



# Updates to the Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) Manual, DP1055, and Implementation of the PUNS Supplemental Form for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities and/or Autism

## ODP Announcement 26-028

### AUDIENCE:

Administrative Entities (AEs), Supports Coordinators (SCs), SC Supervisors, Supports Coordination Organizations (Consolidated Waiver, Person/Family Directed Support Waiver [P/FDS], Community Living Waiver [CLW], and Targeted Support Management Providers, Individuals and Families.

### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this communication is to distribute the updated Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) Manual and the revised DP1055 – PUNS Form, effective February 24, 2026, and to announce the implementation of related updates to the Emergency PUNS process.

This communication formally distributes:

- The updated PUNS Manual (Attachment 1)
- The PUNS Supplemental Form (Attachment 2)
- The revised DP1055 (Attachment 3)

These updates are part of the Office of Developmental Programs' continued implementation of the Multi-Year Program Growth Strategy and are intended to strengthen the accuracy, consistency, and documentation of Emergency Need determinations statewide.



The February 2026 PUNS Manual replaces the prior version dated May 5, 2025. The updated DP1055 and the PUNS Supplemental Form are to be implemented in alignment with the revised Emergency criteria and accompanying guidance effective immediately.

## DISCUSSION:

As outlined in [Office of Developmental Programs \(ODP\) Bulletin 00-19-03](#), updates to Attachment 1 (the PUNS Manual) and Attachment 2 (DP1055) are being announced through this ODP Communication.

To support the successful implementation of the Multi-Year Program Growth Strategy, ODP is making updates to the PUNS process to strengthen the accuracy, consistency, and documentation of emergency determinations. These updates include:

### Updates to Emergency Questions

The Emergency Need questions have been revised to more clearly define and strengthen health and safety considerations. Updates include:

- Clarified and expanded descriptions of caregiver crisis and caregiver health-related risk.
- Expanded definitions of unsafe living environments and situations that pose immediate risk.
- Clearer distinction between diversion from incarceration and diversion/transition from institutional settings.
- Added and clarified criteria related to:
  - Young adults aging out of systems (e.g., RTF, EPSDT, CYF)
  - Children with medically complex conditions transitioning to or remaining in the community



- Individuals requiring immediate support to obtain or maintain Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)

These updates are intended to improve consistency in identifying true Emergency circumstances and ensure alignment with statewide waiver capacity planning.

### **PUNS Supplemental Form**

ODP has developed a standardized PUNS Supplemental Form with questions to accompany the revised Emergency criteria.

These supplemental questions:

- Support Administrative Entities (AEs) in assessing and documenting health and safety risk.
- Provide additional context to strengthen Emergency determinations.
- Do not appear in HCSIS or on the DP1055 form.
- Will be distributed by each AE for use by Supports Coordinators.\*

The PUNS Supplemental Form now includes an Annualized Cost Estimate section that must be completed for all individuals newly added to Emergency PUNS. This section captures the projected annual cost of the services necessary to address the identified Emergency need and ensures AEs have all necessary information to quickly identify and provide waiver capacity.

\*AEs may choose the method of distribution and collection for the Supplemental Questions. If AEs choose to use an electronic version, they must verify with their own IT Departments all relevant security requirements are met. ODP can provide a template for AEs to use if they choose to use Microsoft Forms for completion. To request the template please email [RA-PWODP\\_OUTREACH@pa.gov](mailto:RA-PWODP_OUTREACH@pa.gov).



### DP1055 Updates

The DP1055 has been updated to align with the revised Emergency questions and updated manual.

Questions regarding this communication should be directed to the appropriate Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) Regional Office.

### ATTACHMENTS:

- [PUNS MANUAL](#)
- [PUNS Supplemental Form](#)
- [DP1055](#)