



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona

DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Sent on Behalf of DES/DDD

COVID-19 FLEXIBILITIES UPDATE

Target Audience - Qualified Vendors and Providers

Transmittal Date - 04/26/2023

With the federal COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) scheduled to end on May 11, 2023, the Division continues to wind down the flexibilities associated with the PHE. As [communicated on January 25](#), the Division has updated its Actions Related to COVID-19 web page with a table that reflects the flexibilities and their end dates. The majority of the flexibilities have already been unwound, with the remaining either integrated into the Division's program or scheduled to end on June 30, 2023. The Division is providing additional guidance specific to the following flexibilities to provide Qualified Vendors with adequate time to adjust their procedures.

Parents As Paid Providers: AHCCCS Extends As-Is Until November 2023

DDD began Parents as Paid Providers at the start of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The goal was to ensure families had support during the emergency. AHCCCS worked with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to allow parents to become Direct Care Workers (DCW) for their children who receive DDD benefits. This let Qualified Vendors hire parents and stepparents to provide services for their minor children. Parents as Paid Providers was temporary during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. More information can be found on the Division's website in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

AHCCCS recently updated its list of flexibilities. One update extends Parents as Paid Providers with no changes until Nov. 11, 2023. The Division will keep providing updates as November 2023 gets closer.

Positive COVID-19 Reporting and Technical Assistance

At the beginning of the PHE, the Division created a [technical assistance document](#) to provide Qualified Vendors guidance specifically using the incident reporting process. The purpose of this process was to notify the Division about members who tested positive for COVID-19 and provide information about payment of special rates for providing COVID-19-positive care to members. This reporting requirement and issuance of special rates will end on June 30, 2023. The technical assistance document will also be rescinded and archived.

Article 9 Training

At the beginning of the PHE, the Division suspended in-person Article 9 training and allowed Qualified Vendors to use approved Article 9 training via live video conferencing. In order to ensure access to care, the Division also allowed Qualified Vendors to submit alternate methods to the Division's training department for consideration, including computer-based training (CBT).

Article 9 specifies that "Any person who is involved in the use of a behavior treatment plan shall be trained by the Division or trained by an instructor approved by the Division." [A.A.C 6-6-906 (A)] **In order to ensure**

compliance with Article 9, effective July 1, 2023, all direct support professionals and other required staff must receive Article 9 training either in-person or via instructor-led virtual training. CBT is not permitted.

Habilitation, Employment, and Day Treatment via Telehealth

The Division authorized the consultative components of the Early Childhood Autism Services (service codes ECM and ECB) and Habilitation with Music Therapy (HAM), as well as employment and other habilitative services (Day Program, Habilitation Hourly) to be provided via telehealth during the PHE. AHCCCS and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have indicated this flexibility will not be extended past the end date of the PHE. **As a result, effective July 1, 2023, these services must return to the pre-PHE, in-person delivery model.**