

Adult Autism Waiver (AAW) Amendment Approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) ODP Announcement 22-034

AUDIENCE:

All Stakeholders

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this communication is to inform all interested stakeholders that the amendment to the AAW has been approved by the CMS.

DISCUSSION:

The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) is pleased to announce that the amendment to the AAW **effective April 1, 2022**, was approved by CMS on March 21, 2022. The amended AAW can be found on the DHS website at this link:

<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Disabilities-Aging/Pages/Adult%20Autism%20Waiver.aspx>

The amendment for the Adult Autism Waiver includes the following substantive changes:

- Clarification that the waiver cannot be used to fund home accessibility durable medical equipment that is covered under the Medical Assistance State Plan.

- Delivery of services while the participant is hospitalized. The requirements in the waiver will become effective when Appendix K flexibilities expire, six months after the expiration of the federal COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Extension of time frames for staff training or credentialing for employment-related services.
- Increase in the threshold for obtaining an independent evaluation for Assistive Technology devices.
- Clarification on the inclusion of physical restraints in the Behavioral Support Plan.
- Requirements for obtaining criminal history clearances for staff.
- Aligning Level of Care Reevaluation procedures with current practice.

NOTE: The delivery of direct services using remote technology that was included in this amendment is being delayed at the request of CMS. The addition of remote service delivery will now be included in the amendment proposed to be effective July 1, 2022. Regardless of when remote service delivery is added to the waiver, this method of service delivery is currently allowable when provided in accordance with Appendix K and the Operational Guide. Any changes in remote service delivery included in the waiver will become effective when Appendix K flexibilities expire, six months after the expiration of the federal COVID-19 public health emergency.

COMMENT:

Questions about the AAW amendment or this communication should be directed to RA-odpautismwaiver@pa.gov.