



State of Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Health
Office of Aging and Adult Services
Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities

MEMORANDUM

OCDD-P-20-059
OAAS-P-20-041

TO: Self-Direction Employers

FROM: Fernando Lopez-Evangelio, MHSA, Ph.D.
OAAS Assistant Secretary

Charles Ayles, OCDD Deputy Assistant Secretary

Handwritten signatures of Fernando Lopez-Evangelio and Charles Ayles.

DATE: November 18, 2020

SUBJECT: Hazard Pay Policy and Procedures for Self-Direction In-Home Services
Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) has approved a Hazard Pay rate for Direct Service Workers (DSWs) working with participants in the OCDD and OAAS Waivers. Your DSW employees who provide care to a participant who either tests positive for COVID-19 or a participant who has to quarantine due to living with a household member that tested positive for COVID-19 are eligible for this hazard pay rate for a specified period of time with some exceptions.

Hazard pay is to ensure that DSWs whose employment is NOT based on the COVID-19 exceptions, and DSWs who work with the participants will continue to work even during the COVID-19 illness/exposure period. See guidelines below to determine if your DSWs meet criteria for hazard pay.

1st Step: Does your DSW meet eligibility criteria?

- DSWs who would have been approved to work with the participant prior to the COVID-19 exceptions ARE eligible for hazard pay. **PROCEED TO 2nd STEP.**
- If your DSWs fall under any of the relationships listed below, they are **NOT** eligible for hazard pay:

OAAS:

- Participant's spouse;
- Participant's curator;
- Participant's tutor;
- Participant's legal guardian;
- Participant's responsible representative; or

- Participant's power of attorney

OCDD:

- Self-Direction Employer;
- Legal guardians including parents of minor children; or
- Household members who became DSWs under the exception process

2nd Step: Hazard Pay WILL be Allowed for your DSW for the Following Reasons:

- Participant tested positive for COVID-19 on or after March 21, 2020.
- Participant is quarantined due to living with a household member who tested positive for COVID-19 on or after March 21, 2020.

When Hazard Pay will NOT be Allowed:

- Household member is quarantined, but did **NOT** have a positive COVID-19 test.
- COVID-19 positive test results or quarantine was **NOT** reported to the support coordinator.

You must contact your support coordinator if both steps apply to your DSW(s) and you are requesting hazard pay for them from March 21, 2020 to now.

Going forward, if the participant tests positive for COVID-19 or the participant must quarantine due to a household member testing positive for COVID-19, please see your reporting requirements stated below.

Reporting Requirements

As the Self-Direction (SD) Employer, you are required to report the COVID-19 positive test results to the support coordinator, in order for your DSWs to receive hazard pay. The information **MUST** be reported timely (within 24 hours). Self-Direction Employers of OCDD Waiver (Children's Choice, Residential Options Waiver, New Opportunities Waiver) participants are **required** to report if participants have contracted COVID-19 per OCDD Waiver program rules (i.e., critical incident reporting). **Reminder – For OAAS and OCDD Waiver participants, ALL major health changes ARE required to be reported to the support coordinator upon discovery of the change in health status.**

For retroactive cases back to March 21, 2020, you, as the Self-Direction Employer, should have reported the positive COVID-19 test results (participant or household member) to the support coordinator. If it was **NOT** reported, then hazard pay is **NOT** available.

Reporting Process

When a participant or a participant's household member receives a positive COVID-19 test result, you, as the Self-Direction Employer, must contact their support coordinator to report this information.

For retroactive cases, as the Self-Direction Employer, you must contact their support coordinator to verify that you reported the participant or the household member's COVID-19 positive test results when it occurred.

The support coordinator will complete a "Request for Hazard Pay" form, and will ask for confirmation of the DSW's eligibility for hazard pay. This form will be forwarded to the Fiscal Employer Agent (FEA) by the support coordinator. The FEA will confirm the eligibility of the DSWs and return the request for hazard pay to the support coordinator. The support coordinator will conduct the final verification and process the request. The FEA will then reimburse the **eligible** DSWs with an additional \$2.00/hour for all appropriate hours worked.

A maximum of 40 calendar days will be allowed for hazard pay per participant, if the participant contracted COVID-19. A maximum of 14 calendar days will be allowed for hazard pay per participant, if the participant quarantined due to COVID-19 exposure by a household member who tested positive for COVID-19.

Please notify the Support Coordination Agency of any retroactive hazard pay requests **by close of business Wednesday, November 25, 2020**. Current requests to the Support Coordination Agency for hazard pay should be made within 24 hours of receipt of the positive COVID-19 test result.

If you have any questions for OAAS, please contact OAAS.ProviderRelations@la.gov or if you have any questions for OCDD, please contact OCDD-HCBS@la.gov

- c: Medicaid Program Support and Waivers
Statistical Resources, Inc.
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