



I/DD Provider Support Program Guidance

Table of Contents

1	<i>Executive Summary</i>	2
2	<i>Program Overview</i>	3
2.1	Program Description and Funding Distribution Methodology	3
2.2	Funding Distribution Methodology	3
3	<i>Program Details</i>	3
3.1	Funding, Application, and Reporting Timelines	3
3.2	Eligible Applicants	4
3.3	Program Attestation	4
3.4	Financial Controls and Reporting	4
3.5	Uses of Funds	5
4	<i>In Closing</i>	5



1 Executive Summary

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020 designated aid for state governments to support COVID-19 efforts. Rhode Island is using a portion of that funding to create the **I/DD Provider Support Program**, a grant program to promote not only provider recovery and resiliency, but also address challenges with consumer access during the current COVID-19 pandemic. The I/DD Provider Support Program is intended to address the crisis in I/DD service continuum caused or exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency. The goal of the I/DD Provider Support Program is to support residential provider response and invest in the supply and access to community programming in light of an environment where due to COVID-19, modifications in terms of service delivery and model are necessary.

The COVID-19 public health emergency has had a significant second order impact on I/DD provider revenues and utilization. When the high rate of spread of COVID-19 in the state became more apparent, some consumers and their families began seeking alternative care settings, including some existing residents. In addition, community and day program services were either suspended or had to reduce capacity to respond to the current pandemic. The result for programs was a decline in utilization while also incurring increased costs due to COVID-19. As a result, many I/DD organizations are in financial distress.

COVID has increased operating costs, including personnel expenses for all providers within the I/DD continuum, increasing the risk of destabilization of the array of available I/DD services. It was reported at the outset of the pandemic that the fiscal impact to the majority of the providers within the I/DD community were incurring a fiscal impact of nearly \$1.0 million per month, after accounting for lost revenue and new extra direct costs incurred (PPE, reopening, etc.).

Rhode Islanders living with intellectual and developmental disabilities -- one of the state's most vulnerable populations -- have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Adults with disabilities have, in large part, received services in large group settings pre-COVID-19. Due to the vulnerabilities and poor outcomes associated with COVID-19 infection in this population, an increase in the availability of and access to home-based and small group service delivery is needed. Home-based service alternatives require a large and flexible workforce, and additional financial support is needed to ensure retention and recruitment of staff moving forward.

Providers must deliver individualized and/or small group service models to accommodate COVID-19 public health precautions. This in turn has created a more significant fiscal burden on those provider organizations who deliver community-based services. The nature of the pandemic has either required that these programs close and/or significantly reduce capacity, which has resulted in lower revenues to sustain their workforce and operations.

Finally, we know that some I/DD consumers with pre-existing health conditions are particularly susceptible to the virus and could lead to them ending up in a hospital setting when they otherwise could be cared for in a less restrictive setting. During the public health emergency we need to ensure that hospital beds are available for the sickest patients. Therefore, creating opportunities for I/DD providers to meet the needs of I/DD consumers within its existing service array and settings is not only a priority of the I/DD community, but also from a public health perspective for the state of Rhode Island.



2 Program Overview

2.1 Program Description and Funding Distribution Methodology

The **I/DD Provider Support Program** is established as an initiative to provide additional financial assistance for adult residential and community I/DD service providers in Rhode Island. These grant funds are an additional measure to be used as secondary to other federal coronavirus relief funding received by I/DD residential and community providers, and other funding resources made available by the State over the duration of the COVID-19 response.

As a result of COVID-19, the costs of delivering services and preserving system capacity have increased while revenues have declined throughout the I/DD service array. The **I/DD Provider Support Program** will distribute a total of up to \$10 million in funding, via a grant process, to adult I/DD providers in Rhode Island who are licensed by BHDDH. These grants will allow providers to remain viable through the public health emergency, mitigating the impact of the current pandemic. This document is intended to provide an overview of the goals of the program, the application process and eligibility and evaluation criteria.

2.2 Funding Distribution Methodology

Providers will be required to submit an attestation to the state that specifies the provider's specific award calculation, which will be based on data to be provided by the state. The provider attestation will specify the award calculation, intended to serve as an offset to lost revenue. For purposes of this award, lost revenue will be determined on the basis of the difference between authorization and spend data during the period of the public health emergency which occurred between July 1, 2020 and December 30, 2020.

Award calculations are based on the following formula:

$$\text{LOST REVENUE} = \text{TOTAL SERVICE AUTHORIZATIONS (\$ amount)} - \text{EXPENDITURES}$$

The final allocation of grant funding will be prorated to remain within the \$10M fund and the state will apply a formula to ensure that a prorated share of the \$10M is fairly and equitably distributed to each participating provider. Furthermore, if all eligible providers do not choose to apply, the state will redistribute their share of the \$10M award to the entire population of providers who choose to participate in the program to ensure that the full, allocated amount is deployed.

3 Program Details

3.1 Funding, Application, and Reporting Timelines

Key dates for I/DD Provider Support program are as follows:

- **December 29, 2020:** Program guidance and attestations emailed to providers
- **January 4, 2021:** Deadline to submit questions about the application to OHHS.IDDAccessProgram@ohhs.ri.gov
- **January 5, 2021** Attestations due to the State at 4pm.
- **January 15, 2021:** Funding is anticipated to be available by this date and paid via the MMIS.
- **July 30, 2021:** Post award reporting is due. The state will create a reporting template for providers to account for the receipt and use of other funds intended to offset lost revenue during the public health emergency, such as HRSA dollars that will be due after the grant funds are distributed. The state will work collaboratively with providers to ensure that this requirement is supported by the state and met by each participating provider.



COVID-19 Coronavirus Relief Fund Program

State of Rhode Island, December 29, 2020

3.2 Eligible Applicants

Grant funding through the **I/DD Provider Support Program** will be made available to all BHDDH licensed residential and community providers in the I/DD system that demonstrate revenue loss. These programs must be in operation as of December 1, 2020. Specifically, these programs are required to be licensed by BHDDH as DDOs (“DDO Programs”). These DDO Programs provide an array of services, including residential programming as well as community-based support services to eligible Medicaid beneficiaries as an alternative to the use of higher risk congregate care settings, and as a result serve to mitigate potential exposure to COVID-19 during the pandemic. Furthermore, eligible providers will need to agree to the program attestations and reporting requirements (outlined below).

3.3 Program Attestation

In order to receive funding from this program, eligible providers must submit a signed attestation to the State. The document will require agreement to a section of attestations:

The attestations that applicants must agree to are listed below:

1. **Use of Funds** – Applicants must commit to using funds as outlined below in section 3.4 (Uses of Funds), which will also be outlined in the attestation document.
2. **Award Calculation** – Applicants must agree to the methodology and calculation for grant award funds as outlined in the attestation. Additionally, this will serve as an acknowledgement that they are in agreement with this methodology to determine revenue loss during the public health emergency, beginning July 1, 2020. **All funding determinations are final and non-negotiable.**
3. **Shared Goal Commitment** – it is a priority of the state that these dollars, to the extent possible, be utilized in a manner that promote, 1.) the preservation of and increase access to services by all I/DD consumers in Rhode Island, and 2.) support of frontline workers who provide direct services to those in the I/DD community. Moreover, it is required that recipients of this award, maintain the following access standards:
 - A. To continue to provide essential services to beneficiaries;
 - B. To make reasonable attempts to not lay off over fifty (50) percent of employees;
 - C. To remain in contact with beneficiaries served by the DDO to determine health and safety needs and develop alternative service delivery strategies and modalities, outreach through telephonic service and technology to facilitate, when possible, community outreach and support. The purpose of which is to maintain routine and reduce isolation and risk to participants.
 - D. To comply with all public health recommendations, regarding COVID-19, as applicable.
 - E. That for beneficiaries receiving supports and services through Shared Living Arrangements or through a residential program, the provider shall ensure that the beneficiary served receives sufficient and adequate funding and service levels.

3.4 Financial Controls and Reporting

Applicants must agree to retain and track funds and expenditures in a separate operating account consistent with sound grant management practices; provide periodic status and financial reports in a format approved by EOHHS and DOA, and respond to state auditing requests as needed.



COVID-19 Coronavirus Relief Fund Program

State of Rhode Island, December 29, 2020

3.5 Uses of Funds

- Costs to prevent, prepare for, or respond to coronavirus, including supplies and equipment used to provide care to possible or actual COVID-19 patients, workforce training, personal protective equipment, reporting COVID-19 test results; and undertaking COVID-19 infection control procedures.
- Costs resulting from the business interruption resulting from COVID-19, including lost revenue as defined above as well as any costs that enable the applicant to continue to deliver care during the pandemic, including typical payroll and benefits, rent or mortgage payments, equipment lease payments, and other standard operating expenses, including but not limited to:
 - Payroll support (standard and can include hazard pay, but not required)
 - Contract staffing costs (standard and COVID-related)
 - Payroll tax
 - Pension match
 - Workers' compensation costs
 - Unemployment insurance
 - Personal protective equipment
 - Cleaning/janitorial expenses and supplies (standard and COVID-related)
 - Other COVID-specific costs not listed above, such as temporary housing for staff and clients

Once funds are disbursed, providers are required to keep financial records demonstrating that funds received are spent in accordance with award requirements, as recipients of these funds will be subject to reporting and audit requirements. In the event of an audit, if the facility is found to have used funds for ineligible expenses, the facility will be considered in violation of the grant agreement at which point EOHHS will begin the process of recouping all or a portion of the funds awarded by reducing future payments to the facility.

4 In Closing

The COVID-19 public health emergency caused for the state's I/DD system that requires broad cooperation to overcome; it is also clear that the situation will continue to present challenges as it evolves. This partnership represents an opportunity to extend that cooperation to build strong resilience for the current crisis and improve health outcomes for all Rhode Islanders in need of I/DD services and supports.

The State of Rhode Island looks forward to working with critically important I/DD providers, consumers and other stakeholders to establish and carry out this partnership.