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May 1, 2024

To: Parents, guardians, services coordinators and case management staff

From: Dana Hittle, Interim Director, Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS)

Subject: Children's Extraordinary Needs program selection (paid parent caregivers)

I'm excited to announce the start of the new Children's Extraordinary Needs (CEN) program. This message has important information for:

- Parents and guardians who are interested in being paid to provide care for their minor child.
- Services coordinators and case management staff who serve children.

Background and program information

Last year, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 91. The bill directed ODDS to create a permanent program that pays parents as caregivers. We expect to have federal approval to begin the program July 1.

The program is for minor children who have:

1. An intellectual or developmental disability (I/DD) **or** are eligible for the Children's Intensive In-home Services' (CIIS) medically fragile or medically involved waivers, **and**
2. Are assessed with very high medical or behavioral needs in their Oregon Needs Assessment (ONA). This means they are in the ONA service groups 5m or 5b.

There are about 1,500 children who may be eligible for the program.

The week of May 13, ODDS will mail letters to the parents and guardians of children who may be eligible. This letter will include more details about the program. If your address has changed since your child's last ONA, please tell your services coordinator.

The Legislature funded the program for \$3 million per year. ODDS wants to use this funding to help as many families as possible.

- Within this budget, the program can support 155 children at a time.
- Each child will have up to 20 hours per week of paid parent care.
- If a child has more than one parent caregiver, they can split the hours between the caregivers.
- Parents and guardians must be eligible to work in the United States to provide paid care.
- Children who are enrolled in the Healthier Oregon program are not eligible for the Children's Extraordinary Needs program.

Program selection process

Selection for the program will be random. To choose who receives the 155 slots, each of the 1,500 children who may be eligible will be assigned a random number. This number will be their place on the list.

The week of May 20, ODDS will send a letter to the parents or guardians of the first 155 children on this list. They will have about two months to decide if they want to enroll in the program. The selection letter will include:

- Program information
- Instructions to enroll or opt out

- Frequently asked questions
- A comparison of a parent versus a paid parent caregiver
- The training timeline, and
- Deadlines.

The week of May 27, ODDS will mail a letter to the parents and guardians of the children who were not selected. They will be on the program's waitlist. The waitlist letter will explain:

- The child's place on the waitlist, and
- How the waitlist works.

The order of the waitlist will not change. As slots open, ODDS will contact the parents or guardians of the next child on the waitlist. After the program launches, any family or child can ask to join the waitlist. They will be added to the end of the existing waitlist.

Resources and questions

If you have questions, email cenprogram@odhs.oregon.gov. You can also contact your child's services coordinator. To learn more about the program, visit the [Children's Extraordinary Needs program web page](#).

ODDS looks forward to working with parents and guardians who take on this new role.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dana Hittle". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Dana Hittle
Interim Director
Office of Developmental Disabilities Services

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