GENERAL INFORMATION QUESTIONS

Worker Related Questions

If I am a parent or family member who has not lost my job, but I have taken time off or am not able to work during this crisis, can I be the paid worker? What are the restrictions / guidelines / rules we need to abide by to be paid workers?

- You are able to be the direct care staff for the recipient.
- If you have taken leave time (either paid or unpaid) from your job to care for the recipient, you can be the worker.
- If the recipient receives services from a provider agency, contact the provider agency to temporarily “hire” you as a paid employee.
- If the recipient receives services through self-direction, contact Acumen or Morning to complete the appropriate paperwork.
- Immediate family members must receive on-line or by telephone training on infection control and reporting of abuse/neglect.

If I am a parent caring for my child as a paid worker, can I work on my other paid job at home?

- A family member may not be paid to provide supports to a recipient “at the same time" they are being paid for hours “on the clock” with another job. This means they cannot bill for hours with another job at the same time.
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<th>If I am not legally responsible for a person receiving a waiver, but I live in the same house, can I be the paid worker?</th>
<th>Yes, you can live in the same house, and be a paid worker during this crisis.</th>
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<td>I understand that there is an exception where the worker can reside with you during time of crisis, are we allowed to stay with worker?</td>
<td>Yes. During the emergency the recipient is allowed to live in the worker’s home, and/or the worker can live in the recipient’s home.</td>
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| Can a Direct Support worker (DSW) work more than 40 hours a week during the emergency? | • Yes, under the exemptions a DSW can work over his or her allotted 40 hours per week.  
• You should reach out to your service provider for questions regarding how your support worker will be paid. |
| How long can a Direct Support Worker work for 24 hours in a row? Is there a limit? What if the Direct Support Worker is living with the participant? Explain the 16 hour reference. What is meant by requiring justification for changing night hours to day hours? | • During the emergency the 16 hour limit is waived.  
• You have to use the hours as they are budgeted / approved in the plan of care. You cannot switch night hours for day hours. |
| Will workers be allowed to report to work if Governor Edwards orders a “shelter in place” and the worker does not live with the individual? Should the authorized travel form be kept on the DSW at all times? Will a picture of the letter with the DSW’s name in it be sufficient? | • Yes, workers are essential workers and will be allowed to go to work.  
• On Sunday March 22, 2020 the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) and the Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) released a joint memorandum regarding DSWs as essential employees. [http://ldh.la.gov/assets/docs/OCDD/Coronavirus/OCDD-P-20-009JointMemoRegardingPCAandDSPS.pdf](http://ldh.la.gov/assets/docs/OCDD/Coronavirus/OCDD-P-20-009JointMemoRegardingPCAandDSPS.pdf)  
• OCDD/OAAS also drafted a letter for DSWs to use when they are traveling to and from work during a
**Plan of Care and Documentation Related Questions**

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| Does the family have to complete paperwork if they are paid workers?    | • The requirement to document services has not been waived.  
• The provider will train the family member on how to document services. |
| Does the family have to log into LASRS if they are paid workers?        | • Families will be required to log into LaSRS for the time they are “paid workers”.                                                                                                                  |
| We need to have documentation of verbal agreement from the recipient and legal guardian, if appropriate, and the Support Coordinator needs to sign the budget. Please consider adding this requirement. | • We are asking Support Coordinators to document the conversation as to:  
  o Who they talked to,  
  o When,  
  o What time, and  
  o The nature of the conversation.  
• This should be submitted with the revision to the Plan of Care. |
| In the event that I am unable to provide natural supports to my child during this pandemic, can I request additional hours? What type of documentation is needed in the event that we are no longer able to provide care for our family member? | • If you already receive Home and Community Based Waiver services, you should reach out to your support coordinator to discuss your circumstances and he or she can assist you with what is needed to revise your family member’s Plan of Care and request approval for additional hours.  
• If you do not currently receive Home and Community Based Waiver services, you should reach out to your Local Governing Entity to discuss your situation and possible options to assist you. |
| Can the Residential Options Waiver (ROW) cap be exceeded due to day habilitation/pre-vocational and school closures? | Yes, if you usually attend a day program those hours will automatically become in-home support hours during this emergency.                                                                 |
| If families do not use services for more than 90 days due to a COVID-19 related issue, will the recipient lose their waiver? | No, recipients will not lose their waiver if they do not use services during this emergency.                                                                                                           |
| Are you allowing individuals to bump to the Residential Options Waiver and New Opportunities Waiver during this time? If so, are you waiving pre-certification visits? Will Medicaid honor these requests? | • We encourage you to work with your support coordinator if your needs are changing during this time.  
• If you need additional supports you should request an exemption in your current waiver, instead of a bump to a different waiver.  
• OCDD is working with Medicaid, both offices agree with the exceptions. |
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<th><strong>Will additional hours be available due to school closures/day habilitation closures?</strong></th>
<th><strong>Children’s Choice Waiver</strong> – Families will use the additional 20 hours first, saving their usual budget to use after the 20 are used. If their usual budget has been depleted on an environmental modification then they will still have the additional 20 hours weekly through the COVID-19 crisis. They do not have to have a $0 budget to obtain the additional 20 hours.</th>
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|  | **New Opportunities Waiver and Residential Options Waiver**—day habilitation/vocational hours will be converted to in home support without a revision.  
  - Contact your support coordinator if no longer attending Day habilitation/Vocational services.  
  - If you need more hours contact your support coordinator. You’ll need to tell the support coordinator why you need extra hours. |
| **Other Questions** | **Other Questions** |
| **What happens to people in Children’s Choice waiver whose age outs are upcoming? Will they be able to receive their services at age 21?**  
Families cannot have a lapse in services. | **The Children’s Choice services must end at age 21.**  
**All of the children aging out in the next few months already have a link to a new waiver.**  
**The support coordination agency should prepare the plan of care to transition to the next waiver.** |
<p>| <strong>I am not able to get to the link for the recording about these exceptions. Is there another way I can get to the recording?</strong> | <strong>Try copying and pasting the link into your web browser. Ensure the entire link is copied.</strong> |
| <strong>Can adults who receive Individual and Family Support funds through the Local Governing Entity (LGE) get 90 days of diapers or is this just children in Medicaid?</strong> | Please contact your Support Coordinator to request a family support application. They will complete the application and submit to the LGE office for review. The LGE will notify you if the request is approved. |
| <strong>For our recipients who are unable to get out at this time and spend down their money, is Medicaid going to kick them off of any HCBS Waiver or group home if their account reaches over $2000.00?</strong> | No. They will not be disqualified from Medicaid services. Additional information will be shared at a later date about the time frame for people to spend down money to the limit. |
| <strong>If a recipient is out of the community home / group home / intermediate care facility during this pandemic for more than 30 consecutive days or 45 No. The number of Leave Days will not count during this time.</strong> |  |</p>
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<td>total days, will there be a penalty to the provider or recipient?</td>
<td>• Yes, this is an equal transfer. The Medicaid data contractor will automatically move the day program hours over to IFS hours.</td>
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<td>I am looking for additional details on the transferring of Day Program hours to IFS hours. Is this an equal transfer, meaning if they attend Day Program 6 hours per day are we receiving 6 hours of IFS Single Day? What about the transportation times?</td>
<td>• Yes, this is an equal transfer. The Medicaid data contractor will automatically move the day program hours over to IFS hours.</td>
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<td>What is companion care?</td>
<td>• Companion care is a service where a daily rate is paid to a companion who lives with someone with a disability, to help support the person with a disability. This daily rate takes the place of billing for services by the hour.</td>
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<td>• The daily rate is $92.02. The provider is allowed to keep $17.00 and the person providing the companion care receives $75.02 per day.</td>
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<td>My child is a high school senior and transition planning is at a standstill. Will there be a work group to address transition issues?</td>
<td>• Contact the Department of Education (DOE) about transition planning.</td>
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<td>• If DOE is not clear, call your support coordinator to see what steps you should take. The support coordinator should be able to help you with the next steps, such as applying for services with Louisiana Rehabilitative Services (LRS) to begin looking for employment.</td>
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| I have referrals wanting to start HCBS services. Is there any guidance about starting with a new provider during the stay at home order? | • Changing provider agencies at this time is not recommended, if they are a current recipient.  
• If this is a person who is seeking services because they are new to a waiver program, or someone who is looking for staff due to a current provider not having staff, they can seek new staff.  
• If it is an emergent situation, contact your Support Coordinator and Local Governing Entity. They can coordinate with State office. |
| We were in the process of discharging a person receiving Supported Independent Living services. The prior authorization has come through with a start date of April 1. If the new provider is ready will this change of providers still continue as planned? | • If the new provider is able to support the individual, then the transition should move forward. Please contact the support coordinator to make sure everything is in place.                                                |
| How should providers document care provided if they are no longer able to enter a home/have access to logs? | • Documentation on whatever an individual has access to is acceptable at this time (electronic, etc.), even if this needs to occur on a sheet of paper with notes, dates, times.  
• You must document all phone calls, FaceTime, and Skype contacts.                                                                                                                     |
| Is a Home and Community Based Service provider required to complete 16 hour training to work with an individual during this time? | • At a minimum, the Home and Community Based Service provider must provide training on:  
  o Abuse and neglect reporting and  
  o Infection control prior to staff providing services.  
• The rest of the 16 hour training can be provided following the start of services.                                                                                                             |
| I have a question regarding a new employee, who previously worked for our agency. Is it ok to waive the mandatory 16 hours of orientation at this time if they come back to work for our company? | • Only if the prior training still meets the requirements for licensing.  
• OCDD recommends a refresher of infection control and abuse/neglect trainings.                                                                                     |
| As a provider agency, if I temporarily hire a parent or other family member to care for a recipient, what actions do I need to take? | • The parent should be treated as any other employee.  
• We are not asking providers to make any changes regarding timesheets, progress notes, or any other requirements that would be needed for a new employee, with the exception of the abbreviated training and there is no need for a background check for immediate family members who are temporary employees. |
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<td>Are providers required to go into the homes of Supported Independent Living (SIL) recipients to conduct the face to face visit?</td>
<td>No, visits can be by telephone call, FaceTime, or Skype.</td>
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| Will staff be allowed to remain in hospital with the participant if both test positive? If so, can staff be paid? | * The hospital will let you know what procedures to follow, and who is allowed at the hospital if a participant is hospitalized.  
  * Right now we can’t pay direct support staff while the participant is in the hospital.  
  * If staff has tested he or she should follow the advice of his or her physician or medical health professional about whether to go to work. |
| What is the limit is for a DSW working straight, since they can work over 16 hours if necessary, if they move in with a participant or if a participant moves in with them? | * There are no specific limitations during this event to allow for reduced in person contact to as great extent possible.  
  * Providers should determine what they need to do to ensure the safety of the participant, including scheduling the staff. |
| How can DSWs get paid if they are at home with children due to school; have a sick child at home; are self-quarantined, or not allowed to work due to concern with employer? | * If a DSW cannot work during this crisis, he or she should apply for unemployment.  
  * Please call 1-866-783-5567, or file for unemployment online at [www.LAworks.net](http://www.LAworks.net). |
| Should we continue to pay our employees who have been instructed by their physicians not to come to work? | * You cannot bill for waiver services if the Direct Service Worker (DSW) is not providing the service.  
  * Each agency has to decide how to handle paying their employees.  
  * You should follow all state and federal regulations throughout this event. |
| complete? Such as; Timesheets, daily progress notes, etc.  
* Who signs off on the parent’s timesheet?  
* Will the parent have to use the Electronic Log in system (EVV)?  
* Will the agency bill as we typically do with DSW?  
* Will the rate of reimbursement be the same for parents working with their child? | * The provider dictates the rate of pay for employees and follows all state and federal regulations for employment. |

**Note:** The list of questions is not exhaustive and may not cover all relevant topics.
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| As a vocational provider, can I bill for job coaching via phone call or Skype? | • Your staff must be physically present with the individual to bill for the service.  
• You cannot bill for the service if you are providing training via skype or some other remote method. |
| My family member lives in an ICF/IID facility, and I have taken him home to isolate with me. If the number of days that are allowed for him to be out of the ICF/IID are exceeded beyond the maximum number, will the fee be waived until pandemic is under control and he is allowed to return? | • Emergency rules were posted on 3/27/2020 on the Louisiana Department of Health website concerning the 45 day leave exemption.  
• You can see the OCDD memo regarding the 45 day leave exemption for ICF/IID facilities at:  
• [http://ldh.la.gov/assets/docs/OCDD/Coronavirus/OCDDICFIIDLeaveMemo.pdf](http://ldh.la.gov/assets/docs/OCDD/Coronavirus/OCDDICFIIDLeaveMemo.pdf) |
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| In Self Direction, is the hourly pay rate the same as current DSW staff or is rate controlled by an outside source? | • The employer (Self Direction participant) sets the pay rate for the employee.  
• That hourly pay rate must meet the minimum wage, and the maximum hourly wage is established by the Self Direction program. |
| How quickly can a new worker be hired in self-direction? Can start date be as soon as the application is approved? | • OCDD has asked Acumen and Morning Sun to expedite all new hires.  
• A family member can begin providing and billing for services at the time the application is received. |
| Will the start dates of the 1st and the 16th be waived?                 | Yes. We are asking that applications for hire be expedited, and this requirement is being waived.                                           |
| Can start date be backdated since I have been providing the support?   | No. We are not able to backdate the billing for services until the application is received.                                             |
| Explain the process—step by step—of changing hours for plans of care and then hiring the self-direction employee. | • You should contact your support coordinator for questions about how to request a change in the plan of care hours. Any additional hours must be justified and approved through the normal approval process.  
• There must be a justification for an increase in hours. There is an expectation that the natural support hours that were previously provided continue to be provided through natural supports and not paid supports. |
| In self direction, if I am the employer and I need to become the worker, does my spouse need to become the employer? | • No. You can be both the employer and the worker during the emergency.                                                               |
| If a self-direction employee is working over 16 hours, how will that be entered into Acumen? Is Acumen going to allow the hours over 16 to go through and be paid? |
| Will family members who are paid workers have a separate login as an “employee” versus as “employer”? | • If you are approved for more than 16 billable hours a day Acumen and Morning Sun will allow the hours to be entered.  
• Log in the same way as you instructed staff to do prior to COVID 19. If you have specific concerns regarding log in, please contact Acumen or Morning Sun. |
### SUPPORT COORDINATION RELATED QUESTIONS

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| What do I need to tell families who want to allow family living in home to be their workers under self-direction? | • Acumen will expedite the hiring process.  
• The hiring process includes:  
  o a background check,  
  o I-9,  
  o W4,  
  o L4 (state tax form)  
• All training must include abuse and neglect reporting, and infection control. |
| What do I need to tell families who want to allow family members living in home to be their workers with a traditional provider? | • You should talk to the family and the traditional provider agencies.  
• The provider agency will need to complete the hiring process; that process will be expedited. |
| Do we need to complete revisions for families who want to move from a traditional provider to the Self Direction option? | • Yes, since this is a change of provider that would require a revision.  
• Instead of moving from traditional providers to Self Direction, a family member can be hired by the traditional provider agency to provide services during this emergency.  
• It will be difficult to change from a traditional provider agency to self-direction at this time. |
| Am I required to complete the crisis designation for Children’s Choice Waiver recipients? If so, is there a capped amount that can be assessed during this time? | • You will need to complete a crisis designation if a participant will exceed his or her budget.  
• Individual Family Support hours are capped at 40 hours a week in CCW. |
| Am I required to complete initial face to face visits within 10 days or 30 days? | • The initial visit can be done by telephone, Skype, or FaceTime within 20 days.  
• Support Coordinators will be required to complete assessments within 30 days. |
| Can a phone call count when Skype/FaceTime is not available? | Yes, a telephone call is acceptable. |
| Who do we report to if staff fail to report to work? | • Notify the provider agency that employs the staff member.  
• The provider agency is responsible for developing a back-up plan. |
| Are we required to observe job completion jobs? | • No, please document consent from families.  
• Email acceptance of the job is allowed. |
| What should we do if a skilled nursing provider is unable to staff and services are needed in the home? Will there be exceptions to allow an Individual and Family Support to be staffed in home if no family is available? | • Yes, this should be documented in the plan of care.  
• There will need to be a request for revision to the Plan of Care. |
| Will we be required to mail approved plans of care within current timelines? | • No, this can be done electronically to the family if possible.  
• We will not penalize timelines during this time. |
| How should we handle Comprehensive Plan of Care meetings that have to be completed within a timeframe that includes this emergency event? Are we still held liable for having them completed during the required time frame or is there an option for completing them over the phone? | • Annual Plans of Care where the face to face meeting has not been held will be extended.  
• Please contact the individual by phone during the month you would have had the POC meeting. This will meet the requirements for payment for that month. |