

APD Receives Approval for Waiver Changes

TALLAHASSEE, FL - The Agency for Persons with Disabilities has received federal approval to eliminate five services from the Developmental Disabilities Home and Community-Based Service Waiver (DD-HCBS) on December 1. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) sent a letter this week notifying APD that it may cut its Medicaid waiver services. This request was made through the Agency for Health Care Administration to CMS to comply with a new Florida law approved in the spring

Chore, Non-residential Support Services, and Homemaker Services will be eliminated. However, the definition of In-Home Support Services will be expanded to include some activities previously provided in the eliminated services. The DD waiver has several other services that may be provided to replace the eliminated services.

Massage Therapy and IQ Testing (Psychological Assessments) will also be eliminated. While APD can only pay for approved services with the DD waiver, individuals and families have the option of purchasing additional services with other resources.

APD Director Jane Johnson said, "As a state agency, we must implement the legislatively-mandated changes to the DD waiver. These adjustments will support APD's efforts to stay within its budget while also providing needed services to citizens with developmental disabilities. In the long term, these changes to the waiver will free up money to serve some of the 15,000 people waiting for services."

APD customers who are receiving the services to be eliminated were first notified in June 2007 so they could work with their Waiver Support Coordinators to adjust their service plans. They will receive a second letter in November notifying them of the actual elimination to take effect on December 1.

APD currently serves about 35,000 Floridians with developmental disabilities of mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and Prader-Willi syndrome. For more information on the agency, call **1-866-APD-CARES** or visit www.apd.myflorida.com