

MEMO

To: Case Management Agencies and Authorized Agencies under Choices for Care
From: Adult Services Division, Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living
Date: Thursday April 9, 2020
Re: Guidance on COVID-19 Pandemic Temporary Service Changes

This document provides guidance to agencies working with participants of the Choices for Care program.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an urgent need to maintain physical distance and aggressively reduce person to person contact. This will help to reduce the spread of the virus and reduce the impact on our healthcare system.

With Choices for Care participants receiving less services from people outside their homes, they may have a need for more support in other ways. DAIL is allowing the following temporary changes during the COVID-19 Crisis, effective March 13, 2020, the date the State of Emergency was declared.

If you have questions about this guidance, please contact:
Angela McMann, Program Manager
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Moderate Needs Group and Flex Funds

Please use Moderate Needs Funding flexibly to be able to provide more essential services in the home that were traditionally provided in other settings or other ways. For example, funds used previously for Homemaker services may be used to purchase goods/services to address an unmet need. Area Agencies on Aging, Home Health Agencies and Adult Days can work together on this funding flexibility based on client needs and fund availability.

Assistive Device/Home Modifications

What is changing?	Temporary blanket variance to increase the Assistive Device/Home Modification funding limit
Who is it intended for?	Choices for Care participants whose personal care/respice/companionship providers are not able to provide care in the home due to the COVID -19 crisis

What is the new funding limit?	Up to \$2000 for goods and/or services that meet the criteria of supporting the individual’s health and safety in the home. Examples: purchase of equipment for telemonitoring/communication, smart home devices
How long will these funds be available?	This is a one-time blanket variance made in response to the State of Vermont COVID-19 state of emergency declaration.
How do participants/surrogates access these funds?	Case Managers will approve the purchase of goods/services based on guidance from DAIL, and then communicate that amount to DAIL staff. DAIL staff will enter a Prior Authorization if required.
What is the process for Flexible Choices?	Participants/Surrogates work with Transition II advisor – the rest same as above.

Adult Family Care (AFC) Respite/Companionship

What is changing?	Temporary blanket variance to allow a transfer of unused respite/companionship budget to the home provider’s difficulty of care stipend.
Who is it intended for?	Choices for Care AFC participants whose personal care/respite/companionship providers are not able to provide care in the home due to the COVID -19 crisis.
What is the new funding limit?	Must not exceed the funding limit of the service plan.
How do are these funds accessed?	The Authorized Agency may have respite funds moved into the Difficulty of Care stipend on a monthly basis for the duration of the state of emergency; amount not to exceed average monthly amount based on approved service plan.
How long will these funds be available?	This is a temporary blanket variance in response to the State of Vermont COVID-19 state of emergency declaration.



For Independent Employers: Temporary Blanket Variance to Allow Payments for People Living in the Home

Program	Can workers under the age of 18 be employed and paid?	Can guardians of participants be employed and paid?	Can parents of adult children be employed and paid?	Can spouses be employed and paid?	Can an employer (who is not the recipient) employ her/himself and be paid?
Attendant Services Program (General Fund)	Yes ages 16-17, this will be allowed temporarily.	Yes, this will be allowed temporarily.	Yes, this is already allowed.	Yes, this is already allowed.	Yes, this will be allowed temporarily if the employer lives with the recipient.
Attendant Services Program (Medicaid)	Yes ages 16-17, this will be allowed temporarily.	Yes, this will be allowed temporarily.	Yes, this is already allowed.	Yes, this will be allowed temporarily.	Yes, this will be allowed temporarily if the employer lives with the recipient.
Choices for Care HCBS	Yes ages 16-17, this will be allowed temporarily.	Yes, this will be allowed temporarily.	Yes, this is already allowed.	Yes, this is already allowed for personal care.	Yes, this will be allowed temporarily if the employer lives with the recipient.
Traumatic Brain Injury Program	Yes ages 16-17, this will be allowed temporarily.	Yes, this will be allowed temporarily.	Yes, this will be allowed temporarily	Yes, this will be allowed temporarily.	Yes, this will be allowed temporarily if the employer lives with the recipient.