

## Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD)

### Consolidated Waiver

OCDD currently operates four Home and Community-Based Services Waivers, including the New Opportunities Waiver (NOW), Residential Options Waiver (ROW), Children's Choice Waiver (CCW), and Supports Waiver (SW). There are approximately 11,000 individuals receiving services through these four waivers.

Through stakeholder engagement efforts, it was identified that it is difficult for individuals and providers to navigate the four separate waivers, and it was proposed that there be a consolidation of the four developmental disability waivers. Therefore, Louisiana is proposing a consolidation of the four current waivers into one comprehensive New Opportunities Waiver (NOW).

The proposed consolidated NOW waiver will include services from all four current developmental disability waivers; however, services offered will be most comparable to those currently provided in the NOW. They will be comprehensive in nature.

In an effort to continue ongoing stakeholder feedback, OCDD is seeking input from DD Council members regarding services that will be provided through the consolidated waiver in three areas: employment, specialized behavior support, and transportation.

The following are descriptions of current proposals in these areas for your consideration and feedback:

#### 1. Employment

OCDD is considering the addition of three services related to employment, in an effort to promote integrated employment in the community.

- a. Employment Discovery - Utilizes person-centered planning and processes to learn about an individual's skills, interests, preferences, abilities, and strengths in order to help the individual obtain and/or maintain successful community integrated employment. The purpose of the discovery process is to find out who the person is. This is not a formal assessment process; it is a set of strategies that explores the life of a person. The intent is to identify the direction for employment.
- b. Employment Development - Provides learning and work experiences, including volunteer work, where the individual can develop general, non-job-task-specific strengths and skills that contribute to employability in paid employment in integrated community settings. Services are expected to occur over a defined period of time with specific outcomes to be achieved, as determined by the individual and his/her service and supports planning team. An individual receiving this service must have employment-related goals in his/her support

- plan. Employment Development Services should enable each individual to attain the highest level of work in the most integrated setting and in a job matched to his/her interests, strengths, priorities, abilities, and capabilities, while following applicable federal wage guidelines.
- c. Employment Trial Work Experience (1:1) – Provides the opportunity to work in a real job in an integrated employment setting alongside non-disabled coworkers, customers, and peers, with the appropriate services and supports for a sufficient period of time (but for no shorter than 60 days) to establish whether an individual's interests, skills, and abilities are well-suited for the particular job. The trial work experience shall be selected through a person-centered planning process and shall be individually tailored to each person.

## 2. Specialized Behavior Support

OCDD is considering the addition of a Specialized Behavior Support service to the current Individual and Family Support (IFS) hours available. In order to qualify for this level of support, an individual receiving these services must meet criteria for complex behavioral needs. In this service, the rate of reimbursement would be higher than for non-specialized IFS hours, and the expectations regarding training and credentials of direct support workers would be higher. For example, it would be expected that all direct support workers would be behavior shaping specialists. Criteria for individuals meeting the complex behavioral need category and for additional expectations regarding staff will be developed.

## 3. Transportation

Transportation, especially for non-medical events, has been identified as a significant gap in services by many stakeholders. However, there has been varying stakeholder feedback regarding whether a transportation service should be included as part of a rate or if it should be able to be billed separately. Additionally, OCDD is considering how transportation for community integration activities can be incorporated into the consolidated waiver to ensure availability.

We look forward to an open discussion and your feedback in these three areas.