

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SUPPORTS DIVISION NEWSLETTER

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DDSD RE-OPENING COMMITTEE

Submitted by:

Scott Doan, Deputy Director (Interim Director), Marc Kolman, Deputy Director, and Jennifer Rodriguez, Community Programs Bureau Chief

These times are un-precedented. COVID-19 presents challenges that none of us have ever experienced before, let alone the addition of recent racial un-rest. The challenges and the feelings are real; the fear, anxiety, urgency, hope, and expectations are all real.

The topic of re-opening New Mexico's home and community-based services programs is enormous. It is critical that providers, individuals and their families have guidance and support about re-opening services, and that a collaborative approach is taken to understand the many perspectives that need to be considered. Guidance can include structure and parameters as well as timeframes as to what can and can't be done. DOH and DDSD have the responsibility to issue such guidance, but the decisions can't be made as effectively without input from the broad community. It is more critical now, than ever, to work in partnership with our stakeholders. All guidance will, of course, need to comply with the Governor's Public Health Orders and other directives from the Department of Health.

DDSD has convened a re-opening committee to look at how services can be provided in the new world of COVID. Co-chaired by Jennifer Rodriguez and Marc Kolman, the committee includes DDSD program managers and leads. The work is divided into the following program-specific areas: Residential, Employment and Day, Behavior Supports and Therapies (PT/OT/SLP), Nutrition and Nursing, Case Management and Consulting, Training and the Family Infant Toddler Program. Guiding principles include: health, safety, and

well-being; person-centeredness; individual rights; informed choice; dignity of risk; communication between DDSD, providers, participants and families; and COVID safe practices (social distancing, use of face masks and PPE, personal hygiene, etc.).

DDSD met via Zoom on the afternoon of Friday June 5th with a diverse group of more than 50 stakeholders and partners including individuals, parents, guardians, advocates, providers (residential, day, case management, and therapy) and other state agencies. Key interests and concerns expressed at the meeting include: communicating guidance to individuals and families; "hybrid approach" to day services that considers continuation of day services in the home and in the community using COVID-Safe Practices; requirements for providing internet as a utility and requirements for telehealth as a service; effective use of IDT meetings; need for continuation of therapy services; in-person visit requirements; and testing for individuals and DSPs as well as for other providers who enter the home. Additional guidance recommended included: practical and effective use of masks and face coverings, and family member visits to homes, to name a few.

The issues of re-opening are extensive and complex. It is essential that the needs for ongoing health and safety are balanced with the needs for personal choice and decision-making. To this end, DDSD will be meeting with this group again soon. Program-specific workgroups will also be led by DDSD program managers.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE I/DD POPULATION IN NEW MEXICO

Submitted by:
Scott Doan, Deputy Director (Interim Director) and Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

DDSD's response to COVID-19 is important for reducing the impact of COVID-19 in the I/DD population. DDSD is monitoring the impact of COVID-19 by tracking COVID-19 tests conducted, outcomes of those tests, and deaths in the I/DD population.

DDSD, through collaboration with the NM Public Health Division, as of 5/18/20 has successfully tested Direct Support Professionals (DSP) working in Supported Living and Intensive Medical Living homes in New Mexico. A total of 3,744 DSP (99.60%) have been tested as of 5/18/20. DSPs, which are few in number, who elected not to be tested are not and cannot work in homes until tested.

Collaborating with the NM Epidemiology and Research Division, DDSD reports the following information related to COVID-19 testing, infections, and fatalities. As of 6/4/20, within the HCBS population of 5,222 individuals, including all those in the DD, Mi Via, and Medically Fragile Waivers, 232 have been tested for COVID-19. Of these, 17 have tested positive for COVID-19 and 5 have died.

Of 17 individuals confirmed positive for COVID-19, 1 is in Mi Via, 4 receive Family Living, 1 receives Customized In-Home Support, and 11 are in Supported Living. Of the 5 deaths, 1 was in Family Living, 1 in Customized In-Home Supports, and 3 in Supported Living.

Each fatality due to COVID-19 is a personal tragedy impacting family, friends, and support staff. DDSD joins the community in mourning each of these losses and sends condolences to each person impacted by these deaths.

All New Mexicans, and in particular, vulnerable populations including those with I/DD, have been instructed to stay home except for outings absolutely necessary for health, safety and welfare. These additional restrictions have been enacted to aggressively minimize person-to-person contact and ensure spread is mitigated. All New Mexicans are strongly urged to limit travel to only what is necessary for health, safety and welfare.

The NM Department of Health has active investigations into COVID-positive patients, which includes contact-tracing and swabs of symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals who have had contact with the person who tested positive. Every New Mexican must work together to stem the spread of COVID-19. Stay home and Stay Safe!

For more information, see the Department of Health's COVID-19 resource site at <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>.

For more information about DDSD's COVID-19 response, see: <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/diro/ddcv/>.

HCBS Population	5,222
Tested for COVID-19	232
Confirmed Positive for COVID-19	17
Deaths Due to COVID-19	5

Region	Total # of DSP	# of DSP Tested for COVID-19
Metro	1,827	1,827
NERO	239	237
NWRO	356	353
SERO	386	380
SWRO	951	947
TOTALS	3,759	3,744

COVID-19 GUIDANCE AND DIRECTIVES

Submitted by:
Scott Doan, Deputy Director (Interim Director) and Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

Guidance and directives issued by DDSD are required to be followed by agencies and individuals served by the home and community-based (HCBS) Medicaid waivers. The following are several important directives that must continue to be followed and are published again here for your information. For all DDSD guidance and directives issued since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, see <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/diro/ddcv/>

All DDSD Directives Remain in Effect

DDSD is encouraged by the Governor and Department of Health Secretary's Phase I re-opening of New Mexico. However, it needs to be made clear that the amended Public Health Emergency Order does not impact or change the directives and guidelines issued by DDSD. All directives issued by DDSD remain in effect until further notice, at the very minimum, all directives remain in effect through June 30th, 2020. DDSD is continuously monitoring and evaluating the COVID-19 pandemic as it relates to individuals with developmental disabilities, the impact on their lives, and impact on the delivery of services. To understand what services will look like moving forward living and delivering services in a COVID world, DDSD is engaging multiple stakeholders to start "re-opening" discussions. (Issued in DDSD COVID-19 Response Memo #19 on 6/4/2020)

Restriction of Home Access for All Visitors

DDSD issued COVID-19 Response Memo #4 on March 20th, 2020 which included the restriction of home access for all visitors including non-medical health care providers, vendors, case managers, consultants, clinicians, therapists,

behavior support consultants, families, friends, and guardians. These restrictions remain unchanged and are still effective. All agencies are expected to adhere to this directive. DDSD fully recognizes the hardship this may place on individuals, family, friends, and overall support system for each person. However, continuing to stay home and limit all visits remains one of the most effective strategies to reduce and/or stop the spread of COVID-19.

Internet and WiFi Access in HCBS Residential Settings
Internet services in Residential Settings, although not always directly required by program rules, providing access to the internet via hard wire or WIFI is a cost of doing business that supports the person's health and safety and enhances knowledge, performance and safety of Direct Support Professionals (DSP). These factors ultimately benefit the provider as well as the individual. Effective July 1, 2020, DDSD is requiring that Residential Providers (Supported Living, Intensive Medical Living, and Family Living) assure that all homes have internet capability. All Residential Providers must immediately initiate change to any internal practices or internal policies that cause barriers to internet access for the person in services and their support staff; changes must be completed no later than July 1, 2020. The DD Waiver Service Standards will list internet as a basic utility with the next issue of the Service Standards.

As always, please contact your DDSD Regional Office if you have questions or concerns.

COVID-19 MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

Stay Informed with reliable sources like:
cv.nmhealth.org, cdc.gov & who.int

Preserve daily routines as much as possible.

Take breaks from social media and news, and don't overexpose yourself to too much information.



Maintain a healthy diet, and get regular exercise and plenty of sleep.

Take advantage of **outdoor activities** while still maintaining **social distancing**.

Don't completely isolate yourself. Connect with others virtually, and keep in touch with friends and family.

DDSD'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Submitted by:

Scott Doan, Deputy Director (Interim Director) and Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

As COVID-19 continues to cause massive global changes, DDSD has responded to protect New Mexico's I/DD population. Individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities are particularly vulnerable to potential infection by COVID-19. DDSD's primary response to COVID-19 has been to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infections within the I/DD population including both individuals with I/DD and Direct Support Professional staff and remediate the impact of COVID-19 infections.

Principal activities include the following:

- Provide information and technical assistance to I/DD providers through regular conference calls, formal guidance documents, weekly COVID-19 response memos, and establishing a DDSD COVID-specific website. All communication can be found at <https://nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/diro/ddcv/>.
 - Partner with NM Human Services Department submitting and receiving Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approval for two Appendix Ks (Emergency Preparedness and Response and COVID-19 addendums) for all Medicaid HCBS Waivers (DD, Mi Via, and Medically Fragile). The first Appendix K provides increases in service limitations for Assistive Technology, telehealth options for specific services, face-to-face training, Level of Care assessments, Person-Centered Planning, incident investigation, and retainer payments for Personal Care Services (Homemaker, Customized Community Group Supports, Community Integrated Employment). The second Appendix K was approved on 5/5/20 that allows Employment Supports and Community Integrated Employment to be provided in the home and for the use of telephone-only visits for Case Management, Nursing and Nutrition, PT/OT/SLP and Behavior Support Consultation. CMS also approved rate increases for Supported Living, Intensive Medical Living Services, and Family Living.
 - Weekly phone monitoring by DDSD Regional Offices of all individuals receiving residential services on the DD Waiver. Monitoring includes COVID-specific questions such as monitoring of signs and symptoms of COVID infection and status of visitors. Over 1,000 phone contacts have been made since the Public Health Emergency was invoked in early March. All Jackson Compliance Monitoring visits continue to be conducted and now include COVID-specific questions. Results of all contacts are maintained in a secure, web-based software platform.
 - Conduct daily internal COVID response planning meetings addressing prevention and control, testing, personal protective equipment, planning, funding, and other ongoing issues.
- Developed an effective remote training environment for DDSD training for provider agencies and support staff.
 - A monitoring system was developed using the Therap clinical database and General Events Reporting to track COVID-related issues experienced by people served on the Developmental Disabilities Waiver (DDW) or utilizing State General Fund services.
 - The FIT (Family Infant Toddler) Early Intervention Program made several changes to ensure continued delivery of services including increases to rates for telehealth (including phone) services and increase in billable hours.

All New Mexicans, and in particular, vulnerable populations including those with I/DD, have been instructed to stay home except for outings absolutely necessary for health, safety and welfare. These additional restrictions have been enacted to aggressively minimize person-to-person contact and ensure spread is mitigated. All New Mexicans are strongly urged to limit travel to only what is necessary for health, safety and welfare. The NM Department of Health has active investigations into COVID-positive patients, which includes contact-tracing and swabs of symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals who have had contact with the person who tested positive. Every New Mexican must work together to stem the spread of COVID-19. Stay home and Stay Safe!

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NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

COVID-19 HOTLINE



1-855-600-3453

Available 24/7

NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DDSD RECOGNIZES COVID-19 HEROES

Submitted by:

Linda Ramos, Research and Policy Analyst, Community Programs Bureau

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit New Mexico, DDSD took notice of the caring and innovative solutions advocates, providers and consultants invented to meet the changing circumstances.

In May, DDSD began a social media campaign to recognize those who have gone above and beyond in their quests to make the very best of these challenging times. An e-blast was sent to DDSD employees, providers, consultants and advocates asking for inspiring people and stories to feature on DOH's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn social media accounts. When the stories and pictures arrive, DOH posts them to social media. These posts have been a big hit and are achieving the goal of recognizing and uplifting our community!

Great work is being done, and a few examples of that work include:

The Service Coordinators and Nursing Department at Expressions of Life Inc., a service provider for DD Waiver, go above and beyond. They delivered over 140 pizzas, hand sanitizers, homemade masks and "Buckets of Sunshine," pictured, to brighten the days of their Family Living and Independent Living recipients.

Patsy Tarin, Director of Campo Behavioral Health in Las Cruces, started a community pantry during this crisis. Individuals they serve and staff who need food or supplies can get supplies from this pantry.



"Buckets of Sunshine" created by Expressions of Life Inc. staff



Patsy Tarin, Director of Campo Behavioral Health in Las Cruces

SUPPORTS WAIVER EXPECTED TO BEGIN JULY 1, 2020

Submitted by:
Christina Hill, Deputy Bureau Chief, Community Programs Bureau and
Jennifer Roth, Supports Waiver Program Manager

Are you ready?

The Supports Waiver is scheduled to start on July 1, 2020, pending federal approval from the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS).

The Supports Waiver will be offered to individuals who are currently on the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver Wait List and are waiting for an allocation to the DD or Mi Via Waiver based on legislative funding and registration date. Whether a person accepts or declines the Supports Waiver offer, they will remain on the DD Waiver Waitlist. The draft Supports Waiver Standards can be viewed in the DDSD website.

www.nmhealth.org/publication/view/general/5683/.

There is a \$10,000 annual budget for each person who is eligible for the Supports Waiver. There are ten Supports Waiver Services available in each service delivery model:

- Assistive Technology - \$5,000 every five (5) years
- Behavior Support Consultation
- Customized Community Supports - Group
- Customized Community Supports - Individual
- Employment Supports
- Environmental Modifications- \$5,000 every five (5) years
- Personal Care Services
- Non-Medical Transportation
- Respite
- Vehicle Modifications - \$5,000 every five (5) years

When a person chooses to accept the Supports Waiver offer, they will also pick a Community Supports Coordinator (CSC). The CSC will educate, guide, and help monitor participation and services in the waiver. The CSC will help the person choose the agency-based service delivery model or participant-directed service delivery model. The CSC is not paid from the \$10,000 annual budget.

Are you ready to choose?

Important Considerations before Choosing to Accept the Supports Waiver Offer

While you are considering how Supports Waiver services will fit into your life, we suggest looking at other supports you may be receiving or are eligible to receive and other programs you might be enrolled in. Ask yourself:

- How do my existing supports or programs work for me?
- Can I continue in these programs if I accept the Supports Waiver, or do I have to choose?

What is the best fit for my needs?

Some programs to be aware of are:

State General Fund

The Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) provides an array of services that are available to children and adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and their families based on legislative appropriation from the State General Funds. If you are already receiving services through the State General Fund, you must pick between the Supports Waiver and the State General Fund. You cannot have both programs at the same time. However, choosing the Supports Waiver will also provide you access to Centennial Care, the New Mexico Medicaid Program.

Centennial Care (Medicaid) Services

Centennial Care is the name of the New Mexico Medicaid program. You may already be receiving Centennial Care and, if under 21 years old, Early Periodic Screening Treatment and Diagnostic (EPSTD) services through Centennial Care. If you choose the Supports Waiver you will continue to receive Centennial Care and EPSTD.

Community Benefit

The Community Benefit Program is part of Centennial Care. You may already be receiving the Community Benefit or be on the waitlist for the Community Benefit. If you are already receiving the Community Benefit, you must pick between the Supports Waiver or Community Benefit. You cannot have both programs at the same time. If you are on the waitlist, you can accept a Supports Waiver offer and remain on the waitlist for both Community Benefit and the DD Waiver.



FRIENDSHIP, EMPLOYMENT, & VIRTUAL EVENTS

Submitted by:
Nathan Reiman, Director, State Operations & Programs, Best Buddies

Here in New Mexico, we are a community. We enjoy feeling connected, treating each other fairly, and appreciating the close ties we have with each other. Here in the DDSD community, Best Buddies New Mexico is doing a great job bringing these values to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities as the organization continues to deliver connections in friendship, employment, and virtual engagement. The ultimate goal of this organization: to put themselves out of business by eliminating a need for the services they offer.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, over 850 individuals from 41 schools benefited from Best Buddies New Mexico's friendship programs. Alejandra from Las Cruces shared the following regarding her friendship with Chica, "(w)e both love the same things and truthfully, we both have very outgoing personalities. We've done everything together from getting ready for prom to petting animals at the [New Mexico State] fair to walking down a makeshift runway together." Fifteen new schools were added during this past academic year, and Best Buddies New Mexico is always looking for more interest and connections as it expands.

During this same time frame, Best Buddies New Mexico continued to excel with employment as they offered, through a Project Search partnership with six other organizations, internship rotations at the Embassy Suites Hotel and the University of New Mexico Hospital. The international evidence-based Project Search model, known for helping participant obtain employment at higher wages and for increased hours, does just this in Albuquerque. In New Mexico, the average statewide wage was \$8.88 per hour and average work hours per week was 12.17. In comparison, Best Buddies New Mexico placed 100% of graduates from the 2018-2019 Project Search program, increasing the organization's average placement wage to \$10.49 and average hours worked per week to 23.56. Similar to the above-mentioned friendship programs, the Jobs Team is always looking for more participant interest as the organization continues to grow.



Chica and Alejandra, Best Buddies NM Friendship Program

While COVID-19 has put a damper on many community activities, Best Buddies New Mexico is striving to minimize the effect of isolation on people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. With nine virtual events per week including Trivia Tuesday, Netflix Party Wednesday, Citizens Thursday and Forum Friday, new people every week are engaging and building new connections. Details about these events and all the other Best Buddies New Mexico offerings can be found at <https://www.bestbuddies.org/newmexico/>.

Thank you Best Buddies, and good luck putting yourselves out of business!



FAMILY INFANT TODDLER PROGRAM

Submitted by:
Kathey Phoenix-Doyle, FIT Program Manager

The Family Infant Toddler Program continues the transition process to the new Early Childhood Education and Care Department. There has been a delay in the FIT program's physical move to the new department as the new space will not be ready for move-in on July 1st. Video conference meetings were held with each program to reveal the near final version of ECECD's organizational chart allowing all employees in the transition an opportunity to discuss the organizational structure. The FIT program staff have been supporting efforts by ECECD to distribute PPE to childcare centers by organizing items for distribution in regions throughout the state. We have also begun the process of distributing PPE starter packs to all Early Intervention Provider Agencies. Lastly, ECECD unveiled its new logo which fits nicely on a mask



RESOURCES

Submitted by:
Lisa Storti, Constituent Support Program Manager

There are some wonderful resources for individuals with disabilities & their families in New Mexico. In this newsletter we are highlighting access to on-line community resources.

One such resource is the University of New Mexico (UNM), Center for Development and Disability (CDD). They serve individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, as well as professionals, by providing information and referral to resources throughout New Mexico and the US. Located at the UNM campus in Albuquerque, they maintain trained staff who assist individuals who contact them via phone, internet or walk in. The following services are provided by the CDD:Library: The CDD library contains a specialized collection of books, videos, DVDs, periodicals and journals available for check-out or on-site use by the public. Information on research, education, rights, and topics related to child development and developmental disabilities.

Information Network: The Information Network provides information to individuals with disabilities, families, and professionals on local, state, and national resources. Information Specialists are available to assist both callers and individuals - onsite to find the information they seek. Resource Database: The CDD maintains the Disability Resource Directory (DRD), which is a database of New Mexico programs, agencies and organizations that provide services to persons with disabilities. You may search the database by category, service name or service type.

Autism Resources: The mission of The Autism Programs is to provide requested support to individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families.

Early Childhood Home and Family Services Division: The Early Childhood Home and Family Services Division is dedicated to supporting strong communities through the support of children and families, working to promote positive futures and prevent delay, disability, and risk of disability.

Early Childhood Learning Network: The Early Childhood Learning Network offers training to Early Intervention Providers, Service Coordinators, Teachers, Home Visitors and Preschool Personnel around New Mexico.

The above programs at the CDD may be accessed as follows: To speak with an Information Specialist at the UNM-CDD Information Network regarding disability related resources: Call the Information Network: 1-800-552-8195 or 505-272-8549. Or on-line at <https://www.navigateresources.net/icnm/>.

To access the online Disability Resource Directory, see their website at: <http://www.cdd.unm.edu/Infonet/index.html>.

MI VIA WAIVER RENEWAL & WORK WITH CMS

Submitted by:
Jennifer Rodriguez, Community Programs Bureau Chief

Mi Via Waiver renewal activities are in full swing. After drafting the revised waiver and completing a formal tribal notification and public comment period, the waiver is ready to submit to The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The revised waiver will be implemented October 2020, pending CMS approval. This is great news, however, it doesn't end there. Many authoritative and process documents need to be revised, stakeholder recommendations must be considered, and changes must be made. The Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) has identified several key areas related to the Mi Via Waiver which could benefit from technical assistance, based on stakeholder feedback and input. Specifically, the state noted the following issues for further exploration:

1. Employer of Record (EOR) challenges and concerns, how to support individuals/families in the performance of employer-of-record functions, including training and information including, but not limited to, program integrity issues.
2. Practices related to Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation, oversight and monitoring
3. Balancing person-centered practices with strong oversight strategies by Consultants
4. Learn how other states establish individual budgets, including considerations related to age/EPST
5. Shifting culture through education and awareness to ensure self-direction is utilized and implemented in the best interests of the person
6. Leveraging the strengths of self-advocates in our work

The Human Services Department (HSD) and DDSD together reached out to CMS for technical assistance to complete our waiver renewal activities. The State is working with a CMS contractor, New Editions, to incorporate best and promising practices in self-directed programs, learn what other states are doing and provide technical assistance and guidance to our Mi Via teams. Here are some Mi Via Waiver renewal projects that are underway:

- Developing a training curriculum
- Revising the Service and Support Plan (SSP)
- Revising the New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC)
- Revising the Mi Via Waiver Service Standards
- Revising the Consultant scope of work
- Revising the Consultant Monthly and Quarterly Contact Forms
- Implementing a DDSD visitation and monitoring process
- Developing an EOR Guidebook
- Revising the Backup Plan Acknowledgement Form
- Revising the QMB monitoring tools for Consultants
- Partnering with the Office of Internal Audit (OIA) for monitoring of vendors and other provider types in Mi Via
- Revising the EOR Questionnaire

Input and recommendations are always welcome so feel free to reach out to our Mi Via team with your suggestions.

OTERO COUNTY HOLDS FIRST EVER VIRTUAL SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION FAIR

Submitted by:
Deborah Lassiter, Southwest Regional Office Community Inclusion Coordinator

On May 13, 2020, Otero County had a first ever Virtual School to Work Transition Fair. This virtual fair was organized by the Otero School to Work Transition Team made of representatives from Otero County School District, Tularosa Public Schools, School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, NM State University-Alamogordo, University of New Mexico/Center for Development and Disability-Partners for Employment, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Workforce Connections, Otero County Advocates for DD, Independent Living Resource Center, Epics NM, Independent Living Resource Center, and DOH/DDSD.

The fair featured six Zoom trainings and 16 virtual tables with resources from around the state. Trainings were presented on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) vs. the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), DVR, Project Search, Disability Rights, an overview of the

Otero County Public Schools Special Education Department, and a presentation on the DD Waiver, presented by Nicole Hernandez, DDSD Southwest Regional Office/Intake and Eligibility Bureau. Parents, students, and community members were invited to take part in the Zoom trainings and encouraged to visit the resource tables for more information. During the Zoom trainings, 65-85 people attended each session, and many took the survey offered throughout the event.

Overall, the committee and public stated the event was organized well and offered vital feedback on future virtual fairs. If anyone is interested in viewing the resources and reviewing the recorded presentation, use this link: <https://nmsua.edu/transition-fair/>.

SUPPORTS WAIVER IS ENROLLING PROVIDERS

Submitted by:
Tammy M. Barth, Provider Enrollment Manager

On May 20, 2020, the Provider Enrollment Unit (PEU) announced that we are now ready to move forward with enrolling providers who would like to provide services for the new Supports Waiver. Below are the requirements:

Current Providers

- To enroll as a Supports Waiver provider, you will need to fill out and sign an Amendment Form, the Statement of Assurances Form and the Supports Waiver Final Rule Attestation Letter.
- For providers who have already submitted an Amendment, please fill out and sign the Statement of Assurances Form and Supports Waiver Final Rule Attestation Letter.

New Providers

- Please fill out the DDS Provider Application and New Provider Application Forms.

All providers who are approved to provide Support Waiver services will be required to sign a new Provider Agreement, which includes the Supports Waiver. All required documents can be faxed or emailed to me at **Tammy.Barth@state.nm.us**. All providers who are approved to provide Support Waiver services will be

required to sign a new Provider Agreement, which includes the Supports Waiver.

Timelines:

Agencies who are submitting Amendments through the Fast Track process and want to be included on the initial:

- Primary Freedom of Choice (PFOC), your Amendment must be completely processed through the PEU by June 15, 2020.
- Secondary Freedom of Choice (SFOC), your Amendment must be completely processed by the PEU by July 1, 2020.

Agencies who are submitting new Provider Application process and want to be included on the initial:

- Primary Freedom of Choices (PFOC), your application must be completely processed through the PEU by June 15, 2020.
- Secondary Freedom of Choice (SFOC), your application must be completely processed through the PEU by July 1, 2020.

As always, if you have any questions, please contact me at **Tammy.Barth@state.nm.us**.

CONGRATULATIONS 2020 PROJECT SEARCH GRADUATES!

Submitted by:
Marcy Hintz, School-to-Work Transition Program Manager, UNM Center for Development & Disability/Partners for Employment

When New Mexico public schools closed in mid-March under stay-at-home orders related to COVID-19, New Mexico's seven Project SEARCH sites quickly moved their pre-employment training to Google Classroom or Zoom, and their skills development to tasks inside interns' own homes.

While interns missed their daily interactions with coworkers at their Project SEARCH sites, they also discovered some advantages to remote work and learning. One intern mentioned the chance she had to get more practice with email; another said that choosing a daily schedule for himself was hard at first but good (I bet we can relate!); several mentioned the confidence they gained in using Zoom. In some cases, interns were also able to receive more coordinated services online than were possible in person. Teachers and job coaches teamed up through Zoom or Google Classroom to help interns with mock interviews, with creating video resumes, and with working on budgets.

In all regions of the state, interns' online connection to their teachers, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation counselors, DDS Community Inclusion Coordinators, and job coaches was also a check on daily wellness: interns' work network was their wellness network.

Though graduations couldn't be held in person, many joined for ceremonies online. Our enthusiastic congratulations to New Mexico's 53 graduates of 2020 Project SEARCH! We're excited to see what the world will gain from your talents, dreams, and skills.

For more information about Project SEARCH New Mexico and other school-to-work transition initiatives, check out the UNM Center for Development & Disability/Partners for Employment website at: <http://www.cdd.unm.edu/other-disability-programs/partners-for-employment/project-search/index.html>.

ALBUQUERQUE MAKES IT OFFICIAL!

Submitted by:
Alex Luce, VAMOS Director, Mandy's Farm

Over the past few months, Mandy's Farm worked with Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller to recognize the importance of hiring inclusively in our community. Mayor Tim Keller issued an Executive Order declaring May 2nd as Inclusive Hiring Day in Albuquerque! The Executive Order recognizes that inclusive hiring benefits individuals with disabilities by **increasing financial stability, social inclusion, and meaningful opportunities for success**, as well as allowing **individuals with disabilities to participate in and contribute to their community**. However, the benefits of inclusive hiring are not limited to those with disabilities. Recognizing the workforce, community, and cultural contributions of individuals with disabilities is **an essential component of truly inclusive communities and work environments. An inclusive workforce improves employee morale, reduces turnover, and increases business efficiency and revenue.** Inclusive hiring benefits us all!

Mandy's Farm celebrated the issuance of this Executive Order via social media on May 2nd by highlighting local businesses already committed to inclusive hiring in Albuquerque, sharing success stories, and employer perspectives. Thank you to local businesses who see the value in a diverse workforce and to all those who support Inclusive Hiring.



WHY HIRE INCLUSIVELY?

A diverse workforce benefits the employer, the employee, the workplace & the community at large. Here are 8 reasons why:

ACCESS UNTAPPED WORKFORCE

81% of adults 18+ with developmental disabilities do not have a paid job in the community. Can't find a committed, talented employee? You may not be looking in the right place!

INCREASE EMPLOYEE RETENTION

Research shows that employees with disabilities remain in their jobs longer than their counterparts without disabilities. This saves businesses time and money in turnover costs. Plus, they retain valuable employees!

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS

Through services such as Job Development at Mandy's Farm & other local agencies, businesses get pre-screened, qualified applicants selected specifically for their business. We consider skills, strengths, interest & commitment BEFORE applying.

REDUCED HIRING TIME & COSTS

Many job seekers with disabilities have support in their job hunt. This ensures that applicants are pre-screened, meaning you save time & energy in on-boarding your next employee.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Employers find a return on investment when they hire inclusively. By accessing tax credits & other incentives, businesses see a \$10-35 return on every \$1 invested in accommodations.

INCREASED CUSTOMER LOYALTY

87% of customers prefer to do business with companies that employ people with disabilities. 92% of customers are more likely to continue to frequent businesses that hire people with disabilities.

IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO

Employment decreases loneliness & isolation, increases community connections, & increases independence. People with disabilities have the right to use their skills & strengths to access the benefits of employment.

HIGHER LEVELS OF SUPPORT

Businesses can access FREE support through organizations such as Mandy's Farm. We assess your business needs & culture, assist with tax incentives & advise on accommodation needs.

INCLUSIVE HIRING SUCCESS STORY

ANDY & DION'S

"I have worked with Andy, or Willie as we call him at work, for almost five years now. Willie is one of the most positive and lively people on our entire crew. He comes into work every day and brightens up the day of everyone working. He is always laughing and has a great sense of humor. He shares his stories of his bowling and video game playing with the crew. In addition to being an extremely hard working individual who can keep up with the lunch rush volume at our location better than anyone else; he also makes a big impact on the crew by lightening the mood and making others smile every day."

Marty Hall, General Manager



DDSD E-BLASTS FOR THIS QUARTER

Submitted by:
Tammy Barth, Manager, Program Enrollment Unit

May 2020 BBS Buzz!
Reaching New Heights in Supported Employment Virtual Conference
Temporary Rate Increases for SL, IMLS, and Family Living Providers
Direct Support Professional COVID-19 Testing - Deadline May 18, 2020
DDSD COVID-19 Response Memo #16 and Supporting Documents
MITCSoftware Announces \$10,000 in Awards to DSPs
ABLE NM May 2020 Newsletter
DDSD COVID-19 Response Memo #15 and Supporting Documents
DDSD COVID-19 DSP Testing Memo Re-Issue
KPI Memo, Technical Assistance and Reporting Template Documentation
Tardive Dyskinesia Webinar May 14, 2020
Reaching New Heights Virtual Conference
Let's Recognize our Heroes!
COVID 19 Testing for Direct Support Professionals
DDSD COVID-19 Response Memo #14-Calls Cancelled for 4/30/2020 (**Contains Memo #14**)
Training - Questionnaire-CARMP Draft" in Therap: Process and New Required Elements Regarding Therap.
Save the Date Notice for Online Training - Tardive Dyskinesia
DDSD COVID 19 Calls 4-23-20 (**Contains Memo #13**)
DDSD-DDW Numbered Memo 2020-01
Employment Supports Session for April 22, 2020
DDSD COVID 19 Calls RESCHEDULED
Partners for Employment-Additional Training Opportunities
CANCELLED COVID-19 CALL for APRIL 17, 2020

Training Module Updates Memo
CANCELLED COVID 19 CALL - DDSD COVID 19 Memo #12 and Supporting Documents
Supports Waiver Provider Session Information
Update to Tardive Dyskinesia Resource Document
DDPC Five Year Plan Community Survey
Rate Study Conclusion 4-8-2020 All Services Listed
DDSD COVID 19 Response Memo #11 and Supporting Documents
Targeted Rate Study Announcement for Therapies and Behavior Support Consultation
DDSD COVID 19 Response Memo #11 and Supporting Documents
DDSD COVID Response Call 4-10-2020
Therapist Updates for April 2020
DDSD COVID 19 Response Memo #10 and Supporting Documents
DDSD COVID Response Call 4-8-2020
Partners for Employment Newsletter
ANCOR Survey
PPE Inventory Request from the Governor's Office
Mi Via Outreach to Participants and Families
DDSD COVID 19 Response Memo #9 and Supporting Documents
DDSD COVID Response Call 4-3-2020 CANCELLED
DDSD COVID Response Call 4-3-2020
DDSD COVID Response Memo #8
DDSD Afternoon COVID-19 Response Calls
New Northwest Regional Director
Provider Enrollment Unit - New Staff Member - Joey Dominguez, Management Analyst

NEW HIRES & RETIREMENTS

New Hires:

Tammy Keler, ASB Staff Manager
March 21, 2020, Santa Fe Office

Joey Dominguez, Management Analyst-Basic
April 18, 2020, Santa Fe Office

Michelle Groblebe, NWRO Staff Manager
April 18, 2020, Gallup NWRO office

Diane Baca, Registered Nurse-A
May 16, 2020, Albuquerque Office

Kelly Chavez, Dentist,
May 16, 2020, Albuquerque Special Needs Clinic

Chantel Hopkins,
May 30, 2020, Roswell SERO office

ABOUT US

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If you would like to write an article for the next issue of the DDSD Newsletter, have suggestions or comments, please contact Lisa Storti, DDSD Newsletter Assistant Editor at 505-476-8972 or Lisa.Storti@state.nm.us.