



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Direct support workers will receive bonus payments for serving waiver participants during the pandemic**

*LDH released the first round of bonus payments to eligible workers on July 25*

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**Baton Rouge, La. (August 3, 2023)** — The Louisiana Department of Health received federal approval on July 22 to begin issuing bonus payments to direct support workers who served waiver participants during the pandemic. LDH's Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) and Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) released the first round of federal funding on July 25 to agencies to provide the bonus payments to eligible workers.

"We've received many questions from workers wanting to know if they qualify for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) bonus payments," said LDH Secretary Stephen R. Russo. "This funding is for the retention of currently and actively employed Direct Service Workers who worked with Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver participants during the pandemic. I want to thank all of these workers for their incredible dedication and compassion in continuing to provide services for some of our most vulnerable residents during a very challenging time."

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has provided guidelines on how this money can be distributed. It is available for a small set of workers who meet a variety of eligibility criteria, including:

Direct Support/Service Worker/Professionals (DSWs) and Self-Direction DSWs may be eligible if they:

- Worked directly with an HCBS or Long Term Personal Care Services participant during the period of April 1, 2021 through October 31, 2022;
- Provided direct care services for at least 16 hours in a month; and
- Are currently employed and an active worker with a provider agency (May 2023 report).

A Support Coordination Agency (SCA) staff member may be eligible if they:

- Worked directly with an HCBS participant during the period of April 1, 2021 through October 31, 2022;
- Had at least 10 documented contacts with waiver participants in a month; and
- Are currently employed and an active worker with a Support Coordination Agency (May 2023).

OCDD and OAAS will release a second round of funding in August and September 2023 after running reports in June and July to check for additional eligible workers.

Workers who would like to know if they qualify should reach out to their current employer or refer to LDH's Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about the bonus payments [here](#).

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## About the Louisiana Department of Health

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The Louisiana Department of Health strives to protect and promote health statewide and to ensure access to medical, preventive and rehabilitative services for all state residents. The Louisiana Department of Health includes the Office of Public Health, Office of Aging & Adult Services, Office of Behavioral Health, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, and Healthy Louisiana (Medicaid). To learn more, visit [www.ldh.la.gov](http://www.ldh.la.gov) or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or our [blog](#).

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