

Manitoba



Department of Families

Community Service Delivery
Disability Programs and Specialized
Services

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Ministère des Familles

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March 23, 2020

Dear Community Living disABILITY Services Provider:

I want to again extend my appreciation for your hard work and commitment as we work together to support vulnerable adults and their families during this unprecedented time.

Services provided to adults with intellectual disabilities are critical to ensuring the health and safety of this vulnerable population. In order to support you and your organizations, the Community Living disABILITY Services (CLDS) program is committed to providing accurate and relevant information as it becomes available.

This letter addresses:

- Day Services Redeployment and Funding;
- Support from Abilities Manitoba;
- Personal Protective Equipment;
- First Aid Certification and Criminal and Adult Abuse Registry Checks;
- Agency Accountability and Support Unit (AASU) Deadline Changes; and
- Critical Services Structure.

Day Services Redeployment and Funding

In addition to maintaining the critical day services described in our March 18 letter, it is essential to redeploy as many day services staff as possible to residential settings, so that vulnerable adults continue to receive the services they need from qualified and competent workers. I commend the many agencies that have already made significant strides towards redeployment.

Please be assured that funding will continue to support critical day services, redeployment, and help ensure sustainability of day services into the future. The following plan has been developed to provide day services funding in a streamlined and flexible manner during this public health crisis:

- To assist with redeployment planning and establish funding for each agency going forward, we will be reaching out to day service providers to request a new staffing plan by April 17, 2020. More information on what to include in the plan and a template will be provided later this week.
- The department will use the staffing plans of agencies that have redeployed staff or are in the process of doing so to calculate a new block funding amount.

- Block funding for day services will be effective May 1, 2020 in place of per diems, to continue funding for all redeployed staff and to cover administration costs required for continued operations.
- Beginning May 1, 2020, funding will be reduced for staff who are no longer delivering service. Funding may fluctuate monthly depending on staff deployment. Block funding for day services will continue until the public health crisis is over. Specifics around how block funding will be calculated, including how administration costs will be determined under the block, are being developed and will be shared as soon as available.
- Agencies delivering day services to individuals assessed as having a critical need (as described in the March 18, 2020 letter) will continue to receive their current day service per diems for those individuals. Agencies may also receive block funding if some of their staff are redeployed to support residential service needs elsewhere in the system. If all staff in an agency are providing critical services or are redeployed to residential services, agencies can be assured that funding will remain status quo.
- The department's expectation is that staff be re-deployed to the greatest extent possible. However, if an agency decides not to deploy staff or there are no deployment opportunities which result in layoffs, funding will be adjusted to cover only the agency's fixed operating costs and some administrative costs.
- Additional funds for residential supports, including respite and outreach, can be provided on a case-by-case basis in situations where the needs of individuals cannot be supported through the redeployment of day services staff or the reorganization of residential services. Funding requests must be submitted according to the normal process, either to the community services worker or program manager, dependent on the region.

Support from Abilities Manitoba

Abilities Manitoba has been working very closely with the department to mobilize the disability services sector and ensure that agencies are supported to continue delivering services. I am pleased to advise that Abilities Manitoba is available to support all agencies across the province, whether they hold a membership with the organization or not.

Direct service workers and agencies should visit the [Abilities Manitoba website](#) to access a new, recently-launched staffing redeployment tool. The tool allows direct service workers and agencies to register online to identify staff who are available to deliver critical services as well as agencies seeking staff to fill shifts. Using the information submitted, Abilities Manitoba will match workers with agencies and participants requiring support.

The Abilities Manitoba website also offers an orientation guide for staff who will be delivering residential services for the first time, as well resources that all stakeholders can use to support vulnerable adults, following the health and safety protocols issued by public health officials. Review the [Basic Orientation to Supporting Individuals in Their Home guide](#).

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

We have been working closely with senior officials in Shared Health and government regarding the availability of and instructions for PPE. PPE is in high demand across a number of sectors and government wants to ensure that the areas with the highest priority need are able to access this equipment as required. We have communicated the type of care and support needs of clients, as well as the working environments in which direct service workers provide care, and the resulting need to prioritize CLDS for a supply of PPE. We expect to have further details and resources available very soon and will update you as soon as possible.

Abilities Manitoba has launched a tool to identify where extra supplies may be available or needed:

If you [need supplies](#).

If you [have supplies to share](#).

First Aid Certification and Criminal and Adult Abuse Registry Checks

CLDS wants to minimize the barriers that could impede the swift and timely redeployment of staff within and across agencies to the greatest extent possible

First Aid Certification

We appreciate the challenges agencies are experiencing to ensure staff meet the first aid certification requirement established under Residential Care Licensing standards, as Canadian Red Cross and others have cancelled training in order to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Existing staff whose first aid certification has expired, or is about to expire, will be allowed to continue working, however they must recertify within six months from the date of expiration. Staff who are redeployed to other agencies can transfer their first aid certifications with them, including expired certifications.

New hires who do not have an expired certification on file must be scheduled to work alongside staff who are certified. This can include working alongside staff whose certification has expired. We recognize that we may need to revisit this as the situation continues to evolve.

Criminal Record and Adult Abuse Registry Checks

Staff who have criminal record and adult abuse registry checks on file with their current agency of employment will be considered to have valid checks in place and will NOT be required to obtain new checks should they be redeployed to another agency. This includes individuals with verified checks who have been working in other sectors (e.g., early learning and child care).

New hires who do not have existing criminal record and adult abuse registry checks will not be permitted to work alone with vulnerable adults. However; they can be scheduled to work alongside staff with valid checks, including redeployed staff whose checks are held by their originating agency.

Again, we recognize that we may need to revisit this as the situation continues to evolve.

Agency Accountability and Support Unit Deadline Changes

The submission deadline for the 2020/21 budget is extended to June 1, 2020 and, for the interim 2019/20 fourth quarter report, extended to June 30, 2020.

Sound financial management can help your agency plan and manage limited resources during this difficult time. This may include establishing a tracking system (such as cost centres, or orders) within your organization for all COVID-19 expenses so that it is easily able to generate accurate financial information for your planning and future reporting on an as-required basis. A sample is attached for your reference.

For any questions related to financial reporting requirements, please contact: aasu@gov.mb.ca. Your questions will be directed accordingly.

Critical Services Structure

Effective Monday, March 23, the CLDS program will be operating under a critical services model.

In Winnipeg, the office at 2015 Portage Avenue will function as incident command for CLDS. Incident command will be responsible for responding to urgent phone calls from the public, receiving incident reports, managing placements, following-up on protection issues and processing payments.

Every rural and northern regional office will also operate with the minimal amount of staff required to perform critical functions. Incident command will be available to assist each regional office as needed.

Urgent or COVID-19 related residential care licensing incident reports, other incident reports and invoices can be submitted, with a copy to the community services worker or residential care licensing coordinator to:

CLDScentralizedservicesandresources@gov.mb.ca.

Service providers can submit all other residential care licensing incident reports and other incident reports via fax to their community area or regional office, or by email directly to their community services worker or residential care licensing coordinator.

Community services workers are currently prioritizing families who may have a critical need for case management support. Once those contacts have been made, they will be reaching out to all families to offer more information and support. The department will also post important information for participants, families and support networks on the government website at www.manitoba.ca/covid19.

Families, participants and service providers can continue to contact their community service worker via telephone and email to plan for services. All voicemail and email will be monitored regularly, Monday through Friday. However, if there is an urgent situation that requires an immediate response, please contact the CLDS call centre toll free line at 1-844-730-0105. These phone lines will be staffed Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. After-hours service will continue to be available for urgent matters through the regular process.

Please visit the government's website at: www.manitoba.ca/covid19 for current information around COVID-19, including recommendations from public health officials.

We will continue to provide you with relevant and accurate information as quickly as we can. We are in the process of planning a series of video conferences to provide you with additional information and an opportunity to ask questions in a group setting.

I appreciate the creative problem-solving and shared commitment that all organizations have demonstrated in order to respond to this challenging situation. We are fully committed to working with you to keep participants and staff safe and supported, and to promote the long-term sustainability of our community-based service system.

Sincerely,
Sandra Dorbolo
Acting Executive Director
Disability Programs and Specialized Services

/Attachment