

PROVIDER ADVISORY #2019-009
RESIDENTIAL HABILITATION PROVIDER RATE INCREASE REPORTING

ACTION REQUIRED

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 16, 2019

On June 21, 2019, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed his *A Bold Vision for a Brighter Future Budget* that demonstrates his commitment to helping vulnerable Floridians, including those served by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD). The budget includes \$28.7 million in recurring funds for increases in Residential Habilitation provider rates to increase the pay of Direct Care workers. All Residential Habilitation service rates have been increased by 5.75% effective Monday, July 1, 2019. This uniform rate increase has been applied to any service plans currently in the iBudget system for Fiscal Year 2019-2020. Waiver Support Coordinators were to provide the service authorizations to providers no later than July 1, 2019.

In addition, 2019 General Appropriations Act (GAA) proviso directs that "...These funds must be used exclusively to increase the salaries of direct care staff. The agency must submit a report to the chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee and the chair of the House Appropriations Committee by December 1, 2019, that evaluates the impact of the rate increase on the average salary of direct care staff who provide residential habilitation services."

This rate increase is to be used exclusively to cover the cost for increasing direct care staff wages and applicable employer related expenses (FICA of 7.65%, which is the combined Social Security tax rate of 6.2% and the Medicare tax rate of 1.45%). The intent is to fund the highest possible per-hour wage increase for direct care staff with the additional funds provided.

APD will require all Residential Habilitation service providers to submit wage and payroll documentation for all direct care workers in order to accurately evaluate the impact of the rate increase on direct care staff salaries as directed by the Legislature. At a minimum, two quarters of direct care worker payroll information (4/1/19 – 6/30/19 and 7/1/19 – 9/30/19) will be requested and will include: Employer Medicaid ID, Employer FEIN, Employer Legal Name, Employer Trade Name, Employer Address, Employer City, Employer State, Employer Zip Code, Employer Contact Name, Employer Contact Phone, Employer Contact Email, Employee SSN, Employee First Name, Employee Middle Initial, Employee Last Name, Employee Gross Wages, Employee Taxable Wages, Employee Regular Hours, Employee Overtime Hours, and Employee Hourly Wage.

APD will host an informational meeting at 10 a.m. Eastern on Wednesday, July 31, 2019 to discuss the reporting requirements, standard spreadsheet to be used by every provider, and how to securely submit this detailed information. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to register for the meeting. Submit your questions by 12 p.m. on Monday, July 29, 2019 when registering for PROVIDER ADVISORY #2019-009
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the meeting, or email them to ResHabReport@apdcares.org to have them included in the conversation and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document. The meeting materials, standard spreadsheet to be used by all providers, and FAQs will be available at the conclusion of the meeting.

Per section II, A, 3 of the Medicaid Waiver Services Agreement, providers agree to “comply and cooperate immediately with APD requests for information, records, reports, and documents deemed necessary to review the rate setting process to ensure that provider rates are based on accurate information and reflect the existing operational requirements of each service. Any individual who knowingly misrepresents the information required in rate setting commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in sections 775.082 and 775.083, F.S.”

Additionally, per Appendix A, Billing and Documentation Requirements, of the Developmental Disabilities Individual Budgeting Waiver Services Coverage and Limitations Handbook, all Residential Habilitation service providers are required to maintain “Staffing documentation such as direct care staffing schedules, payroll records indicating identified direct care support staff and hours worked, and any other supplemental support staffing schedules that document staffing ratios and direct contact hours worked.”

APD is working with the Florida Department of Revenue (DOR), the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), and Qlarant to collect, validate, and evaluate wage information for direct care workers. APD will provide a report of how the \$28.7 million has impacted the average salary of direct care workers to the Legislature by December 1, 2019. As an addendum to that report, please be advised that APD will provide the Legislature with a list of providers that do not comply with the request for payroll records as required.