

50 VENDOR CALL REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALIFIED VENDORS

REVISION DATES: 05/10/2023, 3/02/22, 3/22/21

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 5, 2018

REFERENCES: A.A.C. R6-6-2101; A.R.S. § 36-551; Qualified Vendor Agreement

PURPOSE

To establish the non-residential and residential Vendor Call requirements for Qualified Vendors and to outline the process for Qualified Vendors to request release from service authorization.

DEFINITIONS

1. "Auto-Assignment" means the process used by the Division to randomly select a Qualified Vendor to provide services to a Member.
2. "Day" means a calendar day unless specified otherwise in this policy. If a due date to complete an action falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the due date is extended to the following Monday. If a due date falls on a state observed holiday, the due date is extended to the following day, excluding weekend days.

3. “Direct Referral” means a phone call, voicemail, and/or email from the Division to one or more Qualified Vendors requesting the Qualified Vendors’ availability and ability to provide services for a specific Member or specific group of Members.
4. “Emergency” means an immediate need for services due to an unexpected change in the Member’s needs or loss of support system that may result in injury to the Member or exposure to a harmful situation.
5. “Emergency Vendor Call” means a notification sent through Focus inviting Qualified Vendors to submit a response indicating their availability to provide services for a specific Member or specific group of Members, who urgently require services due to an unexpected change in the Member’s needs or loss of support system that may result in injury to the Member or exposure to a harmful situation.
6. “Enhanced Behavioral Group Home” means a time-limited service, designed for Members who have been deemed to need intensive behavioral supports, supports the Member’s choice to

live in and access opportunities in their communities through services offered in their group home.

7. "Expansion" means adding capacity to the Division's Network of group home services. Expansion capacity is determined by the Division not to exceed six individuals per setting.
8. "Expansion Presentation" means an interview the Division and Members have with a Qualified Vendor(s) that respond to a Vendor Call for Expansion.
9. "Expansion Award Letter" means a written response to the Qualified Vendor from the Division notifying them of the approval to add a new group home with specific parameters to the Division's network.
10. "Focus" means a suite of software applications and programs developed to support the process of delivering ALTCS and State only funded services to eligible Members. Focus includes the management of information regarding Member demographics, service plans, service authorizations, Vendor Calls, and claims. For purposes of this policy, non-residential Vendor Calls are

issued in the Focus Client Application and residential Vendor

Calls are issued in the Focus Program Staffing Application (PSA).

11. "Member" means the same as "client" as defined in A.R.S. § 36-551.
12. "Planning Document" means a written statement of services to be provided to a Member, including habilitation goals and objectives, that is developed following an initial eligibility determination and revised after periodic reevaluations.
13. "Planning Team" means a group of people including the Member; the Responsible Person; the Support Coordinator; other State of Arizona Department of Economic Security staff, as necessary; and any person selected by the Member, Responsible Person, or the Department.
14. "Qualified Vendor" means any person or entity that has a Qualified Vendor Agreement with the Division of Developmental Disabilities.
15. "Receiving Group Home" means a Division group home developed using the Vendor Call process to identify vacant

capacity to be used for Members with an Emergency need for group home services.

16. “Residential Services” means, for the purpose of this policy, the same as Community Residential Setting defined in A.R.S. § 36-551 (15), except this policy does not apply to state-operated services.
17. “Responsible Person” means the parent or guardian of a developmentally disabled minor, the guardian of a developmentally disabled adult or a developmentally disabled adult who is a Member for whom no guardian has been appointed.
18. “Vendor Call” means a notification sent through Focus inviting Qualified Vendors to submit a response indicating their availability to provide services for a specific Member or specific group of Members, based on the requirements defined in the Member’s Planning Document.

POLICY

A. STANDARD VENDOR CALLS - Non-Residential Services

1. Qualified Vendors shall view Vendor Calls in the Focus Client Application for all services they are approved to provide in their Qualified Vendor Agreements.
2. Qualified Vendors shall designate and authorize staff, with their own individual Focus login, to respond to Vendor Calls within Focus to avoid delays.
3. Qualified Vendors shall respond to each Vendor Call issued in Focus with either a “yes” or “no” response.
4. Qualified Vendors may request additional information about the Member to determine if they can provide the service needed.
 - a. Qualified Vendors are not required to respond “yes” to the Vendor Call if they request to review additional information.
 - b. If the Member has a current HIPAA release on file, the information will be sent to the Qualified Vendor by secure email within two days by the support coordinator.

- c. If the Member does not have a current HIPAA release on file, or the Member does not agree to sign a HIPAA release, the Member's protected health information will be redacted from the Vendor Call (county and zip code will remain).
5. Prior to responding "yes" or "no" to a Vendor Call in Focus, Qualified Vendors shall review the Vendor Call in its entirety to determine if they can meet the needs and preferences of the Member as outlined in the Vendor Call.
 - a. If the Qualified Vendor determines that they do have the resources and qualified staff available to meet the Member's needs, the Qualified Vendor shall respond "yes" to the Vendor Call as directed in Focus.
 - b. If the Qualified Vendor determines that they do not have the resources or qualified staff available, then the Qualified Vendor shall respond "no" to the Vendor Call.
6. Qualified Vendors may change their response between "yes" and "no" in Focus at any time until the Vendor Call closes.

7. After responding “yes” to the Vendor Call, if a Qualified Vendor determines that they can no longer meet the Member’s needs or no longer has qualified staff available, the Qualified Vendor shall change the “yes” response to “no” response in Focus.
8. The Division shall maintain non-Residential Services Vendor Calls as open until the Qualified Vendor is selected or auto-assigned.

B. STANDARD VENDOR CALLS - Residential Services

1. Qualified Vendors shall view Vendor Calls in the Focus PSA for all services they are approved to provide in their Qualified Vendor Agreements.
2. Qualified Vendors shall have designated and authorized staff, with their own individual Focus PSA login, to respond to Vendor Calls.
3. The Division shall ensure standard Vendor Calls remain open for five calendar days.
4. Interested Qualified Vendors that have the available capacity of qualified staff to provide the service as outlined in the Vendor

Call shall respond to the Vendor Call in writing by using the Focus PSA.

5. Prior to submitting a written response to the Vendor Call in the Focus PSA, Qualified Vendors shall review, at minimum, the Planning Document in its entirety to determine if they can meet the needs and preferences of the Member.
6. If the Division has a signed HIPAA release, the Division shall send a secure email with the Member's additional information to the interested Qualified Vendor.
7. If the Division does not have a signed HIPAA release, the Division shall send a secure email to the interested Qualified Vendor with the Member's personal identifiable information redacted.
8. Once the interested Qualified Vendor has reviewed the Member's additional information and determined staff are available and qualified to meet the Member's needs, the Qualified Vendor shall submit a written response to the Division via the Focus PSA as directed in the Vendor Call by the close date.

9. The Qualified Vendor shall respond to the Vendor Call with the following information in the written response to the Division:
 - a. Date Qualified Vendor can start services.
 - b. Name of the Qualified Vendor.
 - c. Contact name.
 - d. Contact phone number.
 - e. Contact email.
 - f. The experience and background to provide the requested services.
 - i. The number of years the Qualified Vendor has provided services, or if the Qualified Vendor has not provided services, other pertinent experience; and
 - ii. The number and type of homes the Qualified Vendor currently operates for DDD or other state agencies, if applicable.
 - g. A written plan to meet identified needs as described in the Member's residential assessment profile.

- i. A description of how the Qualified Vendor will provide necessary and Member-specific training to staff.
- ii. A description of how the Qualified Vendor will meet the Member's cultural or linguistic needs.
- h. A description of how the Qualified Vendor will meet the Member's special accommodations, to include:
 - i. A description of how complex support needs, including medical or behavioral accommodations, will be met, including assurances that the Qualified Vendor will work collaboratively with the Member's health plan to incorporate any required functional behavioral assessment recommendations.
 - ii. A description of any environmental modifications needed.
- i. A time frame by which the service(s) will be delivered.
 - i. A description of the timeframe that service delivery will begin, which will include the Member or

- Responsible Person visiting the residential setting in their preferred geographic location.
- ii. A description of all required inspection time frames from the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), the Division's Monitoring, Office of Licensure, Certification and Regulation, and site code issuance not to exceed 90 days, for group home Expansions.
 - j. Any additional information responsive to the Vendor Call for services.
 - i. The date by which the Qualified Vendor will offer the Member or Responsible Person a copy of the vendor's policy manual.
 - ii. A description of how the Qualified Vendor will involve Members in the daily planned activities of the home.
10. The Division may require the Qualified Vendor to provide additional information in the Qualified Vendor's response to

Expansion Vendor Calls for Enhanced Behavioral Group Homes and Receiving Group Homes.

11. After the Vendor Call closes, the Division shall provide the Responsible Person, as applicable, with all responses that meet the needs of the Member as outlined in the Vendor Call.
12. The Division shall notify Qualified Vendors if their written response does not meet the needs specified in the Vendor Call.
13. If a Residential Services Vendor Call closes without identifying a Qualified Vendor, the Division shall conduct Direct Referrals as outlined in Section D. of this policy.

C. AUTO-ASSIGNMENT – Non-Residential and Residential Services

1. If a Member or Responsible Person is unwilling, unable, or does not select a Qualified Vendor from the vendors who respond “yes” to the Vendor Call in Focus for non-Residential Services or submit a written response in the Focus PSA for Residential Services, the Division shall auto-assign the service to a Qualified Vendor.

2. The Division shall include a Qualified Vendor that responds “yes” to the Vendor Call in Focus or submits a written response in Focus PSA in the auto-assignment process as necessary.
3. The Division shall notify the selected Qualified Vendor of the auto-assignment within one business day.
4. The Qualified Vendor shall contact the Member or Responsible Person within one business day of being notified of the Auto-Assignment.

D. DIRECT REFERRALS – Non-Residential and Residential Services

1. The Division shall make Direct Referrals if a Vendor Call does not receive any responses within seven days for non-Residential Services or within five days for Residential Services.
2. The Division shall make Direct Referrals in the Member’s preferred geographic area and may extend the search to proximal areas or statewide.
3. The Division shall continue to make Direct Referrals until the service is assigned or is no longer needed by the Member.

4. Qualified Vendors shall respond to the Division's Direct Referrals within one business day.
5. Qualified Vendors who accept the Direct Referral for non-Residential Services shall meet the requirements in Section (A)(5)(a)(b) of this policy.
6. Qualified Vendors who accept the Direct Referral for Residential Services shall meet the requirements in Section (B)(5) of this policy.

E. EMERGENCY VENDOR CALLS – Non-Residential and Residential Services

1. The Division shall issue Emergency Vendor Calls for Members by the using following methods:
 - a. Posting the Emergency Vendor Call in Focus for non-Residential Services; or
 - b. Posting the Emergency Vendor Call in Focus PSA for Residential Services; and

- c. Making Direct Referrals as outlined in Section D(1)(2)(3) of this policy, including contacting Receiving Group homes first for Members needing a group home service.
2. Qualified Vendors shall meet the requirements in D(4)(5)(6) of this policy for responding to Direct Referrals.
3. Qualified Vendors shall respond to Emergency Vendor Calls for non-Residential Services as required in Section A. of this policy.
4. Qualified Vendors shall respond to Emergency Vendor Calls for Residential Services as required in Section B. of this policy.
5. The Division shall maintain Emergency Vendor Calls for Residential Services as open in the Focus PSA for up to three business days.
6. The Division shall maintain Emergency Vendor Calls for non-Residential Services as open until a Qualified Vendor is selected, it is no longer an Emergency need, or the service is no longer needed.
7. Qualified Vendors that respond to the Emergency Vendor Call for Residential Services may meet with the Member or Responsible

Person to coordinate the move if time permits prior to providing Residential Services.

F. SELECTION – Non-Residential and Residential Services

1. The Division shall notify the Qualified Vendor within one business day of being informed of the Member or Responsible Person’s selection.
2. The selected Qualified Vendor for non-Residential Services shall complete the following within one business day of being notified of the Member or Responsible Person’s selection by the Division:
 - a. Acknowledge the service authorization in Focus; and
 - b. Contact the Member or Responsible Person to identify a date to start services.
3. The Division shall notify the Qualified Vendors that responded “yes” to Vendor Calls for Residential Services that were not selected within 14 calendar days of the Vendor Call closing.
4. Prior to providing Residential Services, the selected Qualified Vendor shall:
 - a. Acknowledge the service authorization(s) in Focus.

- b. Verify that the service site is approved by the Division.
 - c. Attend a meeting with the Member's Planning Team to discuss plans for ensuring a smooth transition for the Member.
5. Following the Member moving into a residential setting, the selected Qualified Vendor shall attend a post-move meeting with the Member's Planning Team to discuss behavioral health supports when necessary, and habilitative outcomes as per timelines required in Division Medical Policy Chapter 1620-E.

G. EXPANSION - All Group Homes

1. The Division shall consider expanding the network when all existing options for identified Member(s) have been exhausted or if a network capacity need has been identified. The Division shall send expansion Vendor Calls to:
 - a. Meet the needs of a group of Members.
 - b. Develop new or vacant capacity.

2. The Division shall require new group homes to meet cost effectiveness requirements outlined in the Division's Medical Policy 1620-C.
3. Qualified Vendors shall respond to Expansion Vendor Calls by meeting the requirements as outlined in Section B of this policy.
4. The Qualified Vendor shall participate in Expansion Presentations at the Division's request.
5. The Qualified Vendor shall develop all materials used in Expansion Presentations, such as brochures, videos, or slide decks, in accordance with Provider Policy Chapter 34.
6. Members shall select the preferred Qualified Vendor based on the collective decision of the Members or Responsible Persons.
7. The Division shall notify the Qualified Vendors that were not selected.
8. The Division shall notify the Qualified Vendor when selected with an Expansion Award Letter.
 - a. The Qualified Vendor shall meet all required parameters of the Expansion Award Letter.

- b. The Qualified Vendor shall contact the Division with any concerns regarding the parameters of the Expansion Award Letter.
 - c. The Qualified Vendor Shall provide updates on the status of the Expansion awarded as determined by the Division.
9. The Qualified Vendor shall, within 90 calendar days of receiving the Expansion Award Letter, complete the following:
 - a. Obtain a home that is owned or leased by the awarded Qualified Vendor within the parameters documented in the expansion award letter.
 - b. Obtain a license for the group home as required by ADHS.
 - c. Add the new home address to the service site section in the Division's Contract Administration System.
 - d. Obtain an HCBS certificate from the Division for the home.
 - e. Register the home with AHCCCS as a provider type 25-DD group home.
 - f. Submit an inspection request to DDD Monitoring at DDDMonitoring@azdes.gov and pass the inspection.

- g. Obtain a site code by contacting the assigned DDD Contract Specialist.
 - h. Provide communication at a cadence determined by the Division on recruitment efforts to obtain appropriate staffing levels.
10. The Division may rescind an Expansion Award if the parameters outlined in the Expansion Award Letter are not met, not met timely, or as determined by the Division.

**H. REQUEST FOR RELEASE FROM SERVICE AUTHORIZATION –
Non-Residential and Residential Services**

- 1. Prior to discontinuing providing services to a Member, the Qualified Vendor shall notify the Planning Team and obtain agreement from the Planning Team.
- 2. The Qualified Vendor shall submit a request for release from service authorization to the DDD Customer Service Center (CSC) if a request for release is not agreed upon by the Planning Team.
- 3. The CSC shall process the request and submit it to the District Program Manager (DPM) for resolution.

4. The DPM shall consider the following situations as applicable when reviewing requests for release of service authorization:
 - a. The Qualified Vendor has documented attempts to contact the Member, without success, and services have not been provided.
 - b. The Qualified Vendor responded “yes” to the Vendor Call, the Member or Responsible Person subsequently changed the conditions or expectations, and the Qualified Vendor can no longer meet the Member’s needs, and services have not been provided.
5. The DPM shall notify the Qualified Vendor of the decision within 21 calendar days.
 - a. If the request is denied, the DPM shall include the reasons for denial in the notification.
 - b. A Qualified Vendor who disagrees with the decision of the DPM may file a grievance as provided by A.A.C. R6-6-1801 et seq. and A.A.C. R6-6-2201 et seq.

6. The Qualified Vendor shall continue to provide service until a new Qualified Vendor is authorized.