



DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

OIFA Member Newsletter - February 2021

COVID-19 Still Spreading in Arizona

The national COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) has been extended until April 21, 2021. Arizona continues to see increases in positive COVID-19 cases. The health and safety of members and vendors continues to be DDD's top priority. DDD has implemented many temporary measures to support members and vendors. Everyone must continue to do their part to slow the spread. DDD continues to monitor Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Arizona Department of Health Services guidance. All new guidance is published in the documents available on the [DDD Actions Related to COVID-19](#) web page. Current flexibilities and alternative service delivery options will continue at this time.



You can help slow the spread of COVID-19 by:

- Maintaining physical distancing of at least 6 feet
- Avoiding large groups and going out if possible
- Wearing a face cover when you are out in public
- Covering your cough or sneeze
- Washing your hands for at least 20 seconds often
- Staying home when you are sick

Learn more about COVID-19 at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> or <http://azhealth.gov/coronavirus>.

COVID-19 Vaccine



Arizona has started distributing COVID-19 vaccine. DDD has posted [vaccine information](#) written by the Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center (SARTAC) on its [Actions Related to COVID-19 web page](#). The Arizona Department of Health Services has a [three phase plan](#) for distribution. Your county health department can tell you when you will be eligible to get the vaccine. You can find their contact information at <http://azhealth.gov/findvaccine>. Additional information about the COVID-19 vaccine can be found on the [ADHS website](#).



Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) ensures, tracks and monitors timely service delivery and access to care for members. EVV applies to **all** providers of these services, **including** paid family direct care workers. Providers providing impacted services began using EVV on January 1, 2021. Contact your vendor agency for more details regarding EVV if you are a paid caregiver for a member.

The DDD services impacted are:

- Attendant Care
- Homemaker/Housekeeping
- Habilitation Hourly
- Home Health (Nursing)
- Respite
- Skills Training and Development

EVV is a federal requirement. EVV is a mandatory program. All individuals who receive services from AHCCCS must participate. AHCCCS has posted several [FAQ documents on its website](#) as well as other information about EVV.

COVID Flexibility Extensions

Respite Benefit

As the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) continues to impact Arizona, AHCCCS has re-authorized the Respite hours benefit limit increase from 600 to 720 hours. The increase is available for the benefit year beginning October 1, 2020 and ending September 30, 2021. Support Coordinators will assess members for this service through the current planning process.

Home Delivered Meals

On April 20, 2020, the Division authorized the delivery of home delivered meals to eligible ALTCS members during the COVID-19 public health emergency. This service was scheduled to end on December 31, 2020. AHCCCS has authorized the continuation of this service until April 16, 2021.

Vendor Call Process Changes

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) is improving the way you get services through the vendor call process. Each time you need a service we issue a “vendor call”. A vendor call is a message to all vendors that might be able to provide your services. It lets the vendors know that you need services. DDD has been working to improve the vendor call process and has made some changes. These changes will help match you with a vendor that is best matched to your needs. These changes will be effective on March 23, 2021.

These are the changes you can expect:

1. With your consent, your contact information may be shared with vendors. This provides you the opportunity to connect with vendors faster.
2. The Division will send you contact information about the vendors as they respond to the vendor call.

3. You will now have 7 days to choose a vendor after you receive the first response to the vendor call from your Support Coordinator or DDD Nurse. If you do not select a vendor from the vendors who said they could give you the service, a vendor will be auto-assigned. DDD will send you a letter with the information of the auto-assigned vendor.

Virtual Planning Meetings

Planning meetings are still being held virtually as COVID-19 continues to impact Arizona. These meetings are important and necessary. Members should be involved in the meeting and on the video so their Support Coordinator can see them. DDD uses Google Meet to host virtual planning meetings. Below are some resources that can help members and families participate:

- [How to Use Google Meet Quick Tutorial \(with Sign Language\)](#)
- [ASL Introduction to Google Meet \(American Sign Language\)](#)
- [How to Translate In a Google Meet](#)

Participants can also use closed captioning. Closed captioning can be turned on by hovering the mouse pointer at the bottom of the screen until the menu appears. Click “Turn On Captions”. As each participant speaks, what they are saying will be displayed under the video image. The captions are only seen on that user’s computer.

Tell your Support Coordinator if you cannot attend online. They can set up a phone call or in-person meeting with all team members. In-person meetings require safety measures. These include:

- All attendees wearing masks.
- Social distancing.
- Holding the meeting outdoors if possible.

Community Resources

DDD has info for local, state, and national groups that support members and their families. The DDD website has links to many of these groups that can assist with day to day tasks and other services that may not be covered by the Division. [Visit the community resources section of the DDD website to learn more.](#)

Family Caregiver Grant Program

Funding is available through a reimbursement program for family caregivers who provide care for their loved ones in their own homes. Family caregivers can be reimbursed 50% (up to \$1,000 for each qualifying family member) for qualified home modifications and other equipment used to help their loved ones live more independently.



The Family Caregiver Grant Program was established as a result of legislation. The program is for individuals who have qualifying expenses during a calendar year. These expenses must be related to the care and support of a qualifying family member in their home. Applicants can call the Caregiver Resource Line at (888) 737-7494 to apply. Learn more at azcaregiver.org.

DDD Weekly Town Hall Meetings

DDD is hosting town hall meetings. DDD will present Division news and updates. Other information important to members and families will also be shared. Attendees can also ask questions. Visit <http://bit.ly/dddtownhall> for the schedule and agenda.

Like DDD On Facebook

Like DDD on Facebook, [@OfficialArizonaDDD](https://www.facebook.com/OfficialArizonaDDD), and stay connected to the latest news and events.

Councils and Committees

There are many ways you can volunteer and positively impact the DD community. Visit the [DDD website](http://www.azdd.org) to see all the councils and committees you can volunteer to be on.

Crisis Services

If you, a family member, or a friend have a mental health emergency, it is important that you seek help right away. Trained crisis staff are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help over the phone. The Crisis lines are free, confidential, and open to anyone who needs help. For medical, police and fire emergency situations, always call 911.



Suicide and Crisis Hotlines by County

- Maricopa County served by Mercy Care: 1-800-631-1314 or 602-222-9444
- Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz and Yuma Counties served by Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan: 1-866-495-6735
- Apache, Coconino, Gila, Mohave, Navajo and Yavapai Counties served by Steward Health Choice Arizona: 1-877-756-4090
- Gila River and Ak-Chin Indian Communities: 1-800-259-3449
- Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community: 1-855-331-6432

Especially for Teens

- Teen Life Line phone or text: 602-248-TEEN (8336)

National 24-Hour Crisis Hotlines

Phone

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- National Substance Use and Disorder Issues Referral and Treatment Hotline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Text

- Text the word “HOME” to 741741

Get Caught Up

All old OIFA newsletters are available to view on DDD’s website. Visit the [Member Services](#) page and click on the “Member Newsletters” section.

DDD is Here to Help

Please contact your Support Coordinator or the DDD Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500 ext. 1 (TTY/TDD 711) if you have questions.

Call the DDD Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500 ext. 1, TTY/TDD 711, to ask for this material in other formats. Language help is available at no cost to you.