



## DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

### **PARENTS TEMPORARILY BECOMING DIRECT CARE WORKERS DURING THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY**

**Effective Date: April 8, 2020 through the end of the COVID-19 Emergency**

Updated: April 10, 2020, April 14, 2020, August 11, 2021, August 3, 2022, August 5, 2022, January 4 2023

In order to make sure families have had the support they need throughout the COVID-19 public health emergency, DDD has temporarily allowed family members who qualify, to become a Direct Care Worker (DCW) and provide paid care to DDD members who are children. This has enabled Parents, Step-Parents, and other legally responsible persons (“parent”) to be temporarily hired by a Qualified Vendor Agency (QVA) to be a Direct Care Worker (DCW) for their child.

When services are assessed and added to a child’s planning document, the Support Coordinator, parent, and any other team members involved in the planning should consider who can best provide the services.

The assessment requirements are outlined in the DDD Medical Policy Manual:

- [1240-A Attendant Care and Homemaker \(Direct Care Services\)](#)
- [1240A-1 Attendant Care Supervision Requirements Age 17 And Under](#)
- [1240-E Habilitation Services](#)

The Division has slightly modified its service assessment criteria only in Policy 1240-A Attendant Care and Homemaker (Direct Care Services) as follows:

#### **Considerations (Attendant Care)**

When assessing the need for this service, the following factors are considered:

- A. Due to advancing age, a temporary or permanent documented physical or cognitive/intellectual disability or documentation of other limitations, the parent or guardian cannot meet a child’s basic care needs.
- B. The child’s intensive medical, physical, or behavioral challenges, which are a result of the disability.
- C. The child, due to a medical condition or procedure related to the disability, is unable to attend their school/work/day program.

The Division has also slightly modified its service assessment criteria in Exhibit 1240A-1 ATTENDANT CARE SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS AGE 17 AND UNDER as follows:

- A. The Division will waive the requirement that the assessment considers if the parent, guardian, or other adult is not in the home;

This means that based on a member’s needs a child may be assessed as requiring supervision if a parent or the guardian is in the home at the time the supervision is needed.

## **CONSIDERATIONS FOR IDENTIFYING A PROVIDER SHOULD INCLUDE:**

- If a current or former QVA who has supported the family has a provider available, this option should be considered first.
- Parents may not provide respite to their own children.
- If a parent is working from home and is already being paid by his or her employer during the time a child is scheduled to receive services, the parent cannot also be paid as a DCW for the child during that time.
- If a parent does not want additional people coming into the home during this time, becoming a DCW might be the best option, especially if the member has high-risk factors including:
  - Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
  - Serious heart conditions
  - A compromised immune system
  - Severe obesity
  - Diabetes
  - Chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
  - Liver disease

## **BECOMING A DCW**

A parent who wants to be a DCW must meet the qualifications to be a direct care worker. Most QVA can assist a parent to become qualified. A parent should contact a QVA they currently have a relationship with to determine if they qualify to be hired as a DCW. If a parent doesn't currently have a relationship with a QVA, they can contact their Support Coordinator and ask for a vendor directory or use the online DDD Home and Community Based (HCBS) Directory, <https://ddd.azdes.gov/Organization/DDD/DDDProviderSearch>.

To Qualify you must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Have the following documentation (the QVA can help)
  - Evidence of being trained in Article 9 (can be virtual during the emergency)
  - Evidence of being trained in CPR/ First Aid (can be virtual during the emergency)
  - Evidence of completing DCW Training (by September 30, 2021)
  - Evidence of being trained on the delivery of habilitation services (as appropriate)
  - Evidence a request for fingerprints clearance was submitted, unless the only service being provided is attendant care and the parent resides in the same home as the member
  - Pass background checks including checks of the Department of Child Safety (DCS) Central Registry and the Adult Protective Services (APS) Registry
- Be trained on and agree to follow any QVA specific requirements, for example: review of QVA policy and procedures, QVA employee handbook, training on timesheets, training on progress reporting requirements, etc.

Transition: QVAs are required to track the employment of parents of minor children hired under this exception. At the end of the Covid-19 emergency, DDD will rescind this exception and parents will no longer be able to be paid to provide care for their children (returning to policies in place before the pandemic). QVAs shall assist with the transition to a non-parent DCW if the identified services are still needed.