

Open for Public Comment: Proposed Amendment to the Adult Autism Waiver (AAW) Effective July 1, 2022

ODP Announcement 22-030

AUDIENCE:

All Stakeholders

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this communication is to announce that the proposed amendment to the AAW is available for public review and comment. There is a 30-day public comment period that starts on March 12, 2022 and ends on April 11, 2022.

DISCUSSION:

The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) is pleased to announce the opportunity for public comment on proposed changes to the AAW. As part of this process, ODP is seeking your valuable feedback and comments on the proposed waiver amendment. Information regarding the proposed waiver amendment changes, including how to provide comments, can be found in the Pennsylvania Bulletin, Volume 52, Number 11 published on Saturday, March 12, 2022, at:

<https://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pabull?file=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol52/52-11/392.html>

ODP proposes the following substantive amendment to the AAW effective July 1, 2022:

- Support individuals with complex needs by allowing Residential Habilitation (Life Sharing) services to be rendered in homes owned by the provider of Residential

Habilitation (Life Sharing) services and through the addition of reserved capacity for individuals who are discharged from a state center and individuals who are disenrolled from the Adult Autism Waiver due to incarceration for more than 6 months.

- Simplify the service system through additional alignment of all waivers administered by ODP. This includes:
 - Revising and clarifying the service definitions for Assistive Technology to align with the three other ODP-administered waivers where possible.
 - Revising the provider qualifications of most services to align with the three other ODP-administered waivers where possible.
 - Refining the definitions of critical incidents, protocols, oversight of medication administration, and oversight of restraints and restrictive procedures to comply with 55 Pa. Code Chapter 6100 regulations and ODP incident management policy.
 - The alignment of quality improvement strategies to include the use of the Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q) process and the Plan-Do-Check-Act Model.
- Develop and support qualified staff through revisions to provider qualifications for Supports Coordinators.
- Encourage choice and control by adding Remote Supports as a waiver service and allowing Residential Habilitation (Life Sharing) to be delivered by relatives.
- Promote health, wellness, and safety by adding provider qualification requirements for a Supportive Technology Professional when individuals in

Residential Habilitation settings are receiving remote supports and allowing the continuation of remote monitoring of individuals by Supports Coordinators.

The waiver amendment and the record of change document are available at:

<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Disabilities-Aging/Pages/July-2022-Waiver-Amendment.aspx>.

Please note the following:

- The format of the side-by-side documents has changed and are now referred to as record of change documents. While the column regarding current waiver language has been removed, readers can continue to see the changes to the current waiver language in the record of change documents.
- The amendment to the Adult Autism Waiver that was proposed to be effective on April 1, 2022 as communicated in ODP Announcement [22-004](#) is still pending approval with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). For this reason, you will not see those changes in the waiver amendment effective July 1, 2022 that are posted for review even though ODP still plans on implementing the changes in that previous amendment effective April 1, 2022, after approval by CMS.

COMMENTS:

Interested persons are invited to submit written comments regarding the proposed waiver amendments as outlined below. **Comments received by 11:59 p.m. on April 11, 2022, will be reviewed and considered for revisions to the waiver amendment submitted to CMS.**

Comments should be addressed to Laura Cipriani, Department of Human Services, Office of Developmental Programs, 625 Forster Street, Room 510, Harrisburg, PA 17120.

Comments may also be submitted to ODP at RA-odpcomment@pa.gov using subject header "AAW Amendment Comments."

The Department will also hold a webinar to receive comments on the proposed Waiver amendment. The date, time, and link for registration to attend this webinar are as follows:

March 31, 2022

1:00 PM to 2:30 PM

The following link must be used to register for the webinar:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1110887596030781967>

Anyone who is interested in participating in the webinar may do so by phone but will need a computer to provide comments during the webinar. To assist the Department in accurately capturing comments provided during the webinar, individuals are asked to submit a written copy of their comments by email or mail to the address provided above.

Persons with a disability who require an auxiliary aid or service may submit comments using the Pennsylvania Relay Service by dialing 7-1-1 or by using one of the toll-free numbers:

(800) 654-5984 (TDD users)

(800) 654-5988 (voice users)

(844) 308-9292 (Speech-to-Speech) or

(844) 308-9291 (Spanish)

Copies of this notice and documents containing the changes proposed in the waiver amendment may be obtained by contacting the Office of Developmental Programs, Bureau of Supports for Autism and Special Populations, at the following address or email:

P.O. Box 2675, Harrisburg, PA 17105, RA-odpautismwaiver@pa.gov.

CONTACT:

Questions about this communication should be directed to RA-odpautismwaiver@pa.gov.