



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Peter Mason
Deputy Commissioner

To: DDS Regional Directors, Self Determination Directors, SD Case Managers/Brokers, Allied, Sunset Shores

From: Scott McWilliams, Chief Fiscal Officer

CC: Jordan A. Scheff, Commissioner, Peter Mason, Deputy Commissioner, Katie Rock-Burns, Chief of Staff, Wayne Seidel, Director of Case Management, Siobhan Morgan, Director of Medicaid Operations

Date: March 27, 2020

Subject: COVID-19 Individual Budget System and Self Determination Guidance

On March 10, 2020 Governor Lamont declared public health and civil preparedness emergencies. This enables the state to take necessary measures to prepare for and contain the outbreak of COVID-19 (also known as the coronavirus).

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) understands that some previously issued departmental guidance on COVID-19 creates potential issues for individuals and families in accessing supports and providers receiving reimbursement. The purpose of this memo is to describe the changes in funding for services authorized through Individual Budgets for March and April 2020.

Individual Budget Providers

In March and April, DDS will make COVID-19 supplemental payments to assist providers in maintaining current operations, COVID-19 PPE and preparedness expenses, and additional staffing costs related to COVID-19. Day service providers will be reimbursed up to 105% of their monthly March authorization and residential service providers will be reimbursed up to 120% of their monthly March authorization.

Providers will continue submitting invoices for currently authorized services as provided to the fiscal intermediaries on their regular schedule. Paid invoices will be subtracted from the monthly COVID-19 supplemental payments. Providers will not receive any additional funding without prior approval from the regions.

DDS expects providers accepting payments in the revised methodology will not lay off staff and will maintain staff salary and wages at existing levels. DDS will require providers to continue to invoice for the purpose of federal reimbursement.

Self Directed Services & Behavioral Services Program (BSP)

In March and April, DDS will allow individuals to expend up to 105% of their monthly day authorization and up to 120% of their monthly residential authorization. The FIs are being asked to allow individuals and families to pay for expenses above their budget in accordance with the above guidelines. Budgets will not need to be amended to cover these supplemental payments. These COVID-19 supplemental payments are intended to offset the additional staffing costs related to COVID-19.

Here are some different scenarios and how they should be handled:

- 1) Individual receives services at a facility-based day program that is currently unavailable.
 - a) Day program is able to deliver service remotely: The provider will be paid based upon authorization and enter attendance as the authorized service type. No additional funding or change in authorization needed.
 - b) Day program is not able to deliver service remotely and the individual wants to self direct and receive services in home:
 - i) Individual has a residential authorization: The residential authorization has been increased to cover services delivered during the day. No additional funding needed.
 - ii) Individual does not have a residential authorization: The individual may apply for one-time funding. Each region has a \$200,000 allocation for these service needs, through June 30, 2020. Requests will be considered by the Region and approved through Central Office.
- 2) Individual loses their school program and family needs additional day-time supports: The individual may apply for one-time funding. The agency has a statewide allocation of \$500,000 for these service needs, through June 30, 2020. Requests will be considered by the Region and approved through Central Office.

Individuals and families experiencing difficulty in finding staff should contact their Case Manager for regional assistance.

As service partners to a portion of the state's most vulnerable population, DDS and providers will get through this together. Please be aware that federal and state guidance related to COVID-19 is being updated continuously. DDS is acting and communicating with providers as quickly as possible.

As a reminder, DDS has set up a general inbox for any qualified providers that may have questions regarding this memo or any COVID-19 related planning efforts. Please use the following email for such communications: DDS.COVID19@ct.gov. Also, please continue to check back on our website for updated FAQs.