

WSC ADVISORY #2022-003
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDING

ACTION ENCOURAGED

EFFECTIVE DATE: INFORMATION

This advisory is to inform Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) providers of a *one-time opportunity* to apply for funding provided through the ARPA. **It is important to note that these payments differ from the retainer payments that were previously offered for residential habilitation, life skills development level 1- companion, life skills development level 3- adult day training, and in-home personal supports.**

Currently, applications are being accepted by the Agency for Health Care Administration for:

1. Provider stipend payments
2. Provider retention payments
3. Delayed egress system payments

Provider stipend payments are intended to build provider capacity and identify areas of workforce development. Providers may use this funding to enhance, expand, or strengthen their Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) workforce in the following areas:

- Staffing capacity increase may include one-time retention bonuses such as hero pay that honors caregivers who have courageously cared for Florida's citizens during the pandemic.
- Staffing stability to reduce turnover among staff through hazard pay, sick bank creation, differential pay for nights and weekends, and/or fringe benefits for staff.
- Staffing flexibility provides staff assistance with transportation through incentives such as agency-supplied care services either directly or through contracts with ride sharing services like Lyft and Uber or providing passes for public transportation.
- Improved professional development offering new or expanded training opportunities such as paying staff for attending conferences, CEU credits, and college coursework.

Provider retention payments are intended to assist providers in building and sustaining their direct care workforce with recruitment, retention, and educational incentives. Providers may use this funding to enhance, expand, or strengthen their HCBS workforce in the following areas:

- Staffing recruitment through the payment of a recruitment or hiring bonus for newly hired staff.
- Staffing retention by paying longevity bonuses to staff who reach certain employment milestones with that provider.
- Staffing quality incentives, which reward staff who obtain certain educational or credentialing milestones.

Delayed egress payments are intended to assist providers who want to install a delayed egress system to minimize potential elopements. Reimbursement for the purchase and installation of a single delayed egress system is limited to the maximum amount of \$10,000.

Providers may apply for and receive payments under all of these opportunities. **Applications are due to the Agency for Health Care Administration by February 14, 2022.** Providers can access the applications, review frequently asked questions, submit a question, and apply at: https://ahca.myflorida.com/Medicaid/Policy_and_Quality/Policy/federal_authorities/hcbs_info.shtml