

DDD News 2023

Dec 27, 2023: FY2024 Wage Increase for Direct Support Professionals and Supervisors

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) is releasing the following information related to the January 1, 2024 Direct Support Professional (DSP) and DSP Supervisor wage increase. DDD is pleased to report that, due to the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Appropriations Act, the January 1, 2024 wage increase will be about \$0.50 higher (about \$1.75 per hour as opposed to about \$1.25 per hour).

Consistent with previous years, the aforementioned increases will occur via upward adjustments to fee-for-service program budgets, and to fee-for-service reimbursement rates for the following services: Career Planning, Community Based Supports, Community Inclusion Services, Day Habilitation, Individual Supports, Prevocational Training (Individual and Group), Respite, and Supported Employment (Individual and Group). For information, please see:

- [FAQ: DSP and DSP Supervisor Wage Increases, and Corresponding Updates to Fee-for-Service Reimbursement Rates and Program Budgets](#)
- [DDD Information Bulletin: DSP and DSP Supervisor Wage Increases, and Corresponding Updates to Fee-for-Service Reimbursement Rates and Program Budgets](#)
- [Public Notice](#) (posted Dec. 26, 2023 to the NJ Human Services [Public Notices](#) page)
- [Quick Guide to Updates Fee-for-Service Reimbursement Rates](#) (effective January 1, 2024)
- [Quick Guide to Updated Fee-for-Service Program Budgets](#) (effective January 1, 2024)

Dec 13, 2023: NEW WEBINAR! Incident Reporting: An Overview for Individuals, Families and Caregivers

This webinar will provide an overview of incident reporting as it relates to the safety and support of people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities enrolled with and receiving services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities: what it is, why it's important, and the various steps in the process. While the targeted audience is people receiving DDD-funded services and their families and caregivers, the information is also relevant for support coordinators and coordination supervisors, supports brokerage and other service providers, and direct support professionals and self-directed employees. Anyone may register to attend.

Webinar Title: Incident Reporting: An Overview for Individuals, Families and Caregivers

Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2024

Time: 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

[Register now for Jan. 3 Incident Reporting Webinar](#)

Dec 1, 2023: Upcoming Networking Opportunities for Individuals and Families Self-Directing Their Services

The DDD Office of Education on Self-Directed Services (OESDS) is hosting the following networking events in December for adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD) and families who are or are interested in self-directing some or all their DDD-funded services.

In-person Self-Direction Family Networking Sessions

Advance Registration is required and we now have online registration available!

- Monday, December 4, 2023, from 12 noon – 2 pm at the NJ DDD Freehold Office: [Register now for the Dec. 4 Family Networking Session](#)
- Wednesday, December 6, 2023, from 1 – 3 pm at the Burlington County Library: [Register now for the Dec. 6 Family Networking Session](#)

To learn more about the Family Networking Sessions, visit the [OESDS](#) webpage or email the [OESDS Helpdesk](#).

Virtual Self-Direction Peer to Peer Network Session

Adults with IDD who are self-directing or are interested in learning more about self-direction are welcome to attend.

- Tuesday, December 5, 2023, from 6 – 7:30 pm on Zoom: [Register now for the Dec. 5 Peer to Peer Networking Session](#)

To learn more about Peer to Peer Networking Sessions, visit the [Self-Advocacy](#) webpage.

Nov 28, 2023: NJ Human Services & The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities Launch 'Jobs That Care New Jersey' to Highlight Direct Care Job Opportunities

New Site Lists Jobs for Direct Support Professionals & Certified Home Health Aides

New Jersey Human Services and The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities today announced the launch of the [Jobs that Care New Jersey website](#) highlighting the availability of jobs providing direct supports for individuals with disabilities and older adults.

People can search the new site to find jobs as:

- Direct support professionals who support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to participate in home and community life while promoting well-being; and
- Certified home health aides who assist adults ages 60 and older, and children and adults with disabilities or chronic medical conditions, to live in their homes by supporting daily activities.

As the website evolves, additional jobs in the direct support and service workforce will be added. Human Services has also awarded funding to an advertising firm to design a promotional campaign in the coming months to highlight the website and recruit direct care workers to the home and community-based care field.

Read the full NJ Human Services [Nov. 28 press release](#) ([Nov. 28 press release-Spanish](#)).

Nov 15, 2023: NCI Individual and Family Surveys - We want to hear from you!

We are pleased to share that in 2023/2024 the Division will again administer National Core Indicators (NCI) surveys for individuals and their families and guardians. Next month, Division staff will begin outreach to individuals and families to request voluntary participation in one of the following surveys:

- In-Person Survey – for individuals 21 and older who are receiving at least one Division-funded service in addition to Support Coordination.
- Adult Family Survey – an online survey for family members who have an adult (21 years or older) with an intellectual/developmental disability who lives in the family home and receives at least one DDD service in addition to Support Coordination.
- Family/Guardian Survey – an online survey for family members/guardians who have an adult (21 years or older) with an intellectual/developmental disability who lives outside of the family home and receives at least one DDD service in addition to Support Coordination.

Please see the Division's [NCI Survey Overview](#) for more information.

Encuestas individuales o de familia de los NCI – ¡Queremos saber de usted!

Nos complace compartir que en 2023/2024 la División volverá a administrar las encuestas de los Indicadores básicos nacionales (*National Core Indicators* – NCI, por sus siglas en inglés) para individuos y sus familias y tutores legales. Comenzando el próximo mes, los empleados de la División empezarán la divulgación a individuos y familias para pedir la participación voluntaria en una de las siguientes encuestas:

- Encuesta en persona – para individuos mayores de 21 años que están recibiendo por lo menos un servicio fundado por la División además de coordinación de apoyo.
- Encuesta de familia adulta – una encuesta en línea para miembros de la familia que tengan un adulto (mayor de 21 años de edad) con una discapacidad del desarrollo/intelectual que vivan en el hogar y reciban, por lo menos, un servicio de la DDD además de coordinación de apoyo.
- Encuesta de familia/tutor legal – una encuesta en línea para miembros de familia/tutores legales que tengan un adulto (mayor de 21 años de edad) con una discapacidad del desarrollo/intelectual que vivan fuera del hogar y reciban por lo menos un servicio de la DDD además de coordinación de apoyo.

Para más información, consulte el [resumen de la encuesta de los NCI](#) de la División.

Nov 14, 2023: Proposed Readoption with Amendments

A Proposed Readoption with Amendments: N.J.A.C 10:46D, *Contribution to Care and Maintenance Requirements*, was published on the New Jersey Department of Human Services [Proposed Rules and Amendments](#) page on November 6, 2023. There is a 60-day formal public comment period, which ends January 5, 2024. Written comments may be submitted as follows:

- Electronically: DDD-CO.LAPO@dhs.nj.gov
- USPS Mail: Carol Jones, Administrative Practice Officer, Division of Developmental Disabilities, PO Box 726, Trenton, NJ 08625-0726
- Fax: 609-341-2451

Nov 8, 2023: OPIA Hosting Focus Groups on Health and Healthcare

The Human Services Office of Program Integrity and Accountability (OPIA) is hosting a series of virtual focus groups in November to obtain feedback from families, to help guide efforts related to quality improvement and health outcomes of people served in DHS licensed residences and/or served by DDD provider organizations. The focus groups will be held via Zoom on the following dates and times:

- Monday, November 27, 2023 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 29, 2023 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Thursday, November 30, 2023 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Space is limited, so please register by Monday November 20, 2023. Register here: [Family Focus Group Registration](#)

Note: The November focus groups are intended for families of individuals receiving services from DDD. Focus groups for individuals, providers and mixed stakeholder groups will be scheduled in early 2024.

Oct 24, 2023: Information Sessions on DDD Self-Directed Service Models

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (Division) offers two Self-Directed Employee (SDE) models that individuals electing to self-direct their services can choose: the Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent Model administered by Public Partnerships, LLC, and the Agency with Choice Model administered by Easterseals NJ. In response to continued interest in these models, informational webinars are once again being offered. Please use the below links for these opportunities.

Easterseals' Agency with Choice SDE Model Information Session

- Monday November 27, 2023, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- [Register in advance for this Information Session](#)

Public Partnerships' Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent SDE Model Information Session

- Wednesday November 29, 2023, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- [Register in advance for this Information Session](#)

To learn more about self-directed services and the two SDE models available through the Division, visit our [Self-Directed Services](#) webpage.

Sep 21, 2023: Rescinding of Temporary Service Modifications

In 2020, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) put Temporary Service Modifications in place to support alternative methods of delivering needed services during the federal Public Health Emergency (PHE). The PHE ended on May 11, 2023, with a federal allowance to extend temporary modifications six months beyond that date.

As outlined in this [Information Bulletin on Temporary Service Modifications](#), DDD's Temporary Service Modifications will end on November 7, 2023 (six months after the ending of the PHE), with two exceptions:

- As noted in the August 2023 policy manual revisions, community vendors providing classes under the service category, Goods & Services are permitted to deliver their services virtually or in person.
- Until further notice, providers of Physical Therapy (PT), Occupational Therapy (OT), and Speech Therapy (ST) are permitted to continue delivering DDD-funded services either virtually or in person, in alignment with the current Medicaid State Plan practice permitting a virtual option for PT, OT, and ST.

Sep 11, 2023: NEW WEBINAR! Learning to Self-Direct Your Services: Selecting a Fiscal Intermediary, Getting Enrolled, and Recruiting Self-Directed Employees

Friday, Sep 29, 2023, from 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

[REGISTER NOW for Learning to Self-Direct Your Services: Selecting a Fiscal Intermediary, Getting Enrolled, and Recruiting Self-Directed Employees](#)

The Division of Developmental Disabilities Office of Education on Self-Directed Services will present *Learning to Self-Direct Your Services: Selecting a Fiscal Intermediary, Getting Enrolled, and Recruiting Self-Directed Employees*, a comprehensive webinar discussion, including live Q&A. This webinar is open to anyone interested in learning about self-direction and about the self-directed service options available to people enrolled with DDD. This discussion may be of special interest to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families, support coordinators, supports brokers, and advocates.

Aug 31, 2023: DDD Issues RFP for Emergency Capacity Services Programs

On August 30, 2023, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) issued a [Request for Proposals \(RFP\) for Emergency Capacity Services Homes for Individuals with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities](#).

Through this RFP, two or more providers (which may include the currently-contracted providers who apply) will be awarded funding to operate eight existing Emergency Capacity Services (ECS) Programs.

The primary purpose of the ECS Programs is to provide community residential/day supports for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who are in need of immediate services due to homelessness or other emergent circumstances.

Aug 28, 2023: Brief, Anonymous Survey for Providers of DDD-funded Services

The Statewide Family Advisory Council, a collaborative partnership between the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) and the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities, has convened a workgroup to research electronic record-keeping platforms to help facilitate communication between health providers, disability service providers, and families and guardians. The goal of the workgroup is to identify potential methods for improving health and wellbeing outcomes for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) who are receiving DDD services.

The six-person workgroup consists of three family members and three service provider representatives. The workgroup's first task is identifying the top two or three electronic

records platforms (for example, Therap, Foothold) already commonly in use by DDD service providers.

With this end in mind, agencies currently providing DDD-funded services for New Jersey adults with IDD are invited and encouraged to complete an anonymous three-question [Provider Survey](#) by or before September 8, 2023.

Please note there is no state or federal requirement that providers use an electronic records platform. This survey is simply to learn which platforms, among those agencies who use one, are the most commonly used by DDD service providers.

Aug 21, 2023: Readoption with Amendments Announced

A [Notice of Readoption with Amendments of N.J.A.C. 10:48A, Background Checks and Repeal and New Rule for N.J.A.C. 10:48A-3.7](#), was published on the New Jersey Department of Human Services [Rule Adoptions](#) page on August 21, 2023.

Aug 14, 2023: DDD Issues Request for Proposals (RFP) for Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent and Financial Management Services

As you may be aware, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) offers individuals the option to self-direct some or all their services through one of two self-directed service models: Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA) or Agency with Choice (ACW). The state contracts with a financial management service provider/fiscal intermediary to administer each of these models, and the contract with the fiscal intermediary for the VF/EA model (Public Partnerships LLC) is ending. This requires the state to begin the process of re-procuring financial management services for the VF/EA model.

To meet this requirement, DDD, within the NJ Department of Human Services, issued the following on August 14, 2023:

- [Notice of Funding Availability](#)
- [Request for Proposals: Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent and Financial Management Services](#)

Please note this does not impact the fiscal intermediary for the Agency with Choice Model, which is Easterseals NJ.

Aug 11, 2023: New Information Sessions on DDD Self-Directed Employee Models

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (Division) offers two Self-Directed Employee (SDE) models that individuals electing to self-direct their services can choose: the

Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent Model administered by Public Partnerships, LLC, and the Agency with Choice Model administered by Easterseals NJ. In response to continued interest in these models, informational webinars are once again being offered. Please use the below links for these opportunities.

Public Partnerships' Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent SDE Model Information Session

- Wednesday August 23, 2023, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- [Join this Information Session](#)

Easterseals' Agency with Choice SDE Model Information Session

- Monday August 28, 2023, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- [Register in advance for this Information Session](#)

Learn more at [Self-Directed Services/Self-Direction](#).

Aug 11, 2023: New Webinar: Understanding the Community Care Program Waiting List

Friday, September 8, 2023
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

[REGISTER NOW for 9/8 Webinar, Understanding the Community Care Program Waiting List](#)

The Division of Developmental Disabilities Waiting List and Special Projects Unit will present *Understanding the Community Care Program (CCP) Waiting List*, a live webinar discussion, including Q&A, about what it means to be on the priority waiting list; what it means when your name is reached on that list; and things you can do to prepare while you are waiting. This webinar is open to anyone and may be of special interest to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families, support coordinators, service providers, and advocates.

Aug 8, 2023: August 2023 Policy Manual Updates

The Division of Developmental Disabilities has updated the policy and procedure manuals for our Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver programs, the Community Care Program and Supports Program. You will find a summary of changes on page two of each manual, and a detailed overview will be provided at the next DDD Update Webinar on August 24 ([Register Now](#)).

Please hit the URL refresh button to be sure you are viewing the August 2023 version:

- [Community Care Program Policy Manual](#) (August 2023)

- [Supports Program Policy Manual](#) (August 2023)

Jul 26, 2023: DDD and Boggs Center Partner to Offer Peer EDUcation Series

The Division of Developmental Disabilities and [The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities](#) are partnering to offer a Peer EDUcation Series for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

The Series prepares adults with IDD to help educate their peers about important disability-related topics, including:

- the service system in New Jersey
- self-direction
- person-centered planning
- community resources
- self-determination

Interested in becoming a Peer Educator? [Learn more and apply!](#)

Jul 10, 2023: Day Habilitation Certification Audit Process and Tool

The Division of Development Disabilities (DDD) Provider Performance and Monitoring Unit invites all Day Habilitation providers to review the new [Day Habilitation Certification Audit Process](#) and corresponding [Day Habilitation Certification Audit Tool](#). Both documents are available on DDD's [Day Habilitation Certification](#) webpage.

Please direct any questions about the Audit Process and Tool to DDD.PPMU@dhs.nj.gov.

Jul 7, 2023: NCI Family Survey Open Through August 31, 2023

[National Core Indicators®](#) (NCI) is a collaborative national effort to measure and improve outcomes of participants in public human service systems. Each year, to support this effort, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) facilitates completion of NCI surveys by individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), their families and caregivers, and IDD service providers in New Jersey (see DDD's [overview](#) for more information).

This week, DDD mailed 22,000 NCI Family Survey invitation letters via USPS to the primary caregivers/family members and guardians of individuals receiving at least one DDD service in addition to Support Coordination. Each invitation includes a survey link and unique access code. Participation in the NCI Family Survey is anonymous and voluntary. You do not need to complete the survey if you do not want

to, but it is strongly encouraged. The information collected will help us better understand caregiver/family experiences with the IDD service system and improve the quality of services for everyone.

The NCI Family Survey closes on August 31, 2023. If you have questions about the survey or wish to request an online invitation or hard copy of the survey in English or other languages, please contact DDD.NCI@dhs.nj.gov.

Jul 6, 2023: Family Networking Sessions Offered By the Office of Education on Self-Directed Services

The Office of Education on Self-Directed Services (OESDS) is hosting in-person [Family Networking Sessions](#). These in-person sessions are offered in different locations throughout the State to individuals and families who are, or are interested in, self-directing their services. The sessions offer an opportunity for individuals and families to build connections with others in their communities, and provide a place for discussion and resource sharing. The dates of upcoming networking sessions are:

- Wednesday, July 12: Burlington County, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
- Wednesday, July 19: Monmouth County, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
- Wednesday, August 1: Cape May County, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Advance registration is required. Please email OESDS at DDD.OESDS@dhs.nj.gov for more information and to register.

Jul 6, 2023: FY24 Rate Increases

As part of the FY24 Budget, certain Fee-For-Service rates⁶ are increasing. The required [Public Notice](#) and impacted [Rates](#) were published on June 30, 2023. The new rates will be implemented on or about July 8, 2023 via iRecord. For more information (including information on claiming and new Up-To Budget amounts) please review [FY24 Rate Changes](#)

Jul 3, 2023 NCI-IDD State of the Workforce Survey 2022 Extended Through July 31, 2023

In April 2023, provider agencies who employ direct support professionals received an invitation along with instructions from the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to participate in the [National Core Indicators](#) (NCI) State of the Workforce Survey for Calendar Year 2022. The NCI State of the Workforce Survey has now been extended until July 31, 2023. It is critical that we hear from as many members of the DDD Provider Community as possible to ensure valid results. We are counting on your participation!

Please see the Division's [NCI State of the Workforce Survey Overview](#) for more information.

If your organization has not received an invitation to participate, please contact DDD.NCI@dhs.nj.gov.

Jun 23, 2023: DDD Releases Request for Proposals

On June 22, 2023, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) released *Request for Proposals To Increase Community Capacity of Provider Managed Housing for Individuals With Acute Behavioral and/or Medical Needs*.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) will provide up to \$90,000 per qualifying property to successful bidders in an effort to support new housing stock for persons with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities with co-occurring behavioral and/or medical needs. Please see the below link to the RFP for detailed information.

- [Request for Proposals To Increase Community Capacity of Provider Managed Housing for Individuals With Acute Behavioral and/or Medical Needs](#)

Jun 23, 2023: Office of Education on Self-Directed Services Unit Virtual Lunch & Learn: Introduction to Self-Directed Services

The Office of Education on Self-Directed Services (OESDS) is hosting a Virtual Lunch and Learn. This Virtual Session is entitled Introduction to Self-Directed Services and will take place Thursday, July 20, 2023 from 12:00 noon—1:30 pm. If interested, please register using the following link: [OESDS Webinar: Introduction to Self-Directed Services - 7/20/23 - Registration](#)

The [OESDS webpage](#) also lists upcoming OESDS Self-Direction Networking Sessions and Educational Webinars currently available along with registration instructions.

Jun 21, 2023: Sent on Behalf New Jersey Transit

NJ TRANSIT will conduct its June Accessibility Forum on Tuesday, June 27th, from 1-3pm. NJ TRANSIT's June Accessibility Forum will offer members of the public the opportunity to make comments related to NJ TRANSIT's accessible services and the experiences of customers with disabilities using their transportation services and facilities. For more information, click [here](#). To view the December 2022 forum recording, click [here](#), or to view the first forum, click [here](#).

Jun 21, 2023: Rescinding of DDD COVID-19 Policy

With the release of recent State and Federal Policies on COVID-19, the Department of Human Services' Division of Developmental Disabilities is rescinding the following Policy, effective immediately:

- Residential, Day Program, and Support Coordinator COVID-19 Policy, issued on April 5, 2023.

In place of the above, all DDD/Medicaid Approved service providers, individuals, families, and other Stakeholders are directed as follows:

All DDD/Medicaid approved service providers must follow the most current infection prevention and control information/guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#), and [New Jersey Department of Health \(NJ DOH\)](#) on health issues that impact the population(s) they serve. This includes, but is not limited to: COVID-19, Influenza, etc. In all circumstances, DDD/Medicaid approved providers shall cooperate with Federal, State, and Local health officials.

Jun 14, 2023: COVID-19 Incident Reporting

Effective immediately, the Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Program Integrity and Accountability (OPIA) has rescinded the 11/15/2022 COVID-19 Incident Reporting guidance. Service providers rendering services (Ex. Residential, Day, Support Coordinators, etc.) to individuals through the below entities are no longer required to report positive COVID-19 test results for individuals served to their respective Division (this includes the Streamlined reporting process) unless it is related to hospitalization or death. In those instances, established reporting requirements are to be followed.

- Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) (Please note that this is applicable to Support Coordination Agencies as well);
- Contracted by the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS); or
- Licensed by the New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) to provide mental health or substance use disorder services.

Jun 9, 2023: Access Link/NJ Transit Customer Satisfaction Survey

New Jersey Transit invites stakeholders who utilize Access Link to complete their Customer Satisfaction Survey.

[Access Link Satisfaction Survey - English](#)

[Access Link Satisfaction Survey - Spanish](#)

May 31, 2023: Notice of Proposed Readoption with Amendments

A [Notice of Proposed Readoption with Amendments: N.J.A.C 10:46D](#), Contribution to Care and Maintenance Requirements, was published on the New Jersey Department of Human Services [Public Notices](#) page on May 31, 2023.

May 22, 2023: HCBS Training Opportunity

[The HCBS Settings Rule Series: A Collection of 10 Minute Webinar Shorts](#) are now available on the [College of Direct Support](#). This webinar series includes information, guidance, and expectations for compliance for the various characteristics of the HCBS Settings Rule.

This is great opportunity for direct support professionals to learn about the settings rule while meeting their annual professional developmental requirements! These Webinar Shorts will also be beneficial to Support Coordinators and other stakeholders. Please send any questions to the HCBS Helpdesk: DDD.HCBShelpdesk@dhs.nj.gov.

May 22, 2023: The NCI-IDD State of the Workforce Survey 2022 (formerly called the Staff Stability Survey) is here!

In April 2023, provider agencies who employ direct support professionals received an invitation along with instructions from the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to participate in the [National Core Indicators](#) (NCI) State of the Workforce Survey for Calendar Year 2022. Invitations were sent to the provider email address associated with the iRecord. Provider agencies can take part in the NCI State of the Workforce Survey through June 30, 2023. It is critical that we hear from as many members of the DDD Provider Community as possible to ensure valid results. We are counting on your participation!

Please see the Division's [NCI State of the Workforce Survey Overview](#) for more information.

May 15, 2023: DHS Office of Program Integrity and Accountability Bulletin - Employee On-Boarding Extension

The Department of Human Services (DHS) Office of Program Integrity and Accountability (OPIA) will provide expedited approval of emergency hiring requests until further notice.

Please see [OPIA Bulletin 05-15-23 Employee Onboarding](#).

May 9, 2023: Information Sessions on Division of Developmental Disabilities Self-Directed Employee Models

As you may be aware, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (Division) offers two Self-Directed Employee (SDE) Models that individuals electing to self-direct their services can use. These are the Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent Model administered by Public Partnerships, LLC and the Agency with Choice Model administered by Easterseals NJ. In response to continued interest on the topic, informational webinars are once again being offered. Please register below for these opportunities.

- Public Partnerships' Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent SDE Model Information Session
 - Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at 11:30 am
 - [Register in advance for this Information Session](#)
- Easterseals' Agency with Choice SDE Model Information Session
 - Tuesday, May 30, 2023 at 12:00 pm
 - [Register in advance for this Information Session](#)

Learn more at [Self-Directed Services/Self-Direction](#).

May 1, 2023: Deadline Announcement for Applicable Self-Directed Employees (SDEs) with PPL to Complete All Mandated Trainings

This communication was previously released on April 3, 2023. It is being resent as the June 1, 2023 deadline is approaching.

This communication is applicable to Employers of Record and Self-Directed Employees (SDEs) who utilize the Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA) SDE Model with PPL. The Division's federally approved waivers have embedded requirements that all paid staff (regardless of familial relation) must complete [mandated trainings](#). SDEs have six-months (180 days) from their date of hire to complete these trainings.

Beginning April 3, 2023, all SDEs hired on or before December 1, 2022 who have been employed six-months (180 days) or longer must complete all outstanding mandated trainings by June 1, 2023. This includes CPR/First Aid Recertification, which must be renewed once every two years. If the mandatory trainings and the Training Certification Form and/or CPR/First Aid Recertification Form are not completed and submitted to PPL by June 1, 2023, the SDE will be unable to provide services and receive payment. These forms can be submitted via njddd@pcgus.com or by fax to 1-844-842-5978.

Please see the links below for more information:

- [PPL SDE Training Payments Webpage](#)

- [Quick Reference Guide to Mandated Trainings for SDEs](#)

Please note that SDEs with a hire date after December 1, 2022 will continue to have the customary six-months (180 days) from their date of hire to complete the above requirements. If those requirements are not met the SDE will be unable to provide services and receive payment.

Apr 24, 2023: Temporary Service Modifications

The [Temporary Service Modifications](#) document has been updated. The policy contents are unchanged from the last release outside of updating dates. This document describes how referenced service modifications will continue to be in place until six months after the Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) ends. The Federal PHE will end on May 11, 2023, therefore, the Temporary Service Modifications will end six months later on November 7, 2023. Please plan accordingly.

Please see the below document for full detail (Please be sure to hit *refresh* on your browser to see the most current version)

- [Temporary Service Modifications](#)

Apr 12, 2023: On Behalf of Access Link – Launch of the Access Link Rider’s Choice Pilot (ALRC)

Access Link Riders’ Choice Pilot is the safe, easy, and flexible alternative to Access Link. The program offers Access Link customers the opportunity to allow Access Link to move some of their rides to transportation network companies. Access Link is starting with Lyft and Uber Spring of 2023.

When a customer’s ride is moved to one of the Access Link Riders’ Choice Pilot providers, the customer’s fare is the same as it was with Access Link. The customer may even get to enjoy a faster, more direct ride to their destination.

If you choose to [join the Access Link Rider’s Choice Pilot program](#), you will continue to call Access Link to make ride reservations. Access Link will decide whether your ride will be moved to one of the Access Link Riders’ Choice Pilot providers or remain with Access Link. If the ride is moved, you will receive a text message and/or phone call from the Access Link Rider’s Choice Pilot provider. If the ride remains on Access Link, you will receive the normal Access Link reminder call.

Important Information to Know about the ALRC Pilot:

1. You must be a certified Access Link customer. For information on applying for Access Link service [click here](#).

2. Your EZ-Wallet account cannot have a negative balance.
3. Joining the pilot program does not guarantee that any of your Access Link reservations will be moved to an Access Link Riders' Choice Pilot provider.
 1. When booking an Access Link ride, you should always be prepared to be serviced by Access Link and pay the Access Link fare.
4. ALRC pilot providers offer origin-to-destination service like Access Link.
5. Right now, there is no limit to how many rides you can take with the transportation network companies in this pilot.
6. The ALRC pilot providers will only travel within the [service area](#), which is still ¾ mile from a local fixed route bus.
7. ALRC pilot operators are not required to carry customer bags or luggage. They will assist with securing items, boarding, and exiting the vehicle.
8. ALRC pilot operators will wait the same 5 minutes as the Access Link operators for customers to board and are not required to wait with a customer for a "hand-off" at their destination.
9. You are free to express your preferred Access Link Riders' Choice Pilot provider, but there is no guarantee all your Access Link Riders' Choice Pilot rides will be serviced by your preferred provider.

For more information about Access Link Riders' Choice Pilot, contact Customer Service by emailing adaservices@njtransit.com or calling 973-491-4224, option 5.

Apr 5, 2023: Residential, Day Program, and Support Coordinator COVID-19 Policy

Earlier this week [Executive Order 325](#) was released. This order directs that licensed community residences for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), certified day programs for individuals with IDD, and Support Coordinators are no longer required to maintain a policy requiring employees to provide proof that they are up to date with their COVID-19 vaccination or otherwise submit to weekly testing. As a result, the Division has updated its [Residential, Day Program, and Support Coordinator COVID-19 Policy](#) to align with this new order.

Please review the full policy (Remember to hit *Refresh* on your browser so you see the updated version): [Residential, Day Program, and Support Coordinator COVID-19 Policy](#).

Apr 4, 2023: Proposed Readoption with Amendments

A [Proposed Readoption with Amendments, Proposed Repeal, and New Rule: N.J.A.C 10:48A, Background Checks](#), was published on the New Jersey Department of Human Services [Proposed Rules and Amendments](#) page on April 4, 2023. There is a 60-day formal public comment period, which ends June 5, 2023. Written comments may be submitted as follows:

- Electronically: DDD-CO.LAPO@dhs.nj.gov

- USPS Mail: Carol Jones, Administrative Practice Officer, Division of Developmental Disabilities, PO Box 726, Trenton, NJ 08625-0726
- Fax: 609-341-2451

Apr 3, 2023: Deadline Announcement for Applicable Self-Directed Employees (SDEs) with PPL to Complete All Mandated Trainings

This communication is applicable to Employers of Record and Self-Directed Employees (SDEs) who utilize the Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA) SDE Model with PPL. The Division's federally approved waivers have embedded requirements that all paid staff (regardless of familial relation) must complete [mandated trainings](#). SDEs have six-months (180 days) from their date of hire to complete these trainings.

Beginning April 3, 2023, all SDEs hired on or before December 1, 2022 who have been employed six-months (180 days) or longer must complete all outstanding mandated trainings by June 1, 2023. This includes CPR/First Aid Recertification, which must be renewed once every two years. If the mandatory trainings and the Training Certification Form and/or CPR/First Aid Recertification Form are not completed and submitted to PPL by June 1, 2023, the SDE will be unable to provide services and receive payment. These forms can be submitted via njddd@pcgus.com or by fax to 1-844-842-5978.

Please see the links below for more information:

- [PPL SDE Training Payments Webpage](#)
- [Quick Reference Guide to Mandated Trainings for SDEs](#)

Please note that SDEs with a hire date after December 1, 2022 will continue to have the customary six-months (180 days) from their date of hire to complete the above requirements. If those requirements are not met the SDE will be unable to provide services and receive payment.

Mar 28, 2023: The NCI-IDD State of the Workforce Survey 2022 (formerly called the Staff Stability Survey) is almost here!

In April 2023, provider agencies who employ direct support professionals will receive an invite along with instructions from the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to participate in the [National Core Indicators](#) (NCI) State of the Workforce Survey for Calendar Year 2022. Invitations will be sent to the provider email address associated with the iRecord. Provider agencies can take part in the NCI State of the Workforce Survey through June 30, 2023. It is critical that we hear from as many members of the DDD Provider Community as possible to ensure valid results. We are counting on your participation!

Please see the Division's [NCI State of the Workforce Survey Overview](#) for more information.

Mar 28, 2023: DDD is Currently Conducting the 2022-2023 NCI In-Person Survey!

The Division is once again virtually conducting the NCI In-Person Survey (IPS), for individuals 21 and older who are receiving at least one Division-funded service in addition to Support Coordination. The 2022-2023 NCI IPS will be administered through June 30, 2023.

Please see the Division's [NCI Survey Overview](#) for more information.

Questions regarding the NCI State of the Workforce Survey or NCI In-Person Survey can be directed to DDD.NCI@dhs.nj.gov

Mar 27, 2023: New Electronic Visit Verification Webinar

The Division of Developmental Disabilities is pleased to announce that its next Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) Webinar will be held on Friday, April 14th, 2023 from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm. The webinar will serve as a refresher for Providers and Support Coordination agencies on EVV, as well as provide new updates. Topics will include:

- Live-in Caregivers
- The iRecord EVV Drop down Feature
- Billing
- Manual Overrides
- Phase II Operational/Engaged/Exempt Providers
- Live Q&A
- Much More!

[REGISTER NOW for EVV Webinar](#)

Mar 23, 2023: Support Coordinator Competency Survey

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (Division), in collaboration with The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities at Rutgers RWJMS, has launched the Money Follows Person (MFP) Support Coordinator Competency and Capacity Building Steering Committee (Committee). The Committee's charge is to make recommendations in the development of a certification program for Support Coordinators.

The Committee is seeking input from the New Jersey disability community to learn about the competency and skill needs of NJ's Support Coordinators. Stakeholders are

encouraged to provide input by completing the below survey. The information obtained will be used to inform the Committee's recommendations.

The online survey can be found

at: https://rutgers.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ezguzZYGa6kgFlc

The survey will be open until Wednesday, April 12, 2023, so please participate on or before that date. The Division and Committee appreciate the time you take to complete this important survey. If you need assistance to complete, please contact nicole.l.warren@rutgers.edu – 732-235-9301.

Mar 2, 2023: Residential, Day Program, and Support Coordinator COVID-19 Policy

The Division is pleased to release an updated policy related to COVID-19 entitled [Residential, Day Program, and Support Coordinator COVID-19 Policy](#). Applicable to Licensed Residential, Certified Day, and Support Coordination Agencies, this policy supersedes previous versions. This includes the March 2022 guidance titled *Support Coordination Field Visits*. The policy provides additional information and flexibility related to COVID-19. While the policy is released today, the effective date is March 29, 2023 to allow time for implementation. Please review the full policy (Remember to hit *Refresh* on your browser so you see the updated version): [Residential, Day Program, and Support Coordinator COVID-19 Policy](#).

Mar 22, 2023: Notice of readoption Announced

A [Notice of Readoption: N.J.A.C 10:42B, Moderate Security Unit](#), was published on the New Jersey Department of Human Services [Rule Adoptions](#) page on March 20, 2023.

Mar 20, 2023: DHS OPIA Bulletin - Resume Employee On-Boarding

With an increased availability of fingerprinting appointments, the Office of Program Integrity and Accountability (OPIA) will be returning to normal onboarding requirements of direct support professionals and self-directed employees effective May 15, 2023. OPIA will continue the temporary clearance process until then.

Effective May 15, 2023, new hires must complete onboarding requirements prior to employment and OPIA's Employment Controls and Compliance Unit (ECCU) will no longer process emergency requests for hire. For employees who have already begun employment based on emergency approval prior to May 15, 2023, employers will have until June 15, 2023, to complete criminal background checks via fingerprinting.

Read the full bulletin here: [OPIA Bulletin-Resume On-Boarding 3.17.2023.pdf \(state.nj.us\)](#)

Mar 10, 2023: Human Rights Committee (HRC) Referral Form and Launch of the HRC helpdesk

This communication is being sent to alert you that a revision has been made to the Human Rights Committee (HRC) Referral Form. The revision includes the creation of a dedicated email address that HRC Referrals/information are to be directed to. The form is available for immediate use on the Division's [Provider Information](#) webpage in the *Provider Toolkit* section. A direct link to the form can be found [here](#).

Effective immediately, all referrals and HRC related information (as outlined in [Division Circular #5](#)), as well as questions should be directed to new email address which is DDD.HRC@dhs.nj.gov.

Mar 8, 2023: Notice of readoption Announced

A [Notice of Readoption without Amendments: N.J.A.C 10:40](#), *Organizational Rules*, was published on the New Jersey Department of Human Services [Rule Adoptions](#) page on March 6, 2023.

Feb 7, 2023: DHS Offers Webinar on Newly Released Regulations

The DHS Office of Licensing, within the Office of Program Integrity and Accountability, is offering a webinar on February 14th to review recent changes published in the [New Jersey Register](#) to N.J.A.C. 10:44A Standards for Community Residences for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and N.J.A.C. 10:44C Standards for Community Residences for Persons with Head Injuries for interested stakeholders. Please register using the below information:

- Topic: Overview of Changes to N.J.A.C. 10:44A Standards for Community Residences for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and N.J.A.C. 10:44C Standards for Community Residences for Persons with Head Injuries
- Date/Time: February 14, 2023 from 10:30am to 12pm.
- Registration
Link: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/6734411292462181722>

Feb 2, 2023: On Behalf of the Division of Disability Services - Funding Opportunity

The Department of Human Services' [Division of Disability Services](#) (DDS) has released Round 3 of its Inclusive Healthy Communities (IHC) Grant Program. The IHC Grant Program is designed to advance efforts that result in tangible and sustainable transformation of policies, systems, and environmental conditions to ensure that people

with disabilities benefit from efforts to build healthy communities. DDS proudly announces that the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a 3rd funding cycle is now available.

Please see inclusivehealthycommunities.org/resources for more information. When reviewing, please note required deadlines for timely submission.

Feb 1, 2023: Information Sessions on Division of Developmental Disabilities Self-Directed Employee Models

As you may be aware, the Division offers two Self-Directed Employee (SDE) Models that individuals electing to self-direct their services can use. These are the Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent Model administered by Public Partnerships, LLC and the Agency with Choice Model administered by Easterseals NJ. In response to continued interest on the topic informational webinars are once again being offered. Please register below for these opportunities.

- Public Partnerships' Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent SDE Model Information Session
 - Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 11:00 am
 - [Register in advance for this Information Session](#)
- Easterseals' Agency with Choice SDE Model Information Session
 - Monday, February 27, 2023 at 12:00 PM
 - [Register in advance for this Information Session](#)

Learn more at [Self-Directed Services/Self-Direction](#).

Jan 30, 2023: Community Care Program and Supports Program Manuals

The Division has updated program manuals for its Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waivers, the Community Care Program and Supports Program. A summary of all changes can be found on page two of each respective manual, with detail in the respective section indicated. The February 23rd DDD Update Webinar (Registration link found [here](#)) will provide a detailed overview of the changes. While all updates are important, the Division wishes to highlight the below change that will be of interest to Support Coordinators and individuals utilizing Self-Directed Employees (SDEs).

Self-Directed Employee (SDE) Wages – To date, the Division's policy had been that SDE wages were to be Reasonable and Customary - being between the prevailing minimum wage and \$25 per hour, with wages above that range being permitted in limited circumstances. Those limited circumstances were not sufficiently detailed so Section 8.3.2.0.1 and 8.3.2.0.2 have been added program manuals to better detail how SDE wages are arrived at. In summary, the new policy still allows the Reasonable and Customary wage range of the prevailing minimum wage to \$25 per hour. However, it

now details two additional defined Enhanced Reasonable and Customary wage ranges depending on the documented needs of the individual and education of the SDE. Please see the Community Care Program or Supports Program Manual for more detail.

Each manual can be found at (Please hit *Refresh* on your browser to be sure you are viewing the most recent version):

- [Community Care Program Policies and Procedures Manual](#) (Updated 1/2023)
- [Supports Program Policies and Procedures Manual](#) (Updated 1/2023)

Jan 18, 2023: Webinar - DHS OPIA Introduction to the DDD Licensed Provider Report Card

Effective February 1, 2023, the Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Program Integrity and Accountability is replacing the current Risk Management Report with a newly designed, user-friendly Report Card. This webinar will introduce the Report Card and its components. The target audience is the DDD stakeholder community, licensed community providers and individuals/families residing in DHS licensed settings.

Monday, January 23, 2023 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM EST

Register [here](#)

Jan 6, 2023: DDD is Currently Conducting the 2022-2023 NCI In-Person Survey

We are pleased to share that in 2023 the Division will again administer [National Core Indicators](#) (NCI) surveys for individuals and their families and guardians. Beginning in this month, Division staff will begin outreach to individuals and families to request voluntary participation in one of the following surveys:

- In-Person Survey – for individuals 21 and older who are receiving at least one Division-funded service in addition to Support Coordination.
- Adult Family Survey – an online survey for family members who have an adult (21 years or older) with an intellectual/developmental disability who lives in the family home and receives at least one DDD service in addition to Support Coordination.
- Family/Guardian Survey – an online survey for family members/guardians who have an adult (21 years or older) with an intellectual/developmental disability who lives outside of the family home and receives at least one DDD service in addition to Support Coordination.

Please see the Division's [NCI Survey Overview](#) for more information.

Jan 6, 2023: Message from the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services

The Division is re-broadcasting the below message from the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS). The message explains that beginning April 1, 2023 all States, including New Jersey, are required to resume their Medicaid Eligibility Processes. The Division recommends that stakeholders review this material, especially the Frequently Asked Questions found at the [Community Toolkit](#) link below.

Dear NJ FamilyCare community,

I hope you have enjoyed a happy and healthy holiday season. As many of you know, we had been anticipating an announcement from the federal government about the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE). Late in 2022, we began to hear that Congress might separate the Medicaid continuous enrollment requirement from the ongoing PHE – and they in fact did so in late December, in the omnibus spending bill signed into law by President Biden on December 29, 2022. As a result, while the PHE continues, states are now required to resume Medicaid eligibility processes beginning April 1, 2023.

We are anticipating guidance from the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in early January, and we will be prepared to share an update with you at our February 1 meeting of the [Medical Assistance Advisory Council](#). We will also be updating our [StayCoveredNJ website](#), removing references to the end of the PHE and clearly stating the April 1 date for when eligibility processes will resume. Please visit our [Community Toolkit](#) page for posters in English, Spanish, and 19 other languages.

In the meantime, here are the two most important things for our NJ FamilyCare members to know:

- *Make sure NJ FamilyCare/Medicaid has your correct mailing address*
 - *Members can confirm or update their contact information by calling NJ FamilyCare at 1-800-701-0710 (TTY: 711). NJ FamilyCare will use this information to communicate with members about their healthcare coverage.*
- *Respond to mail from NJ FamilyCare/Medicaid*
 - *Members need to look for and respond to mail from the State of New Jersey or their local County Board of Social Services. If NJ FamilyCare requests information, they need to respond right away to avoid a gap in their NJ FamilyCare coverage.*

On behalf of the whole DMAHS team, I wish you happiness and health in 2023. We look forward to working together with you to serve people the best way possible in the months ahead!

*Jennifer Langer Jacobs (she/her)
Assistant Commissioner, Division of Medical Assistance & Health Services
NJ Department of Human Services*