Understanding Kentucky’s 1915(c) HCBS Waivers

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

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. DMS made the initial updates in March 2020 and renewed those updates in March 2021.

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. The items in the blue were changed in 2020 and are still in effect. The items in the green boxes were added in 2021.

- Increasing limits on certain services, such as personal-care type services, nursing services and Home Delivered Meals
- Adding the 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
- Allowing Community Mental Health Centers to provide PDS case management to HCB waiver participants
- Allowing participants to receive waiver services if they are in the hospital and the hospital cannot meet their non-medical, disability-related needs
- Giving case managers, support brokers, and service advisors additional support to help participants who want to get a COVID-19 vaccine
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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/kyhcbsappendixk.

How long will these temporary updates last?
DMS isn’t sure right now. These temporary updates will expire based on when the federal government decides the COVID-19 public health emergency is over. We will notify you once we have a date. There will be a transition period before returning to normal waiver operations.

Additionally, Governor Andy Beshear and the Kentucky Department for Public Health are continuously evaluating the COVID-19 situation in Kentucky and updating guidelines as needed. For the latest COVID-19 information from the state, go to kycovid19.ky.gov.

Where can I find more information?
Here are a few links you might find helpful.

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<tr>
<th>COVID-19 FAQ for 1915(c) HCBS Waivers</th>
<th>• <a href="https://bit.ly/kyhcbscovid19faq">https://bit.ly/kyhcbscovid19faq</a></th>
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<tr>
<td>All 1915(c) HCBS Waiver COVID-19 Information</td>
<td>• <a href="https://bit.ly/kyhcbswaiverinfo">https://bit.ly/kyhcbswaiverinfo</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>State of Kentucky COVID-19 Information</td>
<td>• Kycovid19.ky.gov</td>
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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