



HCBS Workforce Recruitment and Retention Plan

State of Rhode Island

Enhanced HCBS Rate Increase Workforce Recruitment and Retention Plan (WRRP)

Self-Directed Program Guidance for Fiscal Intermediaries

December 20, 2021

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1. Executive Summary

The State of Rhode Island will leverage enhanced federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) from the Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021, Section 9817, *Additional Support for Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services during the COVID-19 Emergency* to stabilize the home and community-based services (HCBS) workforce, mitigate labor impacts of the COVID-19 emergency, and provide access to quality, person-centered HCBS services for Medicaid beneficiaries, promoting independent living. It is our collective challenge and opportunity to direct the maximum potential amount of an estimated \$115 million one-time, enhanced HCBS FMAP funding to address what we learned from the public health emergency, address system inequities and meet the complete needs of Rhode Island Medicaid members needing HCBS services.

Based on policy analysis and substantial stakeholder survey feedback highlighting a critical need to strengthen the HCBS workforce via improved compensation, EOHHS is dedicating an estimated \$56 million of these ARPA funds to a HCBS Workforce Recruitment and Retention plan with the goal of increasing compensation to frontline HCBS workers. Of this, an estimated \$4 million will be focused on Self-Directed programs, allowing Fiscal Intermediary agencies to provide retention and hiring bonuses to Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) and ensure consumers can access the in-home care they need. Self-directed home care options such as the Personal Choice and Independent Provider programs provide additional capacity for home-based care by encouraging consumers to source and recruit their own Personal Care Aides (PCAs) from among their relatives, friends and neighbors, thus increasing the capacity of the overall system.

The State of Rhode Island is excited to launch this effort to build back a better, more equitable healthcare system after the COVID-19 pandemic and be prepared for the changing needs and desires of Rhode Islanders. As with all programs launched at Rhode Island EOHHS, we ground our decision making for this program in our core values of choice, community engagement, and race equity.

2. Program Description

Leveraging its pandemic response and LTSS planning efforts, the State of Rhode Island has established time-limited, enhanced funding supports to stabilize and build the capacity and availability of HCBS services for Medicaid enrollees, including an estimated \$4 million for recruitment and retention of Personal Care Aide (PCA) workers in Self-Directed programs, allowing Fiscal Intermediary agencies for the Personal Choice and the Independent Provider programs to provide retention and hiring bonuses to PCAs.

Fiscal Intermediary agencies will receive these funds via a grant in January 2022, and will disburse program funds to support PCAs throughout the 16-month program period from January 1, 2021 through March 31, 2023. Fiscal Intermediaries shall use at least 85% of grant funds to pay direct bonuses to PCAs: a \$500 recruitment bonus for new hires, and a quarterly retention bonus equivalent to 10% of the quarter's gross wages for existing PCAs. Fiscal Intermediaries shall use no more than 15% of grant funds to pay eligible payroll expenses (such as taxes) related to these bonuses.

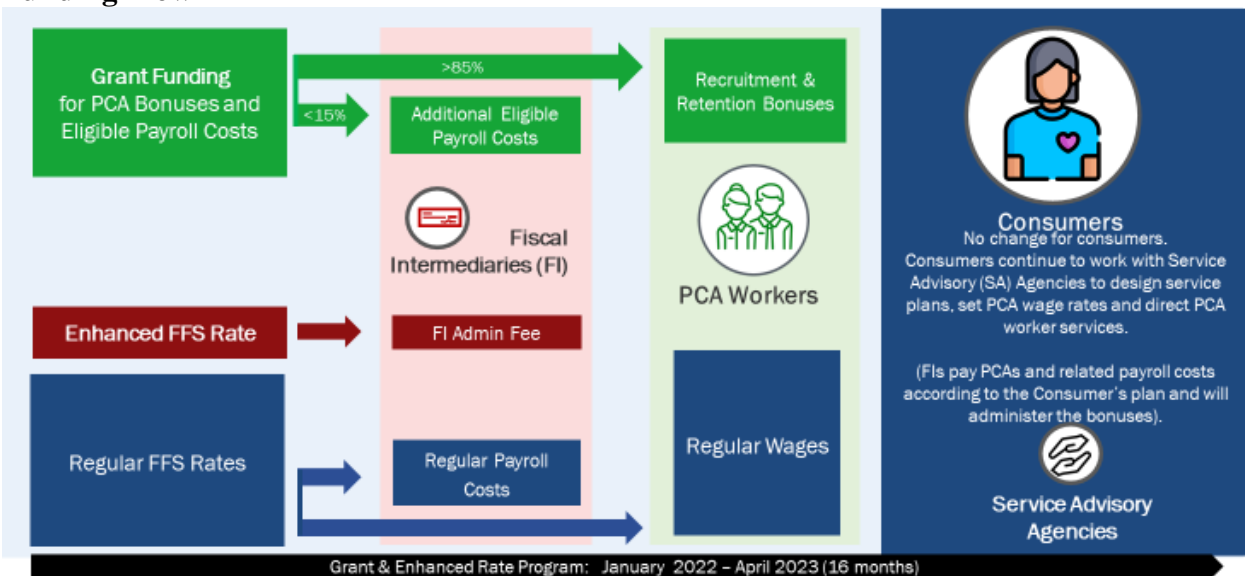


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In addition, Fiscal Intermediary (FI) agencies shall receive an administrative fee to support management of this grant. This will be paid in the form of a 10% increase in the FFS fiscal management rate for a five-month period, January 1, 2022 through May 30, 2022.

This program will not impact the regular ongoing activities of Consumers and Service Advisory Agencies.

Funding Flow



The goals of this Program are to increase the number of PCAs actively providing frontline services to Medicaid enrollees to meet consumer needs more fully, and to improve PCA retention rates. This Program builds on the momentum and learnings of Rhode Island's workforce stabilization program during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency that sent over \$30M in CARES funding to direct care workers.

EOHHS will post documents and information related to this Program on the [ARPA HCBS Enhancement Initiative](#) page. Participating Fiscal Intermediary agencies are encouraged to check this site regularly for updated information.

3. Program Details

3.1. Eligible Provider Agencies and Funding Mechanisms

Fiscal Intermediaries: Funding through this Program shall be directed through the Fiscal Intermediaries for the Personal Choice and Independent Provider programs. There are currently two such entities that are certified by Rhode Island Medicaid to facilitate employment of PCAs by Medicaid enrollees through the Personal Choice and Independent Provider programs:



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Fiscal Intermediaries and Estimated Active and New Hire PCAs

Program	Fiscal Intermediary	NPI #	Estimated Active PCAs	Estimated New Hires
Personal Choice	The Fogarty Center	1821323940	700	150
Independent Provider	Public Partnerships LLC	1184243248	80	50
Total			780	200

Program funding shall be allocated based on the number of active PCAs the Fiscal Intermediaries currently manage and the estimated number of new PCAs (see EOHHS estimates included in table above) who begin providing services during the program period (see recruitment bonus eligibility dates and details in Section 3.2 Funded Activities, below). This funding shall be disbursed via a one-time grant payment to each Fiscal Intermediary in January 2022.

Program	Fiscal Intermediary	Total Grant Funds	For PCA Bonus (≥85%)	For Additional Payroll Costs (≤15%)
Personal Choice	The Fogarty Center	\$3,522,436	\$2,994,071	\$528,365
Independent Provider	Public Partnerships LLC	\$402,564	\$342,179	\$60,385
Total		\$3,925,000	\$3,336,250	\$588,750

In addition, Fiscal Intermediary agencies shall receive an administrative fee to support management of this grant, which will be paid in the form of a 10% increase in the FFS fiscal management rate for a five-month period, January 1, 2022 through May 30, 2022. Estimated administrative fee increase amounts are shown below:

Program	Fiscal Intermediary	Estimated Enhanced FFS per month	Estimated Enhanced FFS \$ Total
Personal Choice	The Fogarty Center	\$4,000	\$20,000
Independent Provider	Public Partnerships LLC	\$200	\$1,000
Total		\$4,200	\$21,000

3.2. Funded Activities

Permitted uses of the grant funding and administrative fee are described below. Please note the qualifying activities are different for each type of funding.

Fiscal Intermediaries shall use 100% of grant funding for the following activities:

- **Recruitment and retention bonuses:** At least 85% of grant funding shall be used for direct payments to PCA workers in the form of recruitment and retention bonuses.
 - **Recruitment Bonuses for New PCAs** - Grant funding will be available for recruitment bonuses for up to 150 new PCAs in the Personal Choice program and



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50 new PCAs in the Independent Provider program during the program period. Fiscal Intermediaries shall provide a \$500 recruitment bonus to PCAs newly hired with first date of service between January 1, 2022 and February 1, 2023 (or whenever grant funds are exhausted, whichever is sooner). The Fiscal Intermediary shall provide the new hire with \$250 upon start of service (or as soon as funds are available to the Fiscal Intermediaries, whichever is later) and \$250 after three months of program employment, if PCAs are actively providing services during each of the three months.

- **Retention Bonuses for Active PCAs** - Grant funding will be available for retention bonuses for an estimated 780 active PCAs (estimated at 700 in the Personal Choice program and 80 in the Independent Provider program) and an estimated 75 new hire PCAs during the program period (assuming that some PCAs will be hired during the program period and will receive first a recruitment bonus and then begin receiving a retention bonus partway through the period). Fiscal Intermediaries shall provide a quarterly retention bonus to PCAs who commenced employment on or before January 1, 2022, equivalent to 10% of the PCA's quarterly gross wages, throughout the 16-month program period January 1, 2022 and April 30, 2023. For PCAs newly hired with first dates of service between January 1, 2022 and January 1, 2023, Fiscal Intermediaries shall begin issuing retention bonuses for the period beginning in the fourth month of service (following the first three months of employment when PCAs receive their recruitment bonus, unless grant funds have been exhausted by that time).
- **Additional eligible payroll costs:** Fiscal Intermediaries shall use no more than 15% of the grant funding for additional eligible payroll costs such as payroll taxes, unemployment insurance, workers compensation, liability, and/or other employer costs paid by Fiscal Intermediary as a result of increased compensation to PCA workers under this program.

Administrative Fee

Separate from the grant program, Fiscal Intermediaries shall use 100% of the administrative fee they receive (separate from grant funding) to support management of the grant, including issuing and documentation of bonus payments and program monitoring and reporting.

3.3 Program Participation Requirements

Fiscal Intermediaries shall maintain detailed and separate accounting records for grant funding and administrative fees received through this program and shall use the funds in a manner consistent with the Qualifying Activities outlined above. Participating Fiscal Intermediaries are required to maintain detailed and complete financial and payroll records demonstrating that funds received through this program are spent in accordance with program guidance. Fiscal Intermediaries shall cooperate fully with the State and any third parties in audits of such records. In the event of an audit, if a Fiscal Intermediary is found to have used funds for ineligible



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expenses, the Fiscal Intermediary will be required to repay such funds to the State. At the end of the program period, any unexpended funds **must be returned** to the State.

Participating Fiscal Intermediaries shall notify the State (by emailing sarah.harrigan@ohhs.ri.gov and rick.brooks@ohhs.ri.gov) when 80% of their grant funds have been expended, allowing the State to explore options for allocating additional funding if needed, or to plan for reallocation of unexpended funds.

Participating Fiscal Intermediaries shall also submit the following documents to the State as required components of program participation. Drafts of these documents are provided as Appendices for reference and discussion only; the final forms may differ from the drafts and should be accessed and submitted online via the [ARPA HCBS Enhancement Initiative webpage](#).

- Submit an *Attestation and Initial Workforce Report*, including:
 - Signed commitment to implement the payments in accordance with the proposed Program Guidance, and providing baseline workforce data.
 - See draft in Appendix A.
- Submit a quarterly *Workforce and Expenditure Report* for each reporting period to address the impact of this program's investments on PCA recruitment and retention, as well as documenting the distribution of funds consistent with the requirements in this Program Guidance.
 - See draft in Appendix B.

3.4. Program Dates

Key dates for the HCBS Workforce Recruitment and Retention Program are as follows:

- December 29, 2021: *Attestation and Initial Workforce Report* due by 5pm.
- January 1, 2022: Grant program begins. Enhanced FFS rate period begins.
- May 30, 2022: Enhanced rate period ends.
- April 30, 2023: Grant program period ends. All program funds must be spent or returned to EOHHS unless an extension is pre-arranged with EOHHS.

Reporting periods: Quarterly reports are due 2 weeks after the last day of each reporting period, by 5pm.

Start Date	End Date	Quarterly <i>Workforce and Expenditure Report</i> due:
Jan 1, 2022	Mar 31, 2022	Apr 14, 2022
Apr 1, 2022	Jun 30, 2022	July 14, 2022
Jul 1, 2022	Sep 30, 2022	Oct 14, 2022
Oct 1, 2022	Dec 31, 2022	Jan 14, 2023
Jan 1, 2023	Apr 30, 2023	May 14, 2023



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Appendix A

DRAFT Initial Attestation and Workforce Report

This is a draft subject to change. Please access and submit the final version online at: [ARPA HCBS Enhancement Initiative](#) by Dec 29, 2021 at 5PM.

Fiscal Intermediary Agency Contact information

FI Agency: _____

NPI #: _____

Name of agency lead contact submitting report: _____

Job title of lead contact: _____

Email of lead contact: _____

Phone for lead contact: _____

Mailing address for lead contact: _____

Total # of Employed should equal the total of the each of the following sections:

- *Years of Service*
- *Ethnicity*
- *Race of employees*

Workforce Report

	Personal Care Aides
Total employed	
0 - 1 year of service	
1 - 5 years of service	
5+ years of service	
# who speak a language other than English	
Ethnicity of employees	
Not Hispanic or Latinx	
Hispanic or Latinx	
Race of employees	
White	
Black or African American	
American Indian or Alaska Native	
Asian	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	
Other	
Unknown	



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Attestation

By submitting this form on _____ [Today's Date] _____, I, _____ [Name] _____, hereby attest that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that the above information is accurate and complete.

I recognize that the purpose of the HCBS workforce grant funds and administrative fees received by _____ [FI Agency] _____ is to improve recruitment, retention, and capacity of the Personal Care Aide (PCA) workforce for Self-Directed programs. I hereby attest that at least 85% of the grant funds shall be spent to provide recruitment and retention bonuses to PCAs and no more than 15% of the grant funds shall be spent on additional eligible payroll costs, via Qualifying Activities as described in Program Guidance. I further attest that the administrative fees my agency receives related to this program shall be spent in accordance with Program Guidance. My agency will maintain payroll and financial records to support this attestation, and such payroll records may be subject to audit by EOHHS. In the event that EOHHS determines that Program funds have been used for ineligible expenses, my agency may be required to repay such funds to EOHHS. My agency commits to notifying EOHHS when we have spent 80% of grant funds. My agency also commits to returning to EOHHS any Program funds not expended by the Program end date of April 30, 2023. My agency will maintain and submit quarterly Expenditure Reports and Workforce Reports as required by EOHHS.



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Appendix B

DRAFT Quarterly Workforce and Expenditure Report

A final version to be accessed and submitted online via: [ARPA HCBS Enhancement Initiative](#).

Quarterly reports must be submitted to EOHHS within two weeks following the end of each reporting period, and should include data as of the last day of the reporting quarter.

Start Date	End Date	Workforce and Expenditure Report due
Jan 1, 2022	Mar 31, 2022	Apr 14, 2022
Apr 1, 2022	Jun 30, 2022	July 14, 2022
Jul 1, 2022	Sep 30, 2022	Oct 14, 2022
Oct 1, 2022	Dec 31, 2022	Jan 14, 2023
Jan 1, 2023	Apr 30, 2023	May 14, 2023

Fiscal Intermediary Agency Contact information

FI Agency: _____

NPI #: _____

Name of agency lead contact submitting report: _____

Job title of lead contact: _____

Email of lead contact: _____

Phone for lead contact: _____

Mailing address for lead contact: _____

Reporting period

Reporting period - start date:	
Reporting period - end date (use this date's data):	

Total # of Employed should equal the total of the each of the following sections:

- *Years of Service*
- *Ethnicity*
- *Race of employees*



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Table 1: Workforce Report

	Personal Care Aides
Total employed	
0 - 1 year of service	
1 - 5 years of service	
5+ years of service	
# who speak a language other than English	
Ethnicity of employees	
Not Hispanic or Latinx	
Hispanic or Latinx	
Race of employees	
White	
Black or African American	
American Indian or Alaska Native	
Asian	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	
Other	
Unknown	
Total hired during reporting period	
Total terminations during reporting period	
Retention rate (# terminations during reporting period divided by # employed at start of reporting period)	
Total job openings	



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Table 2: Cumulative Grant Expenditure Report Summary

	Grant \$\$ spent since Jan 1 2022	Total Grant \$\$ received	% of Grant \$\$ spent since Jan 1 2022
Additional compensation - recruitment and retention ($\geq 85\%$)			
Increased payroll costs related to the additional compensation above (target $\leq 15\%$)			
Grand Total			

If spending proportions in Table 2 vary significantly from target percentages, please explain here the reasons and plans for reaching the target spending ratios by the end of the program period April 30, 2023:

Please estimate the date by which your agency anticipates having spent 80% of the grant funding.

Table 3: Cumulative Number of PCAs Supported

Additional Compensation Paid to PCAs since January 1, 2022	Total \$\$ spent on additional compensation	Number of PCAs that have received additional compensation
Recruitment bonuses	\$	\$
Retention bonuses	\$	\$
TOTAL	\$	\$

Comments (optional; note highlight successes, challenges and lessons learned):

Attestation

By submitting this form on _____ [Today's Date], I, _____ [Name], hereby attest that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that the above information is accurate and complete. _____ [FI Agency] has maintained personnel, payroll and financial records to support this attestation and acknowledges that such personnel records may be subject to audit by EOHHS. In the event that EOHHS determines that Program funds have been used for ineligible expenses, my agency may be required to repay such funds to EOHHS. My agency shall return to EOHHS any Program funds not expended by the Program end date of April 30, 2023.