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January 12, 2021

To: Families of children receiving ODDS services
From: Lilia Teninty, Director, Office of Developmental Disabilities Services
Subject: Family Supports During COVID-19

The Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) recognizes the vital support parents and family members provide every day to keep their children with intellectual and developmental disabilities healthy and safe at home. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in some children with higher needs not being able to access in home service providers, with parents and family members filling in the gaps.

Soon after the COVID-19 pandemic reached Oregon, ODDS submitted a request to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to offer monthly stipends to parents/guardians of children younger than 18 with the most significant support needs.

CMS did not respond to this request. Instead, ODDS received permission to support families of children under 18 with the most significant need by allowing parents to temporarily provide paid hourly supports to their children as Personal Support Workers (PSWs). ODDS expects to offer this option if the federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) declaration is extended past January 21, 2021. The PHE has been extended multiple times during the COVID-19 pandemic, so it may be extended again. We are reaching out now, so that parents of qualifying children can begin their enrollment paperwork and be ready to start providing services as soon as possible, should the PHE be extended in January.

This option will be available to children with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who have the most significant support needs. Specifically, this option will be available for parents of children who:

- Meet criteria for the Children’s Intensive In-Home Services (CIIS) program including the Medically Fragile, Medically Involved, and Behavior programs, and/or;
- Require 240 hours or more of attendant care monthly based on their current Child Needs Assessment (CNA).

If your child qualifies for this program, your service coordinator will contact you with additional information about this option and, if you chose to pursue this option, information on how to enroll. If a parent wants to enroll, they will need to complete paperwork and meet basic requirements, such as passing a background check and following all applicable Oregon rules. These requirements include following ODDS guidance on providing paid support during distance learning.

If your child does not meet criteria for this option, reach out to your child’s Services Coordinator to discuss what supports make sense for your child to ensure they are healthy and safe at home.

Thank you for all that you do for your children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lilia". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning.

Lilia Teninty
Director
Office of Developmental Disabilities Services

Previous Director’s Messages are available at
<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/DD/Pages/messages.aspx>

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You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact the Oregon Office of Developmental Disabilities Services at 503-945-5811. We accept all relay calls or you can dial 711.