



# DDD SHOUT

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## QUALIFIED VENDOR AND PROVIDER NEWSLETTER

November 2025

### **AHCCCS Public Comment Period on Emergency Rule Draft Policies**

The Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) has posted policies for public comment in response to the Emergency Rule related to ALTCs Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) assessments for children under age 18.

The following policies are open for an expedited (14-day) public comment period through November 24, 2025. Please visit the [AHCCCS Public Comment webpage](#) to share your feedback and recommendations on the policies.

- 1620-17A: HCBS Needs Tool (revised)
- 1620-17B: HNT Guidance for Child Tool (revised)
- 1620-17C: HNT Guidance for Adult Tool (revised)
- ACOM 450: ALTCs Extraordinary Care Review Process for Minor Members. This is a new policy that also includes an attachment specific to MCO reporting requirements (Attachment A).

On Thursday, November 13, 2025, AHCCCS hosted a forum to offer a deeper dive into draft policies associated with the Emergency Rule. They are holding a second forum on [Monday, November 17, 2025](#), from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm. AHCCCS is sharing details about the policies released for public comment, how to submit feedback, and additional ways to stay involved. A recording of the forum will also be posted to the [AHCCCS Member Resources webpage](#) under “ALTCs Policies” later this week.

AHCCCS encourages families, providers, and community stakeholders to attend and participate in these important discussions. For more information, visit <https://www.azahcccs.gov>.

### **Assessment Guidance Update**

On October 1, 2025, Support Coordinators began using the new HCBS Needs Tool (HNT) at member planning meetings. On Thursday, October 16, 2025, the Governor announced that AHCCCS would do emergency rulemaking. This process included changes to the HNT and created a new process called Extraordinary Care Review for children under the age of 18.

On October 16, 2025, AHCCCS guidance stated that members under age 18:

- Would not be assessed for Attendant Care and Habilitation until the HNT was revised
- Would have their original hours reverted to match the last HCBS Needs Assessment tool completed prior to October 1, 2025
- Would be authorized for any additional assessed hours resulting from the use of the October 1 HNT.

An [email](#) was sent to members, and a [vendor announcement](#) was sent to all Qualified Vendors with this information on October 16, 2025.

On October 29, 2025, AHCCCS provided updated guidance for all DDD members under age 18. This guidance stated:

- Any assessments completed using the HNT after October 1, 2025, are considered invalid because the tool is invalid
- Additional hours assessed using the October 1, 2025, HNT may not be authorized. DDD must reinstate authorizations so that, during this interim period, members receive the hours of direct care services (attendant care) and habilitation they received prior to October 1, 2025.
- DDD Support Coordinators must complete an assessment using the HNT in place prior to October 1, 2025:
  - When a Health Care Decision Maker has concerns about the reinstatement of hours and prefers the hours/or service assessed from the 10/1 version of the HNT.
  - To reassess members under age 18 who were assessed for the first time using the invalid HNT after October 1, 2025.
  - When they identify members under age 18 who are newly eligible for ALTCS
  - When a member has had a significant change in their condition.
  - When a health care decision maker requests an updated assessment.

**All assessed hours for members under age 18 are subject to change once AHCCCS revises its HNT assessment policies and implements an updated HNT.**

The Division has reinstated all authorizations in Focus that were changed as a result of an assessment completed using the revised HNT after October 1, 2025. A dedicated team is working on this project to ensure it can be completed as quickly and accurately as possible. Qualified Vendors should reference authorizations for services in place prior to October 1, 2025, for Attendant Care and Habilitation services for members under age 18.

In the event that claims were submitted for October 2025 and the Qualified Vendor determines that different hours need to be billed, the Qualified Vendor must follow the claims replacement process. Since these services are subject to EVV policies, Qualified Vendors must ensure that all [EVV visit maintenance and audit documentation](#) requirements have been followed and that the EVV aggregator is updated prior to billing.

**Billing Between 10:00 pm and 6:00 am**

The Division continues to receive questions from Qualified Vendors regarding paid care between the hours of 10:00 pm and 6:00 am. The exact language in House Bill 2945, which became law in April 2025, is “EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN THE MINOR CHILD’S PLAN OF CARE, 5 A PARENT MAY PROVIDE ATTENDANT CARE SERVICES AND HABILITATION SERVICES 6 UNDER THE PROGRAM ONLY BETWEEN 6:00 A.M. AND 10:00 P.M.”

As detailed in the [vendor announcement published on October 2, 2025](#), there is no limit on services provided between the hours of 10:00 pm and 6:00 am if the member has documented needs during those hours.

Although this guidance utilized the HCBS Needs Tool, which was released on October 1 and is now considered invalid, the above guidance remains applicable. Once an assessment has been completed, the member’s needs, including any tasks that require overnight completion and the associated time, must be documented. During the conversation using the decision tree, the member’s planning team can identify who provides the care. A parent is not prohibited from providing care overnight as long as the need is documented. A separate after-hours billing approval is not required to be submitted to the Division if the agency has the updated documentation that shows the authorized hours to be provided overnight.

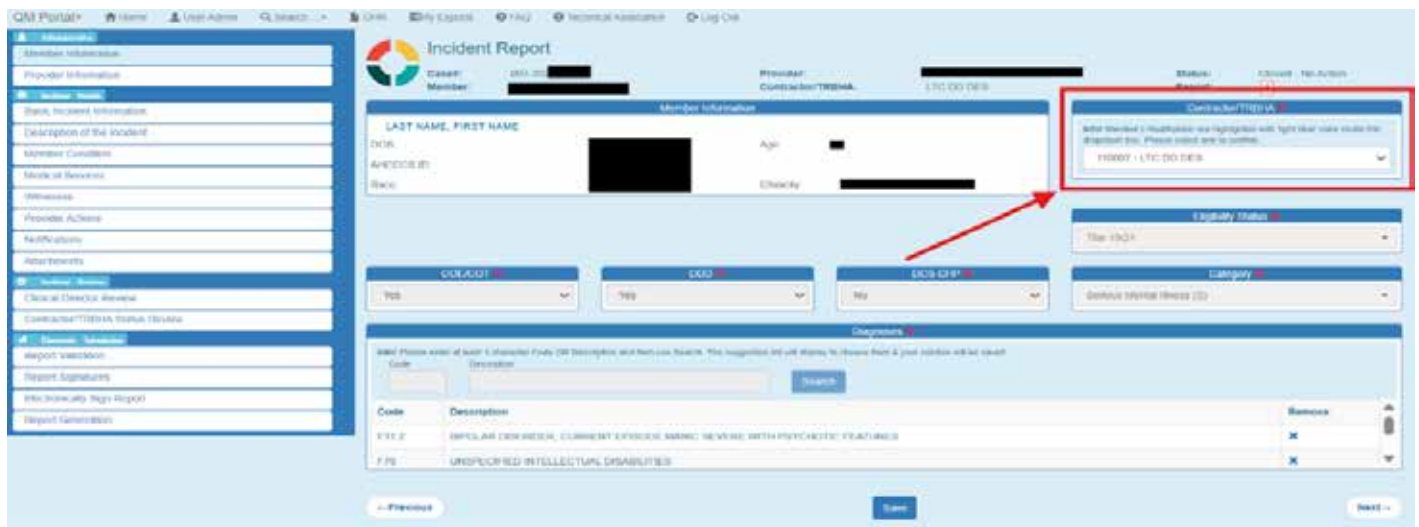
## Incident Reporting Process Change – Effective November 1, 2025

On November 1, 2025, the Division implemented a new process requiring Qualified Vendors to enter incident reports directly into the AHCCCS QM Portal. Since implementation, the Division has identified that the “Contractor/TRBHA” option is not being updated to route incident reports to the Division as outlined in the [User Guide](#). Below is an excerpt detailing the required process. Qualified Vendors must ensure that staff entering incidents complete this required step for all entries into the AHCCCS QM Portal.

### Member Information Setup

The AHCCCS QM Portal automatically populates the Member’s current physical/behavioral health plan in the Contractor/TRBHA field. For DDD members, you will see either **010158 - UnitedHealthCare** or **010306 - Mercy Care Plan**. This section must be updated for the IAD to be sent to the Division.

**REQUIRED:** Use the drop-down to update the Contractor/TRBHA field to: **110007 - LTC DD DES**.

The image shows a screenshot of the AHCCCS QM Portal's Incident Report form. The form is titled "Incident Report" and includes a sidebar on the left with various navigation options. The main form area contains fields for "Member Information" (Last Name, First Name, DOB, Address, etc.), "Contractor/TRBHA" (highlighted with a red box and a red arrow), "OU/AGOT", "DDD", "SUS ID #", "Emergency Status", and "Language". Below these fields is a "Diagnoses" section with a table of codes and descriptions. The "Contractor/TRBHA" dropdown menu is currently set to "110007 - LTC DD DES".

Qualified Vendors with questions should contact the [Division’s Chief Quality Officer](#).

### Survey Request - Provider Workforce Development Toolkit Survey

The Division is seeking feedback from Qualified Vendors to ensure the Provider Workforce Development Toolkit remains relevant, practical, and impactful. By completing the Provider Workforce Development Toolkit survey, Qualified Vendors will help the Division understand:

- How often the resources have been accessed and used.
- Whether the resources are viewed as relevant and useful to Qualified Vendors’ workforce needs.
- The impact of these tools on recruitment, hiring outcomes, and long-term workforce strategies.

The Division is committed to supporting Qualified Vendors in meeting workforce needs and strengthening recruitment efforts across the state. Earlier this year, the Division published the [Provider Workforce Development Toolkit](#), providing resources designed to help address staffing gaps, promote sustainable hiring strategies, and connect Qualified Vendors with statewide workforce partners. Qualified Vendor input is essential. The results will guide improvements to the Toolkit and strengthen statewide workforce development efforts. **The [Provider Workforce Development Toolkit Survey](#) is open until November 25, 2025.** Qualified Vendors and providers with questions related to Workforce Development should send them to the [DDD Workforce Development Team](#).

## Prevention And Support Training Update

As [announced on September 8, 2025](#), the Division is modifying the current Prevention & Support training curriculum that has been in place for nearly a decade. The Division's Office of Professional Development, in collaboration with a group of Qualified Vendor trainers, is revamping the training to include updated content that incorporates current industry best practices. As a reminder, Prevention and Support (P&S) training is a requirement outlined in Article 9 ([Arizona Administrative Code 6-6-901 through 6-6-909](#)) and is required for all direct support professionals providing paid care to members who may exhibit unsafe behavior as documented in the member's planning document and behavior plan. Qualified Vendors with questions about training requirements should review the [Division Behavior Supports Manual Chapter 600 Training](#).

Changes to the curriculum include:

- Updated physical intervention techniques
- Increase in de-escalation skill acquisition
- Increase in activities to understand Behavior and Trauma

Certified Prevention & Support Instructors are required to be recertified annually. As the training curriculum is new, these Instructors will need to attend an in-person four-day training clinic rather than the expected observation completed by the Division training staff.

The schedule for recertification clinics will be posted on the Division's training website later this year. Each Instructor must complete the revised Instructor application prior to attending the clinic.

### Reducing the Need for a Rights Restriction Over Time

Section B.5.e in the [Behavior Support Manual Chapter 200 Prohibitions and Restricted Techniques](#) states, "When a Rights Restriction is used, the Planning Team shall take steps to reduce the need for the Rights Restriction over time. It is not permitted to use a Rights Restriction to address a risk without helping the Member gain skills needed to reduce or eliminate the Rights Restriction." Below are the requirements needed for a behavior plan of a newly proposed Rights Restriction and a proposed reduction of that same previously approved Rights Restriction. More details and an example for each can be found in the [Reducing the Need for a Rights Restriction Over Time standalone document](#).

#### Newly Proposed Rights Restriction

- Proposed Restriction
- Reason for Proposed Restriction
- Previous (lesser intensive) Intervention & Rationale
- Supports in Place
- Estimated Time of Restriction

#### Gradually Fading a Formerly Approved Rights Restrictions

- Proposed Restriction
- Reason for Proposed Restriction
- Previous (lesser intensive) Intervention & Rationale
- Supports in Place
- Estimated Time of Restriction

Qualified Vendors and providers with questions about rights restrictions and fading of rights restrictions,

or who would like to request technical assistance regarding a behavior plan, should contact the [PRC Administration](#).

Qualified Vendors who need technical assistance with plan submission requirements should contact their PRC team for assistance, [PRC District Chair](#), or the [Administrative Assistants](#).

## Holiday Gifts from the Heart Program

The Arizona DES Division of Developmental Disabilities is gearing up for its 35th annual Holiday Gifts from the Heart (HGFTH) program. The Holiday Gifts from the Heart Program is an opportunity for DDD members and their families who are in need of support to have a magical holiday season. The generous support of sponsors brightens the holidays throughout Maricopa County and the City of Tucson.

Holiday Gifts from the Heart sponsors are individuals, families, community groups, and businesses who are looking for a meaningful way to impact the lives of others. From gift cards to sponsoring multiple families with gifts, there are a range of giving opportunities available. The [HGFTH Sponsorship Information Sheet](#) has more information about the different ways to sponsor a member or family. Staff are asked to share this program with any people, organizations, businesses, or other entities they think would be interested in making a difference in a DDD member's life this holiday season. Anyone with questions should contact the Holiday Elves at [dddholidayprogram@azdes.gov](mailto:dddholidayprogram@azdes.gov).

Interested sponsors can use one of the following forms to register.

- [Maricopa County Sponsor Form](#)
- [City of Tucson Sponsor Form](#)

## Report Fraud, Waste, Abuse and Misconduct

Report to DDD:

- Call DDD at 1-877-822-5799
- Send an email to [dddfwa@azdes.gov](mailto: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

- Provider Fraud
  - In Arizona: 602-417-4045
  - Outside Arizona: 1-888-ITS-NOT-OK (1-888-487-6686)
- Report Member Fraud:
  - In Arizona: 602-417-4193
  - Outside Arizona: 1-888-ITS-NOT-OK (1-888-487-6686)
- If you have questions about AHCCCS fraud, abuse of the program, or abuse of a member, email the AHCCCS Office of Inspector General (OIG) at [AHCCCSFraud@azahcccs.gov](mailto:AHCCCSFraud@azahcccs.gov).