



CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
Department for Medicaid Services

Andy Beshear
Governor

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To: All 1915(c) Home and Community Based Services Waiver Stakeholders

From: Pam Smith
Director, Division of Community Alternatives

Date: April 24, 2020

Re: COVID-19 Update

Since early March, the Department for Medicaid Services (DMS) has been taking steps to help our 1915(c) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver participants, their caregivers and families, and providers through the COVID-19 pandemic. We wanted to take a moment to let you know what we've done to reduce the risk of COVID-19 to participants and the people who serve them. Recent actions include:

- Temporary changes to services, services delivery methods, and provider qualifications to reduce face-to-face contacts and minimize service disruptions. The updates are explained in the "What Does This Mean to Me? Temporary COVID-19 Changes" document attached to this letter.
- Creating flexibility for providers to allow them to work around issues created by COVID-19 and continue providing services.
- Creating a COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions for 1915(c) HCBS waivers to address stakeholder questions.

All COVID-19 resources and guidance regarding the 1915(c) HCBS waivers are available on the DMS Division of Community Alternatives website at <https://bit.ly/kyhcbswaiverinfo>.

While we are working remotely during the state of emergency, DMS staff stands ready to help you. If you have waiver-related questions or concerns, please call us at (844) 784-5614 or email us at 1915cWaiverHelpDesk@ky.gov.

Sincerely,

Pam Smith

Pam Smith
Director, Division of Community Alternatives

What Does This Mean To Me? Temporary COVID-19 Updates

In March 2020, the Kentucky Department for Medicaid Services (DMS) made temporary updates to the Commonwealth's six 1915(c) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers: Acquired Brain Injury (ABI), Acquired Brain Injury Long Term Care (ABI LTC), Home and Community Based (HCB), Model II Waiver (MIIW), Michelle P. Waiver (MPW), and Supports for Community Living (SCL) due to the COVID-19 state of emergency.

Why did DMS make these updates?

DMS made these temporary updates to:

- Reduce the risk of COVID-19 to participants and providers.
- Reduce service disruptions caused by COVID-19.
- Deal with potential staffing shortages caused by COVID-19.

Here is a list of some of the changes DMS has made to help participants:

Increasing limits on certain services, such as personal-care type services, nursing services and Home Delivered Meals

Adding Home Delivered Meals service to all waivers, except Model II

Allowing assessments, case management visits, and certain services to be provided online or via phone.

Waiving the approval process for hiring an immediate family member as a Participant Directed Services (PDS) employee in HCB and SCL

Allowing new PDS employees to begin working while waiting on background checks and screening results

DMS also made changes to help providers work around the challenges COVID-19 presents and continue to provide services to you during the state of emergency. All updates are outlined in Appendix K of the 1915(c) HCBS waiver application, which is available at <https://bit.ly/kyhcbappendixk>.

How long will these temporary updates last?

DMS isn't sure right now. Governor Andy Beshear and the Kentucky Department for Public Health will decide when it is safe to begin lifting the COVID-19 state of emergency. Those decisions will help us figure out when to return to normal operations. We will notify you once we have a date.

What Does This Mean To Me? Temporary COVID-19 Update

Where can I find more information?

Here are a few links you might find helpful.

Waiver Updates
Webinar

• <https://bit.ly/325covidwebinar>

Waiver Updates
Webinar
Presentation

• <https://bit.ly/kyhcbscovidresponse>

COVID-19 FAQ
for 1915(c)
HCBS Waivers

• <https://bit.ly/kyhcbscovid19faq>

A full list of waiver-related COVID-19 resources is available on the DMS Division of Community Alternatives at <https://bit.ly/kyhcbswaiverinfo>.

What if I have more questions?

If you have questions about these temporary updates, you can contact DMS by calling (844) 784-5614 or by email at 1915cWaiverHelpDesk@ky.gov