

Adult Autism Waiver (AAW) Amendment Effective January 1, 2025

Public Comment Webinar
May 10, 2024



Welcome!



pennsylvania

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS

The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) would like to welcome you to the Public Comment Webinar for the AAW Amendment effective January 1, 2025.

Presenting today are:

- Stephanie Maldonado- Adult Autism Waiver Manager
- Julie Mochon- Director of the Division of Policy and Program Innovation
- Jamie Bonser- Policy Analyst working with the Adult Autism Waiver



Agenda for Today

Overview of Changes to the AAW- 30 – 40 minutes

- New AAW Service- American Sign Language (ASL) English- Interpretation
- Changes to current AAW Services:
 - Assistive Technology
 - Day Habilitation
 - Residential Habilitation
 - Service Definition
 - Provider Qualifications
- Reserved Capacity

Questions – 10 to 15 minutes

Public Comment- 30 to 50 minutes

Questions?

Questions-

- Any questions may be submitted using the question pane.
- We will spend a few minutes at the end of the webinar to go over answers to some of the questions we receive regarding the AAW Amendment.
- We will only address questions specifically related to proposed waiver changes.



Today's Public Comment Process



There will also be an opportunity for obtaining public input on the proposed AAW Amendment. Comments may also be entered using the question pane.



Each person will be limited to 5-minutes for public comment.



Please note that ODP will not respond to public comments during this webinar.

New AAW Service



American Sign Language- English Interpret

American Sign Language (ASL)- English Interpreter Service

- The ASL- English Interpreter Services is for participants who utilize ASL.
- Participants utilizing this services must have an implementation plan and a plan to fade out the use of an interpreter to promote direct communication.
- The service can be provided in private homes, via teleservices, and for limited activities in residential homes.
- Interpreter services are limited to an average of 8 hours per day.

ASL-English Interpreter Service Continued



The ASL-English Interpreter service can be rendered:

- By traditional providers that enroll directly with ODP, or through an Organized Health Care Delivery System.

The waivers will pay what the provider charges to the general public (vendor payment).

Changes to Current AAW Services



Changes to Current AAW Services

Other proposed changes to current services offered through the AAW are intended to align waiver requirements and provider qualifications with regulatory requirements and other ODP waivers, correct errors, and provide clarifications requested by stakeholders.

In addition to waiver alignment and meeting regulatory requirements, these proposed changes are intended to further support participants in achieving an Everyday Life, including promoting choice, freedom, communication, quality, and health and safety.

Assistive Technology

- Independent evaluations of assistive technology needs for devices costing less than \$750.00 are not required.
 - An evaluation may still be completed if the service plan team believes an evaluation will be beneficial.
- Independent evaluations may now also be completed by a professional certified by SHIFT as an Enabling Technology Integration Specialist (ETIS).
- Clarification that:
 - The \$5,000.00 lifetime limit on generators may not be raised using the exception process.
 - The \$10,000.00 lifetime limit for Assistive Technology services includes independent evaluations of participants' assistive technology needs.

Day Habilitation

Day Habilitation

- Previously Day Habilitation supports included a comprehensive analysis of an individual's interests, skills, strengths, preferences, etc.
 - Proposed changes would require that this analysis be completed at least annually.

Interests

Skills

Strengths

Preferences

Residential Habilitation- Service Definition



The following update was made to the Residential Habilitation service definition.

- Residential Habilitation/Life Sharing service providers must have licensed nurses available when serving participants that need care by a licensed nurse.

Residential Habilitation- Provider Qualifications

Provider qualifications were updated for both Residential Habilitation: Community Home and Life Sharing providers.

- These provider qualifications were previously incorporated in the AAW through the requirement that Residential Habilitation providers enrolled in the AAW also be qualified and enrolled to provide Residential Habilitation/Life Sharing services in either the Consolidated or Community Living Waivers.
- These provider qualifications are now being explicitly added to the AAW due to the inclusion of Performance Based Contracting for residential services in both the Consolidated and Community Living waivers.

Residential Habilitation- Provider Qualifications



The inclusion of these provider qualifications are intended to continue to ensure that Residential Habilitation providers can support participants' visions for an Everyday Life by:

- Demonstrating prior experience delivering Home and Community Based Services (HCBS),
- Maintaining an experienced executive leadership team, and
- Continuing to provide services without interruption due to changes at the executive level.

Residential Habilitation- Provider Qualifications

Prior to enrolling to provide Residential Habilitation: Community Home and Life Sharing services, a provider must have:

- Actively provided direct non-residential HCBS as a provider enrolled in an ODP waiver service for the two (2) years immediately prior to enrolling to provide Residential Habilitation Services.
- The provider must also remain in good standing and not subject to sanctions or enforcements by ODP.

Residential Habilitation Provider Qualifications

Executive level staff requirements:

- Providers must have or hire an executive level staff member with:
 - A bachelor's degree,
 - 5 years' experience in an executive level position relating to the provision of residential services to individuals with ID/A and/or serious mental illness, with responsibility for ALL of the following:
 - Day-to-day residential agency operations;
 - Oversight of the development/implementation of residential agency-wide policies and procedures;
 - Supervision of management level staff; and
 - Compliance with applicable state and federal regulations.

Residential Habilitation- Provider Qualifications

Requirements for Chief Executive Officers (CEOs)

- The position of CEO must be filled at all times.
- There must be a written plan of succession should the current CEO leave their position.
- Organizations must notify the ODP Regional Office within 10 business days of the hiring date of a new CEO, including interim or acting CEOs.
- Within 30 days of hire, new CEOs must complete:
 - The Health Risk Screening Tool Orientation
 - Dual Diagnosis Training

Residential Habilitation-Provider Qualifications

Requirements for Chief Financial Officers (CFOs)

Organizations must have a CFO with either 5 years' experience or evidence of contracted financial management experience.



Supportive Technology Professionals

- Removed the requirement that the Residential Habilitation provider must obtain written consent from the participant or the participant's legal guardian prior to the utilization of remote supports or anytime there is a change to remote supports.
 - This change was made to align with requirements in other ODP waivers.

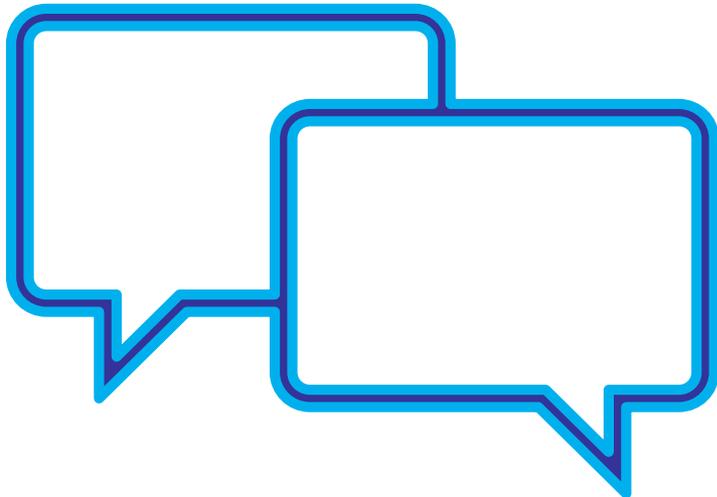
Reserved Capacity

Clarified Language for Reserved Capacity:

- Removed reserved capacity for individuals who receive services in an acute care hospital because they will not be disenrolled from the waiver.
- Clarification of what is **not** considered hospital/rehabilitation care for purposes of reserved capacity was added:
 - Residential treatment facilities,
 - State mental health hospitals,
 - Private and state ICFs/ID.

Questions?





- Official public comments may also be entered using the question pane.
- All comments will be reviewed and considered for revisions to the AAW Amendment submitted to CMS.
- Reminder each person is limited to **5-minutes** for providing public comment.

Comments Continued...

There are other opportunities to provide public comments on the proposed amendments.

- The public comment period for the proposed amendments is opened from April 20, 2024, to June 4, 2024.
- All comments received prior to 11:59 PM on June 4, 2024, will be reviewed and considered for revisions to the AAW Amendment submitted to CMS.
- Comments on the proposed changes to the AAW may be submitted via email at:

RA-odpcomment@pa.gov

Please use the subject line- “AAW Amendment Comments.”

Comments Continued...

Comments may also be submitted via mail.

Comments should be addressed to:

Julie Mochon

Department of Human Services,
Office of Developmental Programs

625 Forster Street

Room 510

Harrisburg, PA 17120



Additional Information

The proposed AAW Amendment may be found in its entirety in the Pennsylvania Bulletin, Volume 54, Number 16, published on Saturday, April 20, 2024, at:

<https://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Home/volume?vol=54&issue=16>

Additional Information about the proposed changes to the AAW, including the Record of Change, may be found on the DHS webpage at:

<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Disabilities-Aging/Pages/Proposed-Waiver-Amendments.aspx>

Thank you

