

April 27, 2020

Developmental Disabilities Division:
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions

In-Home Supports Questions and Answers

In-Home Supports (IHS) is intended to support the individual and their primary caregiver to prevent or delay unwanted out-of-home placement by providing a specially-trained caregiver. The purpose of this service is to assist the parent or primary caregiver in meeting the care needs of the individual. In-home supports provides relief support (respite), support while the parent or primary caregiver is working/attending school (supervision), and extra help when the parent or primary caregiver is available and needs support caring for their family member (second-pair-of-hands).

IHS is not intended to replace informal or formal supports that are available and should only be considered after all other sources of support have been exhausted.

During the COVID-19 event, exceptions to our normal practices and policies will be allowed. Below is guidance to address the exceptions and questions:

Q1. Can a primary caregiver get paid to provide In-Home Supports?

In-Home Supports is a service to provide respite relief/support (where the caregiver is away), supervision (where the caregiver is at work or school), and/or to provide a 2nd pair of hands (extra help while caregiver is available and needs support).

The primary caregiver cannot be the staff as they would not be able to provide relief/support to themselves. IHS can be provided by a relative, however the relative may not be living in the same home as the individual.

Q2. Can in home support be provided during school hours? (from the Appendix K Question & Answers document)

Yes. If the school is not providing *in-person* Part B IDEA services, IHS can occur during this time, however the family will need to work within their current authorized hours. There may need to be exceptions, but this will be looked at on a case by case basis.

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Q3. If a family needs to request an increase in authorized hours, what additional information will need to be provided?

As with many things, there are different items to consider during this COVID-19 emergency period. Families should look at their currently approved hours to determine if there is a need for more or if their authorized hours will meet their needs. The request will need to outline whether or not the school is providing any services in the home (face to face), as well as if after school care or daycare is still accessible from either the family's regular child care provider or from an alternate source. The determination will take into account the primary caregivers' situation as well. Are they working away from home or are they working from an in-home setting, are they on leave from work.

This information is needed to determine if the request meets the criteria of In-Home Supports and the waiver.

Q4. Can a family refrain from using IHS if they do not want to risk exposure to their child, or other people in the home?

Yes, Primary caregivers can choose to not have caregivers come into the home without losing access to the in-home services authorized hours. In other words, the service will not be terminated even if it is not used during the public health emergency.

Q5. What will happen if all currently approved hours are not able to be used at this time, or the service is not being provided?

Authorized hours will not be reduced if they are not able to be used during this time.

Individuals will continue to be screened and in the waiver even if they do not have staff, as long as they continue to have a need for the service. Medicaid eligibility will not change at this time of the public health emergency.

If a client no longer meets the level of care (LOC), they will be de-screened from the waiver.

Q6. Why are annual IHS applications needed?

The annual application for in-home services helps understand the changing needs of the family. The review captures information about family needs and patterns of living related to the three core in-home support services:

- Supervision - primary caregiver is working or attending school,
- 2nd pair of hands - primary caregiver is available and needs additional support in the home or community, and
- Respite - temporary relief from primary caregiving responsibility (primary caregiver is away).

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Q7. If a Self-Directed In-Home Support employee receives a “Good to Go” letter from Veridian prior to their background check coming back, are they able to start employment?

When a “Good to Go” letter is received by the employer of record and the DDPM, the employee is able to start working. They will be treated as a full employee by Veridian, receiving an employee number and able to submit timesheets electronically as well as by paper method.

In the event there is a hit on the employee’s background check, the results will go to the employer of record and that employee must stop working immediately.

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