

DDD SHOUT

VENDOR & PROVIDER NEWSLETTER

Volume XXIX - February 2022

COVID-19 Update

The Omicron variant of COVID-19 is having a significant impact on the number of positive cases being reported in Arizona. The COVID-19 vaccine and booster remain one of the best ways to avoid serious illness from COVID-19 infection. Currently, Arizonans 5 years of age and older can receive the Pfizer vaccine and Arizonans 18 years of age and older can receive the Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Booster Shots

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the following groups should get the booster:

- Arizonans 12 years and older who received the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine at least 5 months ago.
- Arizonans 18 years and older who received the second dose of the Moderna vaccine at least 5 months ago.
- Arizonans 18 years and older who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine at least 2 months ago.

The CDC has determined that individuals 18 years and older interested in a COVID-19 booster shot are not required to get the same brand they received for their initial vaccine. The Moderna and Pfizer mRNA vaccine boosters are preferred even if an individual received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine initially. Either will have the desired effect of boosting the individual's immune system against COVID-19. The Johnson & Johnson booster is still available if it is preferred.

Vaccine Availability

Whether they are getting a booster or their first dose, members or their families can contact their [DDD Health Plan](#) for assistance if they need an in-home vaccination or an appointment can be made at a local pharmacy like Walgreens or CVS. A text message with their zip code can also be sent to GETVAX (for English) or VACUNA (for Spanish) to receive a message with three vaccination sites near them, with phone numbers to call to schedule an appointment.

How to Get Tested

Testing is available to anyone who thinks they may have COVID-19. Testing locations can be found online at <https://www.azdhs.gov/covid19/index.php#everyone-get-tested>. The federal government has also made at home tests available at no cost. These can be ordered by visiting <https://www.covidtests.gov/>.

In-Person Meetings with Members Eligible for ALTCS

During the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), the Division has provided many service "flexibilities" with AHCCCS approval to change how we deliver services and ensure members were able to receive services during

the pandemic. Effective January 16, 2022, the Secretary of Health and Human Services extended the PHE . As such, approved service flexibilities may continue to be available until at least April 16, 2022, based on the continued approval and direction of AHCCCS.

In May 2021, AHCCCS identified several of these flexibilities that would no longer be available at the conclusion of the federal public health emergency declaration, including Virtual case management visits for ALTCS members.

On Monday, January 31, 2022, AHCCCS notified DDD and the other Managed Care Organizations supporting members eligible for the Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS) that beginning April 1, 2022, person-centered service planning meetings can be held in-person if the member chooses that option. This means members and their families can select to have their person-centered service planning meeting in person, rather than virtually.

Virtual person-centered service plan meetings will continue to be an option for members and families who prefer not to meet in person. The status of the flexibilities can be found in [Appendix K \(page 5\) of the AHCCCS COVID-19 Status of Flexibilities](#) document. The person-centered service planning process focuses on what is best for the member. This change allows members to choose the meeting type that best fits their needs.

Claims System Update

As announced earlier this year and as part of the Division's Current 2 Future Initiative, DDD is updating its claims system in order to be compliant with state and federal regulations and to resolve the AHCCCS HIPAA TCS Compliance Claims Processing System Notice to Cure.

The new system will utilize the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) and standard Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) claims forms when reimbursing Qualified Vendors for submitted claims. This will include the use of standardized Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Transactions and Code Sets (TCS) in lieu of DDD proprietary codes currently being used by vendors when submitting claims. Qualified Vendors will be required to submit claims on official, nationally-recognized forms. The current DDD billing template will be replaced by these forms. Vendors will have three options for submitting claims:

- Submit a CMS 1500 form in paper form
- Submit an electronic 837 form
- Manually enter claims directly in Wellsky for each authorization

DDD is anticipating completing User Acceptance Testing (UAT) in early 2022 with a group of Qualified Vendors who tested an initial version of the claims system earlier this year. Once the system is determined to be fully functional, DDD will provide Qualified Vendors with 60-days notice before all claims will be required to submit claims using the new system. Training sessions will be available once the system is determined to be fully operational.

As a reminder, all Qualified Vendors will have access to two accounts that will be used to submit claims billings. The Vendor's contract main point of contact or designee must designate these billing users by identifying them in the FOCUS system. Contract main points of contact or designee can assign these users following these three steps:

1. Login in to the Focus and select the Admin Tools application.
2. Choose "Users" at the top of the page.
3. Click the "Assign" button in the column labeled "Access to WSHS" for up to two individuals who will be able to access the claims system.

The Division has [published a page](#) on its website where information about this project, including Frequently Asked Questions, are available for review. If you have questions about the project, please submit them using this form, <https://forms.gle/qZ5KWjZryEa2NfRY7>.

National Core Indicators

[National Core Indicators \(NCI\)](#) is a collaborative effort between the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) and the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI). NCI uses a series of [surveys and in-person interviews](#) to measure member satisfaction and efficacy of DDD programs and services. The 2021-2022 National Core Indicator survey cycle has started. This is an opportunity for members and their families to express their thoughts, feelings, and concerns around the services provided to them by the Division and for providers to provide data about their workforce.

HSRI and NCI are currently working to ensure the State Provider Portal will be available in the next few weeks for Qualified Vendors to complete the annual Staff Stability Survey which includes questions about Arizona's Direct Care Workforce for January 2021-December 2021. This information is critical for Arizona to plan for how to support and improve the DCW workforce. Qualified Vendors will be sent an email directly from HSRI with information about and the link to the survey. All Qualified Vendors are requested to participate.

In-person interviews with selected members and a representative from Pilot Parents of Southern Arizona are currently being scheduled. Three family surveys started to be sent to randomly selected members' families beginning in January 2022. Qualified Vendors are asked to encourage the selected families to complete the survey. DDD does not receive information related to individual survey feedback, only an aggregated report from NCI. The survey responses are not returned to DDD. Questions about National Core Indicator surveys, Arizona survey data, and other state survey reports can be sent to DDD's NCI Coordinator via email at NCISurveys@azdes.gov.

Residential Vendor Call Update

As [previously communicated](#), the Division is revising the residential vendor call process to help match members with vendors more efficiently, standardize the process for all residential services statewide, and automate the tracking and monitoring of data. The Division plans to implement these changes on March 7, 2022.

On Monday, February 7, 2022, an email intended for internal DDD staff regarding a computer based training was inadvertently sent to Qualified Vendors. Qualified Vendors should ignore that email, the Division apologizes for the confusion. The below information about Qualified Vendor training was sent to all Qualified Vendors on [January 27, 2022](#).

The Division will host training sessions so Qualified Vendors can familiarize themselves with the changes being made to the residential vendor call process which include:

- Updates to the Division's Provider Policy Manual Chapter 50.
- Enhancements to the Program Staffing Application (PSA) in Focus.
- How to complete the Residential Vendor Call Process in PSA in Focus.

The training sessions are scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday, February 22, 2022
 - 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
 - Join via Internet: <https://azgov.webex.com/azgov/j.php?MTID=m22f4c2ef8488679ee8a9f64151be5ff8>

- Join by phone: 1-877-309-3457
- Meeting access code: 2467 392 4959
- Meeting password: fJUA3VF6Mq
- 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 - Join via Internet: <https://azgov.webex.com/azgov/j.php?MTID=m9de08a27575ba19c0d08fea3ab109da9>
 - Join by phone: 1-877-309-3457
 - Meeting access code: 2468 109 4812
 - Meeting password: fwPZpYpj452
- Thursday, February 24, 2022
 - 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
 - Join via Internet: <https://azgov.webex.com/azgov/j.php?MTID=mf719b9657276d5243d13628ab423cb6e>
 - Join by phone: 1-877-309-3457
 - Meeting access code: 2460 529 4464
 - Meeting password: mTwwS3b43wt
 - 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 - Join via Internet: <https://azgov.webex.com/azgov/j.php?MTID=m821198ebcf0ff5dce4aab1ef303b14f6>
 - Join by phone: 1-877-309-3457
 - Meeting access code: 2458 356 1245
 - Meeting password: nSPeQYfF442

The Division will also host sessions at which Qualified Vendors and Providers can ask and have answered any questions they have related to the process changes. These sessions will be held on:

- Tuesday, March 29, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
 - Join via Internet: <https://azgov.webex.com/azgov/j.php?MTID=mf077d3f2545685d4e262804e1ad2cc38>
 - Join by phone: 1-877-309-3457
 - Meeting access code: 2469 525 1363
 - Meeting password: heTkzY7rQ53
- Tuesday, April 5, 2022, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 - Join via Internet: <https://azgov.webex.com/azgov/j.php?MTID=m30a6258aa772082013789cb59f4fc3a9>
 - Join by phone: 1-877-309-3457
 - Meeting access code: 2462 967 1422
 - Meeting password: hhWjWfud873

For more information about the changes, visit the project's [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) page. Qualified Vendors and Providers with questions regarding the changes being made to the residential vendor call process, may submit them using [this form](#).

Article 21 Informal Public Comment Request

The Department of Economic Security (Department) is in the process of rewriting Title 6 of the Arizona Administrative Code (A.A.C.) Chapter 6, Article 21. These are the administrative rules that direct the Division of Developmental Disabilities' procurement and rate setting.

These rules are being revised to clarify the Qualified Vendor application process. They also include updated guidance for people seeking to become Independent Providers. Outdated definitions and language are also being replaced with modern terminology.

The Department is seeking informal input as we draft these rules. This will ensure stakeholders' comments and concerns are considered early in the rule writing process. There will be a formal public comment period after the rules are published in the Arizona Administrative Register pursuant to A.R.S. § 41-1023. The Department would like to include stakeholders' comments in the early stages. This will avoid adding additional steps and requirements.

The [Public Notice](#) including directions on how to submit comments and a [draft of the 6 A.A.C. 6, Article 21](#) rules are available on the DES website.

Policy Public Comment

The Division is currently accepting public comments regarding two new Division policies:

- Division Operations Policy Manual Chapter 6002-D Members At Risk If Missing
- Division Operations Policy Manual Chapter 6002-G Abuse and Neglect Reporting

Public comments are being accepted until February 25, 2022. The policy revisions can be found on the [Policy page](#) of the Division's website. Members and families can use this form, <https://forms.gle/4MGCsdyKTRPJna3m9>, to submit public comments if they are interested in providing feedback.

Program Integrity Education

The Division's Program Integrity Unit (PIU) hosted education sessions for Qualified Vendors and Providers in mid-2021 to communicate standards and guidelines as well as other aspects of the Division's compliance programs. The PIU will again host a series of **voluntary**, virtual sessions for interested Qualified Vendors and Providers to discuss the aspects of program integrity and provide information related to staff roles and compliance responsibilities. The educational sessions, which are specific to each service type, have been scheduled as follows:

- Home and Community Based Services
 - Monday, March 7, 2022
 - Tuesday, March 8, 2022
 - Friday, March 11, 2022
- Group Homes, Day Treatment Services and Employment Services
 - Monday, March 14, 2022
 - Tuesday, March 15, 2022
 - Friday, March 18, 2022
- Developmental Home Services
 - Monday, March 21, 2022
 - Tuesday, March 22, 2022
 - Friday, March 25, 2022
- Therapy Services

- Monday, March 28, 2022
- Tuesday, March 29, 2022
- Friday, April 1, 2022

All sessions will be held from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. and will be accessible via Google Meet, <https://meet.google.com/zby-xiam-ans>, or by phone, 1-320-322-1271, using PIN 144899641#.

These sessions are not mandatory; rather, they are intended to provide valuable information and allow all Qualified Vendors and Providers to ask questions of the Division's PIU manager, Elanie Estrada. Staff whose main responsibilities are related to compliance/ethics and accounting/claims are highly encouraged to attend at least one of the sessions.

TPL Waiver Requests with Primary Payer Discounts

Per the [AHCCCS Provider Participation Agreement](#) and [DDD Provider Policy Manual Chapter 12](#), all Qualified Vendor Agencies agree to comply with AHCCCS guidelines and policies. Participation in the Arizona Medicaid program as a DDD Qualified Vendor requires Qualified Vendors to agree to bill DDD only after third-party payers have adjudicated the claim. Qualified Vendors should not bill, nor attempt to collect payment from DDD members. Qualified Vendor Agencies shall submit claims for \$0.00 due.

Special payment arrangements with Primary Payers (commercial insurance plans) are prohibited practice and will be referred for Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA) investigation. These arrangement include but are not limited to:

- Quick payment discounts (i.e. 10% payment reduction for timely payments)
- \$0.00 payment for specific CPT® or HCPCS codes (i.e. \$0.00 for 92507; \$0.00 for E2599)

COBV Waiver Requests submitted without having third-party payers adjudicate the claims first will be denied.

As outlined in [DDD Provider Policy Manual Chapter 20](#), "Per 42 CFR 455.2, Abuse means provider practices that are inconsistent with sound fiscal, business, or medical practices and result in an unnecessary cost to the Medicaid program, or in reimbursement for services which are not medically necessary or that fail to meet professionally recognized standards for health care." Providers agreeing to zero or reduced payment from the Primary Payer does not increase DDD's, nor the member's liability for payment. Provider agreement to discounted rates or zero payment for services is inconsistent with sound fiscal business practices and will be reported to DDD's Program Integrity Unit and/or the AHCCCS Office of the Inspector General (OIG).

[DDD Provider Policy Manual Chapter 57](#) outlines the Qualified Vendors responsibility in receiving a clean denial before submitting a COBV Waiver Request to DDD:

- The Qualified Vendor must receive a clean denial from the primary insurance company or companies (more information regarding waiver processing is available in Chapter 57-E DES/DDD Waiver Request).
- The Division/AHCCCS makes payments to Qualified Vendors on behalf of members for medical services rendered, but only to the extent that the member has a legal obligation to pay. This means that if a Division member has third party insurance, the Division's payment will be limited to the member's responsibility (usually the deductible, copay and/or coinsurance).

Town Hall Meetings

The Office of Individual and Family Affairs (OIFA) continues to host town hall meetings for members, families and providers. **The next town hall meeting will be held on Thursday, March 3, 2022, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.** DDD will present updates and announcements and AHCCCS will also present information regarding its America Rescue Plan Act spending plan.

Please share this information with the members and families you serve and encourage them to participate. The town hall schedule and instructions to join via the Internet or phone can be found at bit.ly/dddtownhall.

Get Caught Up

Did you know the Division posts vendor announcements and editions of the Shout on the web? Get caught up and stay informed on all of the recent vendor communications, <https://des.az.gov/services/disabilities/developmental-disabilities/vendors-providers/vendor-announcements>.

Report Fraud, Waste, Abuse and Misconduct

Report to DDD

- Call DDD at 1-877-822-5799
- Send an email to dddfwa@azdes.gov
- Send a letter to DES/DDD
Attn: Corporate Compliance Unit
1789 W Jefferson St.
Mail Drop 2HA1
Phoenix, AZ 85007
- Complete this [online form](#).

Report to AHCCCS

- Call the Office of the Inspector General at 602-417-4193
- Report Online at the [AHCCCS Website](#)
- Report Provider fraud by calling:
 - Maricopa County: 602-417-4045
 - Outside Maricopa County: 1-888-487-6686
- Report Member fraud by calling:
 - Maricopa County: 602-417-4193
 - Outside Maricopa County: 1-888-487-6686
- Submit general questions via email at AHCCCSFraud@azahcccs.gov