

April 2, 2020

Dear Provider,

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is making the following modifications related to billing and payment for Community-Based Day Supports (CBDS) and the Residential Absence Policy.

Community-Based Day Supports (Activity Code: 3163)

Due to program closures as a result of the public health emergency, it is anticipated that billable attendance will not support current Ready Payment amounts, resulting in a recoupment of funds.

Currently, providers may only submit attendance for in-person services provided in March. Additional guidance regarding rates and billing for remote services will be released the week of April 6th. To prevent recoupments from occurring again, **DDS is suspending all Ready Payments for 3163 contracts for the remainder of the fiscal year.**

Additionally, **DDS is temporarily holding approval of all March CBDS billing that would result in the recoupment of Ready Pay funds.** This is not a permanent hold and providers should plan for billing to ultimately be reconciled. DDS is temporarily delaying reconciliation to better support short-term provider cash flow considerations. **In cases where March billing will generate a payment, invoices will be approved.**

Residential Absence Policy (Activity Codes: 3153, 3751, 3150, & 3752)

The following revised Absence Policy is in effect for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2020:

Revisions to DDS Approved Absence Policy – Residential Programs

Effective: March, April, May, and June 2020

Issued: April 2, 2020

To streamline the process for requesting approval to invoice for Residential Absence Units, DDS has made the following changes to the DDS Approved Absence Policy – Residential Programs, issued July 1, 2016. These changes remain in effect for March, April, May, and June 2020.

Providers have two options for billing absence units in 3153, 3751, 3150, & 3752. Providers may access either option at their discretion.

Option 1:

- Providers that become eligible for absence units must submit the Absence Policy Worksheet via email to Area/Region for approval.
 - Providers do not need to submit the Billable Absence Request Form.
- Area/Region will review the Absence Policy Worksheet to determine that the provider is eligible and the number of units payable in the month requested.

- Area Director will provide **written email approval** of Absence Worksheet, which will allow provider to bill the approved number of units.
- Additionally, Area Director approval indicates **blanket approval to bill for all future absences** for the duration of the fiscal year, without requiring additional submission of the Absence Policy Worksheet.
 - Providers may only bill absence units associated with active enrollments.
 - Individuals no longer active in program are considered a vacancy and may not be billed as an absence.
 - Providers may only invoice for absences that occur during March – June, 2020. Billing for any absences in prior months will require approval through normal absence policy process.

Option 2:

- Providers may wait until the end of the fiscal year to bill absences, without requiring submission of the Absence Policy Worksheet.
- Provider submits Service Delivery Reports (SDR) for services provided through June 2020, with regular attendance only.
- Once SDRs for all months have been approved by DDS, providers may submit supplemental SDRs for absence units, up to the total units listed on their service summary form.

If you have any questions on the above, please feel free to reach out to me at toni.gustus@mass.gov or your regional contract manager.

Thank you,

Toni Gustus
Director of Contract Administration
Department of Developmental Services