



Date: June 24, 2020

To: Home and Community-based Services Providers

Subject: Information Letter 20-32
Temporary Emergency Rate Increases for Home and Community-based
Services Programs Effective April 1, 2020

On March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump issued Proclamation 9994 declaring a national emergency concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak and Governor Greg Abbott declared a state of disaster in all Texas counties due to COVID-19. Subsequently, on March 19, Dr. John Hellerstedt, Commissioner of the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), issued a Public Health Disaster Declaration in Texas.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) adopted temporary emergency payment rate add-ons for Home and Community-based Services (HCS) waiver providers to support access and safety during the emergency declaration related to COVID-19.

The emergency payment rate add-ons will be effective retroactive to April 1, 2020 and are assumed to conclude on August 31, 2020 or the end of the disaster declaration. All payment rate add-ons are subject to required State Plan Amendment and Waiver Amendment approval from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services as applicable.

These temporary emergency rate increases will be paid in the form of an add-on payments to applicable service providers' current rates. This add-on payment is separate from and cannot be used to fulfil spending requirements associated with current supplemental payment programs; including, the Attendant Compensation Rate Enhancement program or the existing Temporary Add-on Payment for HCS Supervised Living and Residential Support Services.

HCS Waiver Payment Add-ons and Required Provider Attestations

The payment rate add-ons for the HCS waiver only apply to providers delivering in-home day habilitation services to persons with intellectual disabilities or related conditions residing in three or four-bed group homes and receiving Supervised Living or Residential Support Services. These rate increases will apply to the current day habilitation rates so that providers delivering services in group homes can maintain hourly direct care staff wages due to reduced client to staff ratios.

Per 355.205 - Emergency Rule for Emergency Temporary Reimbursement Rate Increases and Limitations on Use of Emergency Temporary Funds for Medicaid in Response to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), HCS providers receiving increased funding associated with add-on payments for COVID-19 must submit an attestation affirming that the add-on payments will be used only in the manner prescribed above. HCS providers who receive add-ons but fail to complete the required attestation will be subject to recoupment of the associated payment add-ons. The attestation form can be [here](#). Please utilize Chrome (Preferred Browser), Firefox or Safari.

Payment Add-on Rate Information

The approved payment add-ons effective April 1, 2020 can be accessed at: <https://rad.hhs.texas.gov/long-term-services-supports/>

Claims Submission

Providers should continue to bill their current services using their normal billing process. However, the payment add-ons associated with COVID-19 must be billed through the following bill code/modifiers:

QUALIFIER: HC
SERVICE CODE: T2020
MODIFIER: blank
PLACE OF SERVICE: 12
REVENUE CODE: 0942

The electronic payment system will be updated with the new rates no later than June 29, 2020; no additional action is required by individual providers.

For claims between 4/1/2020 and 6/29/2020, HHSC will identify and reprocess the applicable claims based on the temporary rate increase; no additional action is required by individual providers.

Resources

Please contact the HHSC Rate Analysis Long-term Services and Supports Customer Information Team at RAD-LTSS@hhsc.state.tx.us if you have questions regarding the rates or this letter.

Sincerely,

[signature on file]

Brooke Ellison
Director, Long-Term Services and Supports Rate Analysis