

September 2, 2020

Dear Family Member and/or Guardian:

I hope this correspondence finds you well during these challenging times. I want to share some important updates pertaining to imminent funding cuts that will impact the services and supports we provide in our residential program.

As you may be aware from news reports over the last several months, New York State is facing a significant budget deficit which will unfortunately impact agencies such as ours. There has been swift action at the state level to start closing this financial gap that includes funding cuts which will directly impact the reimbursement rates for residential providers operating under New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). This modified reimbursement methodology will be implemented on October 1, 2020 for providers and will:

- Reduce reimbursement rates to residential programs with vacancies by eliminating any occupancy adjustment for those vacancies. This will result in a 4.54% cut to our rates.
- Reduce reimbursement by 50% to providers whenever a person spends time away from the residence (i.e., overnight visits, time spent in a hospital or rehabilitation facility).
- Reduce and limit the allowable days that we will be reimbursed when a person spends overnights away from the residence (i.e. visiting family for an overnight, overnight vacations, etc...). The limit of allowable days is 96. In other words, if you take your loved one home for an overnight visit for up to 96 days, we would receive 50% of our reimbursement for the time spent away from the residence. After 96 days, we would not receive any reimbursement for time spent away from the residence.

As you can imagine these significant reductions in reimbursement have the potential for a serious impact on residential services, particularly our ability to ensure sufficient staffing at each location. To ensure the stability of the residential program, we ask that you partner with us in finding the balance between maintaining strong family connections with your loved one, and the agency's ability to maintain the high level of supports and services you have come to expect.

Please be aware that overnight visits will have an impact on the financial stability of the program. Therefore, we ask that where possible overnight visits are limited. Day visits with your loved one, however, will have no effect on billing and are unlimited. We appreciate your careful review of this information and ask that you be mindful when scheduling your next visit with your loved one.

Also, based on the reduced reimbursement for vacancies, the agency is working to ensure maximum capacity at each of our residences. At the residences where there is a vacancy, we will be having people tour and visit. The visitor guidelines will be followed to minimize the health and safety risks.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or the Director of Residential Services, Karen Andrus, if you have any questions or would like to discuss how you could help advocate for restoration of full funding.

Sincerely,



Matt Mehlenbacher, Chief Operations Officer