

CLTS Waiver Program Uniform Rates – Transition Guidance

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requires the Department of Health Services (DHS) to develop a statewide uniform rate methodology for most Children’s Long-Term Support (CLTS) waiver services. Each county waiver agency (CWA) is responsible for implementing the new statewide rate schedule. Agencies are expected to begin steps in January 2019 to transition from current rates to the new rate schedule no later than July 1, 2019. Full implementation, including updating individual service plans (ISPs) and service authorizations for every CLTS participant to reflect the new rates, must occur by July 1, 2019.

A statewide rate methodology is intended to provide a transparent process that establishes a consistent, predictable, and stable network of supports and services for program participants and their families. DHS engaged in lengthy and comprehensive outreach to solicit input from stakeholders in order to develop rates that meet participants’ needs. Moving from individual county rates to a state-based methodology will be a transition; however, it is not expected to result in a loss of resources for participants.

Agencies may implement the new rates one of the following ways:

- All at once (i.e., determine ISP changes, care levels, and outliers for each child ahead of time, but submit authorizations to change to the new rates on one specific day)
- At the six-month or annual ISP review
- By another method that works for the agency, as long as the rate schedule is being used for all waiver participants by July 1, 2019

On July 1, 2019, the third party administrator (TPA) will begin paying providers based on the state rate schedule.

Resources for Updating Rates

Over the course of the transition, ISPs and authorizations must be updated to reflect the new rate schedule. CWAs are to use the following tools to determine rates:

- [CLTS Long-Term Support Waiver Program Rate Schedule, P-02184](#)
- [CLTS Code Crosswalk, P-02283](#)
- [Updated Service Descriptions](#)

Certain service rates reflect the intensity of support and/or degree of professional experience that an individual participant may require. For these services, CWAs must first determine a care level for the individual before the corresponding rate can be identified. DHS anticipates that the majority of waiver participants will meet the medium care level. The [Care Level Classification Guidelines, P-02273](#) provides instructions for determining care levels as required for most respite and supportive home care services. CWAs may use the [Care Level Classification Form](#) to

document how care level determinations were made. At the time of subsequent annual ISP reviews, support and service coordinators will assess whether there is a change in care level classification for a participant receiving these services.

A CWA may request an outlier rate exception for any service that is included in the rate schedule. A participant may require an exception to the rate schedule due to (1) the complexity or intensity of the individual participant's care needs or (2) service availability issues. The [Outlier Rate Request Guidelines, P-02274](#) provides instructions for determining the appropriateness of an outlier request. CWAs must use the [Outlier Rate Request Form](#) to submit a request to DHS for an outlier rate for a waiver participant.

Family Impact

A primary guiding principle of the transition to the statewide rate schedule is that as plans are adjusted to reflect the new rates and/or service categories, CLTS waiver participants will maintain a comparable set of supports and/or services. CWAs must work to ensure that changes to ISPs do not create challenges or impose barriers to any participant's pursuit of their individual outcome goals.

Contact your [technical assistance lead](#) with any questions about levels of service and/or before implementing any changes to an ISP or authorization when the rate setting would result in either:

- The loss of exceptional service arrangements that have been made to address a participant's unique circumstances
- A significant increase in the cost to a family, either in out-of-pocket expenses (e.g., base child care costs) or parental payment fees

As ISPs are updated to reflect the new rate schedule, CWAs must consider whether:

- Parental payment fees need to be recalculated.
- ISP signatures are needed.

Transition Plans

Each CWA must submit a [CLTS Rate Setting Transition Plan](#) to DHS describing how the agency will transition all CLTS Waiver Program participants to the rate schedule by July 1, 2019. DHS will additionally request one report during the transition period on the progress toward updating the rates.

Have Questions or Need Assistance?

Direct questions to your [technical assistance lead](#).