

APPENDIX K: Emergency Preparedness and Response and COVID-19 Addendum

Background:

This standalone appendix may be utilized by the state during emergency situations to request amendments to its approved waiver, to multiple approved waivers in the state, and/or to all approved waivers in the state. It includes actions that states can take under the existing Section 1915(c) home and community-based waiver authority in order to respond to an emergency. Other activities may require the use of various other authorities such as the Section 1115 demonstrations or the Section 1135 authorities.¹ This appendix may be applied retroactively as needed by the state. Public notice requirements normally applicable under 1915(c) do not apply to information contained in this Appendix.

Appendix K-1: General Information

General Information:

A. State: MS

B. Waiver Title(s): Independent Living Waiver

C. Control Number(s): MS.0255.R05.03

D. Type of Emergency (The state may check more than one box):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pandemic or Epidemic
<input type="checkbox"/>	Natural Disaster
<input type="checkbox"/>	National Security Emergency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify):

E. **Brief Description of Emergency.** *In no more than one paragraph each*, briefly describe the: 1) nature of emergency; 2) number of individuals affected and the state’s mechanism to identify individuals at risk; 3) roles of state, local and other entities involved in approved waiver operations; and 4) expected changes needed to service delivery methods, if applicable. The state should provide this information for each emergency checked if those emergencies affect different geographic areas and require different changes to the waiver.

This Appendix K is additive to the approved Appendix K. Changes being made include updates to K-2-f to amend the percentage of rate variance allowed when utilizing an agency provider for Personal Care Attendant Services and to K-2-m to address compliance audit activities.

COVID-19 pandemic. This amendment will apply waiver-wide for each waiver included in this Appendix, to all individuals impacted by the virus or the response to the virus (e.g. closure of day programs, etc.)

F. Proposed Effective Date: Start Date: March 1, 2020 **Anticipated End Date:** January 26, 2021

G. Description of Transition Plan.

All activities will take place in response to the impact of COVID-19 as efficiently and effectively as possible based upon the complexity of the change. The state will implement additional flexibilities requested as needed at DOM's discretion based on the severity of the pandemic.

H. Geographic Areas Affected:

These actions will apply across the waiver to all individuals impacted by the COVID-19 virus.

I. Description of State Disaster Plan (if available) *Reference to external documents is acceptable:*

The state's pandemic disaster plan is available at https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/resources/2944.pdf.

Appendix K-2: Temporary or Emergency-Specific Amendment to Approved Waiver

Temporary or Emergency-Specific Amendment to Approved Waiver:

These are changes that, while directly related to the state's response to an emergency situation, require amendment to the approved waiver document. These changes are time limited and tied specifically to individuals impacted by the emergency. Permanent or long-ranging changes will need to be incorporated into the main appendices of the waiver, via an amendment request in the waiver management system (WMS) upon advice from CMS.

a. ___ Access and Eligibility:

- i. ___ Temporarily increase the cost limits for entry into the waiver.**
[Provide explanation of changes and specify the temporary cost limit.]

[Redacted]

ii. ___ Temporarily modify additional targeting criteria.

[Explanation of changes]

[Redacted]

b. X Services

i. X Temporarily modify service scope or coverage.

[Complete Section A- Services to be Added/Modified During an Emergency.]

ii. ___ Temporarily exceed service limitations (including limits on sets of services as described in Appendix C-4) or requirements for amount, duration, and prior authorization to address health and welfare issues presented by the emergency.

[Explanation of changes]

[Redacted]

iii. X Temporarily add services to the waiver to address the emergency situation (for example, emergency counseling; heightened case management to address emergency needs; emergency medical supplies and equipment; individually directed goods and services; ancillary services to establish temporary residences for dislocated waiver enrollees; necessary technology; emergency evacuation transportation outside of the scope of non-emergency transportation or transportation already provided through the waiver).

[Complete Section A-Services to be Added/Modified During an Emergency]

iv. ___ Temporarily expand setting(s) where services may be provided (e.g. hotels, shelters, schools, churches). Note for respite services only, the state should indicate any facility-based settings and indicate whether room and board is included:

[Explanation of modification, and advisement if room and board is included in the respite rate]:

[Redacted]

v. ___ Temporarily provide services in out of state settings (if not already permitted in the state's approved waiver). [Explanation of changes]

[Redacted]

c. X Temporarily permit payment for services rendered by family caregivers or legally responsible individuals if not already permitted under the waiver. Indicate the services to which this will apply and the safeguards to ensure that individuals receive necessary services as

authorized in the plan of care, and the procedures that are used to ensure that payments are made for services rendered.

Temporarily allow Personal Care Services to be provided by the family members provided they are not legally responsible for the person to include individuals living in the home with the participant.

d. X Temporarily modify provider qualifications (for example, expand provider pool, temporarily modify or suspend licensure and certification requirements).

i. X Temporarily modify provider qualifications.

[Provide explanation of changes, list each service affected, list the provider type, and the changes in provider qualifications.]

Allow flexibility on expiring state issued identification, training, background checks, etc. at DOM's discretion throughout the pandemic. Flexibilities include temporarily waiving/delaying requirements for full 40 hour training, state issued ID, TB skin test, physical exam, CPR and first aid certification. To ensure ongoing quality of care and safety, new provider staff or those due for recertification of credentialing will be required to complete training on infection control, proper transferring techniques, and Vulnerable Person's Act, will be required to complete a HCBS Provider Health Self-Attestation form, and will be required to have a name only background check with results that do not preclude them from providing care in accordance with state law.

ii. X Temporarily modify provider types.

[Provide explanation of changes, list each service affected, and the changes in the .provider type for each service].

Allow qualified personal care provider agencies to provide personal care in addition to individual personal care providers.

iii. Temporarily modify licensure or other requirements for settings where waiver services are furnished.

[Provide explanation of changes, description of facilities to be utilized and list each service provided in each facility utilized.]

e. X Temporarily modify processes for level of care evaluations or re-evaluations (within regulatory requirements). [Describe]

Allow authority to delay the completion of recertifications throughout the pandemic and/or the authorization to complete them telephonically where appropriate in accordance with HIPAA requirements.

f. X Temporarily increase payment rates.

[Provide an explanation for the increase. List the provider types, rates by service, and specify whether this change is based on a rate development method that is different from the current

approved waiver (and if different, specify and explain the rate development method). If the rate varies by provider, list the rate by service and by provider.]

The state added agency providers as providers that rendered personal care services to supplement the current provider pool during the pandemic. At that time we allowed a 20% increase on the cost to allow for agency costs to render services. We are increasing that rate increase to up to 30% to ensure a rate that provides a sufficient provider pool during the pandemic.

Individualized service budgets are not a component of this waiver. Person-centered plans of services and supports for participants who are utilizing the agency provider for supplemental support during the pandemic are being updated to reflect the agency as a back-up provider.

g. X Temporarily modify person-centered service plan development process and individual(s) responsible for person-centered service plan development, including qualifications.

[Describe any modifications including qualifications of individuals responsible for service plan development, and address Participant Safeguards. Also include strategies to ensure that services are received as authorized.]

Allow any face to face/home visits including quarterly plan reviews to be completed telephonically, if needed, in accordance with HIPAA requirements. Case Managers will still be required to complete monthly contacts with participants/caregivers by phone to ensure services are received as authorized.

h. X Temporarily modify incident reporting requirements, medication management or other participant safeguards to ensure individual health and welfare, and to account for emergency circumstances. [Explanation of changes]

Allow for any follow up related to critical incident reports to be completed telephonically, as needed, in accordance with HIPAA requirements.

i. ___ Temporarily allow for payment for services for the purpose of supporting waiver participants in an acute care hospital or short-term institutional stay when necessary supports (including communication and intensive personal care) are not available in that setting, or when the individual requires those services for communication and behavioral stabilization, and such services are not covered in such settings.

[Specify the services.]

j. ___ Temporarily include retainer payments to address emergency related issues.

[Describe the circumstances under which such payments are authorized and applicable limits on their duration. Retainer payments are available for habilitation and personal care only.]

k. ___ Temporarily institute or expand opportunities for self-direction.

[Provide an overview and any expansion of self-direction opportunities including a list of services that may be self-directed and an overview of participant safeguards.]

l. ___ Increase Factor C.

[Explain the reason for the increase and list the current approved Factor C as well as the proposed revised Factor C]

m. X Other Changes Necessary [For example, any changes to billing processes, use of contracted entities or any other changes needed by the State to address imminent needs of individuals in the waiver program]. [Explanation of changes]

DOM will waive the requirement that a participant must be terminated from the waiver if he/she is not available for services after 30 days; however, participants will still receive monthly monitoring by Case Managers to assure health and welfare.

Allow for the timeline for annual compliance reviews by DOM to be extended, if needed, during the pandemic and not to extend past the end date of this Appendix K amendment. DOM conducts post payment reviews of providers annually. These reviews include, but are not limited to, review of claims data, that staff providing claimed services are qualified, that services were provided to eligible individuals, and that those services were provided in accordance with the frequencies, amounts, and duration on the approved Plan of Services and Supports.

Appendix K Addendum: COVID-19 Pandemic Response

1. HCBS Regulations

- a. Not comply with the HCBS settings requirement at 42 CFR 441.301(c)(4)(vi)(D) that individuals are able to have visitors of their choosing at any time, for settings added after March 17, 2014, to minimize the spread of infection during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Services

- a. Add an electronic method of service delivery (e.g., telephonic) allowing services to continue to be provided remotely in the home setting for:
 - i. Case management
 - ii. Personal care services that only require verbal cueing
 - iii. In-home habilitation
 - iv. Monthly monitoring (i.e., in order to meet the reasonable indication of need for services requirement in 1915(c) waivers).

v. Other *[Describe]*:

b.

Add home-delivered meals

c. Add medical supplies, equipment and appliances (over and above that which is in the state plan)

d. Add Assistive Technology

3. Conflict of Interest: The state is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic personnel crisis by authorizing case management entities to provide direct services. Therefore, the case management entity qualifies under 42 CFR 441.301(c)(1)(vi) as the only willing and qualified entity.

a. Current safeguards authorized in the approved waiver will apply to these entities.

b. Additional safeguards listed below will apply to these entities.

4. Provider

Qualifications

a. Allow spouses and parents of minor children to provide personal care services

b. Allow a family member to be paid to render services to an individual.

c. Allow other practitioners in lieu of approved providers within the waiver. *[Indicate the providers and their qualifications]*

Allow qualified personal care provider agencies to provide personal care services in addition to individual personal care attendants.

d. Modify service providers for home-delivered meals to allow for additional providers, including non-traditional providers.

5. Processes

a. Allow an extension for reassessments and reevaluations for up to one year past the due date.

b. Allow the option to conduct evaluations, assessments, and person-centered service planning meetings virtually/remotely in lieu of face-to-face meetings.

c. Adjust prior approval/authorization elements approved in waiver.

d. Adjust assessment requirements

e. Add an electronic method of signing off on required documents such as the person-centered service plan.

Contact Person(s)

A. The Medicaid agency representative with whom CMS should communicate regarding the request:

First Name: Paulette

Last Name: Johnson

Title: Nurse Office Director, Office of Long Term Care
Agency: Mississippi Division of Medicaid
Address 1: Walter Sillers Building, Suite 1000
Address 2: 550 High Street
City: Jackson
State: Mississippi
Zip Code: 39201
Telephone: (601)359-6141
E-mail: Paulette.Johnson@medicaid.ms.gov
Fax Number: (601)359-9521

B. If applicable, the State operating agency representative with whom CMS should communicate regarding the waiver is:

First Name: Anita
Last Name: Naik
Title: Office Director, Office of Special Disability Programs
Agency: Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services
Address 1: 1281 Highway 51 N
Address 2: Click or tap here to enter text.
City: Madison
State: Mississippi
Zip Code: 39110
Telephone: (601)853-5230
E-mail: ANaik@mhrs.ms.gov
Fax Number: (601)853-5230

8. Authorizing Signature

Signature:

Date: 8/3/2020

_____/S/_____
State Medicaid Director or Designee

First Name: Paulette
Last Name: Johnson
Title: Nurse Office Director, Office of Long Term Care
Agency: Mississippi Division of Medicaid
Address 1: Walter Sillers Building, Suite 1000
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