to be that map

A statewide, MDHHS-funded navigation program built specifically to answer 'where do I even start' questions.



STEP 3

It's one of six real options

MiNavigator isn't the only navigation resource in Michigan, and knowing all six matters when one is backed up.

Michigan's navigation resource map

MiNavigator	Statewide, MDHHS-funded, general orientation
CMH supports coordinator	Your first point of contact within your own CMH
Michigan Alliance for Families	Parent Training and Information Center, education focus
Arc Michigan chapters	Regional advocacy and navigation support
Centers for Independent Living	Peer-based, independent of CMH

THE ONE CALL THAT FINALLY MADE SENSE OF IT



Omar had spent months bouncing between agencies, each one telling him to call someone else. A friend mentioned MiNavigator by name at a community event. Omar called with a single specific question about waiver eligibility documentation. The navigator didn't solve everything, but pointed him to the exact CMH office and the exact form he needed, in fifteen minutes, after months of dead ends.

ONE SPECIFIC QUESTION GOT HIM FURTHER THAN FOUR MONTHS OF GENERAL CONFUSION HAD.

What matters, at a glance

MICHIGAN SPECIFIC

What MiNavigator is

A statewide program funded through MDHHS, providing information and assistance to individuals with disabilities and their families.

What it can help with

General orientation to the service system, connecting families to the right agency, and explaining unfamiliar terminology and processes.

What it can't do

MiNavigator isn't a case manager and can't force an agency to act. It orients you; it doesn't advocate on your behalf in a dispute.

Prepare before you call

Having your family member's specific situation, current services, and precise question ready makes the call far more productive.

Capacity varies

Like much of Michigan's navigation infrastructure, demand for MiNavigator can exceed available staff time.

Five more doors exist

CMH supports coordinators, Michigan Alliance for Families, Arc Michigan chapters, MPAS, and Centers for Independent Living all offer overlapping support.

BRING THESE · CHECK AS YOU GO

☐ Your family member's current services and situation, summarized briefly

☐ One specific, well-defined question to lead with

☐ MiNavigator's contact information

☐ Backup contact information for at least two other navigation resources

☐ A notebook for tracking who you've talked to and what was said

YOUR MOVE

When you don't know where to start, here is how to use MiNavigator effectively

1

Write down your single most pressing question before calling.

2

Contact MiNavigator with that specific question.

3

If MiNavigator can't resolve it, ask which of the other five resources can.

4

Follow up with your CMH supports coordinator directly.

5

Escalate to Arc Michigan or MPAS if the issue involves a dispute.

6

Keep a running list of who you've contacted and what they said.

A vague question gets a vague answer. A specific question gets you a form, a name, or a next step.

RESOURCES NAMED IN THIS POST

michiganallianceforfamilies.org · <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org>

arcmi.org · <https://arcmi.org>

Informational only. Not legal or medical advice. Verify current program rules before acting.

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