

## Agency with Choice (AWC) Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance for Specific Participant Directed Services Effective July 1, 2019 ODP Announcement 19-075

### AUDIENCE:

AWC Financial Management Services (FMS) organizations, Participants<sup>1</sup> utilizing the AWC FMS model, managing employers, Support Service Professionals (SSPs), Administrative Entities (AEs) and Supports Coordination Organizations (SCOs)

### PURPOSE:

This Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) communication is intended to provide the wage range tables for specific participant directed services provided to participants utilizing the AWC FMS model effective July 1, 2019. The following is a brief overview of the items that are included in this communication.

### DISCUSSION:

Wage and benefit ranges will be used to pay SSPs and to support claims processing in the Provider Reimbursement and Operations Management Information System in electronic format (PROMISE™) by the AWC FMS organization.

#### **Wage Ranges and Hourly Benefits Allowance Attachments and Tables**

There are ODP established wage ranges and an hourly benefit allowance for six (6) participant directed services for participants who are using the AWC FMS model.

#### **Attachment #1, AWC Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance Effective July 1, 2019**

indicates the services for which ODP has established wage ranges and an hourly benefit allowance (with the assigned procedure code for each service). Participants enrolled in the Consolidated, Person/Family Directed Support (P/FDS), or Community Living Waiver

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this ODP Communication, the use of the word participant implies that the person is enrolled in the Consolidated, Person Family/Directed Support (P/FDS), or Community Living Waiver.

will use the wage and hourly benefit allowance in Attachment #1. These wage ranges are effective July 1, 2019.

**Attachment #2, AWC Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance Effective July 1, 2019 for Enhanced Communication Services** was developed for participants who have been assessed as needing a direct service by staff proficient in Sign Language. These wage ranges are effective July 1, 2019.

The wage ranges and benefit allowance contained in Attachment #2 may **only** be used when a participant is:

- Enrolled in the P/FDS, Consolidated, or Community Living Waiver;
- Deaf; and
- Determined to need a service by staff who are proficient in Sign Language.

### **Guidance about Enhanced Communication**

The Enhanced Communication Services modifier (U1) was added to eligible services listed in Attachment #2. It also allows for enhanced communication services to be included in the Individual Support Plan (ISP). The services with the U1 modifier should only be added to the ISP if the participant is eligible, in need of enhanced communication supports, and the SSP has been determined qualified to provide the service by ODP.

### **Guidance about Wage Ranges and Hourly Benefit Allowance**

The AWC FMS Department-established fees are identified in a public notice published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* and are available at <http://dhs.pa.gov/provider/developmentalprograms/feeschedulerates/publicnotice/index.htm>. The “total amount” on the service details page of the ISP will need to reflect the total units and total dollar amount for each AWC service on the plan.

The following is a list of the components that comprise the Department-established fee that is paid to the AWC FMS organization:

- Wage to the SSP.
- Benefit allowance (when negotiated).
- Employer-related taxes/insurances.
- Workers’ Compensation.
- AWC Provider Liability Insurance.
- Employer-paid health care cost considerations.

**Both the Supports Coordinator (SC) and the AWC FMS organization will ensure copies of this communication and the correct attachments are provided to the managing employer.**

The AWC FMS organization is required to explain in detail the information in this communication including how to use the wage range/benefit allowance and an explanation of the Department-established fee.

It is important that the AWC FMS organization and the managing employers understand how the benefit allowance is applied. It is also important that the managing employers understand how to use the wage and benefit allowance when negotiating wages with the SSPs. For example, using Attachment #1, the managing employers can negotiate a wage within the established ranges and can also decide whether to offer the established benefit allowance. The established benefit allowance is included in the "Rate with Benefit Allowance" column.

Managing employers are to use the wage ranges and benefit allowance when negotiating the wages and optional benefit allowance with SSPs who are qualified and eligible to be paid by the AWC FMS organization. An explanation on how to use the wage ranges and the optional benefit allowance is outlined below:

- **Effective July 1, 2019, there is a new procedure code for the Chore Service. Homemaker is a separate service. The wage ranges for both services are the same and the amount remains unchanged from Fiscal year 2018-2019.**
- **The enhanced services that offer staff-to-individual ratios of 2:1 have two rows of wage ranges.** The row that has a greater high-end wage may only be used to pay a staff member who is certified, has a bachelor's degree, or is a nurse in accordance with the qualification requirements in the waivers. The row that has the lower high-end wage is used to pay a staff member who has a high school diploma and is not certified, does not have a bachelor's degree, or is not a nurse.
- Managing employers should contact the AWC FMS or SC to determine if the participant is eligible to receive enhanced communication services.
- The AWC FMS organization shall make managing employers aware of the Department-established fee for each service and how that fee is included and calculated in the ISP. In addition, the wage range and benefit allowance information must be reviewed prior to the effective date of July 1, 2019. The AWC FMS organization **may not** impose more stringent agency-established wages **within** the wage ranges.

Example: The wage range for In-Home and Community Support (W7060) without the benefit allowance is \$7.25 to \$17.04 per hour. An AWC FMS organization may not impose a restriction on the top payment to SSPs at \$12.00 per hour.

- The wage ranges and benefit allowance apply to new hires and existing SSPs.**  
 The wages/benefits of SSPs hired before July 1, 2019, whose wages/benefits are above the attached ranges, may be reduced by the AWC FMS organization to align with the established ranges/benefit amount. If an AWC FMS organization chooses to pay an SSP an hourly wage that exceeds the wage and benefit ranges, the AWC FMS organization is responsible to pay the excess amount of wages and benefits. ODP expects the AWC FMS organization will inform the managing employer of the AWC FMS organization's decision to reduce an hourly wage prior to the reduction being discussed with the SSP. If the AWC FMS organization needs to reduce the wage to align with the established wage range/benefit allowance, that reduction must be made in accordance with Labor and Industry Standards. Those standards include, but are not limited to, disallowance for a retroactive reduction.
- The benefit allowance, if offered, must be adjusted for the next pay date following July 1, 2019.** The AWC FMS organization and managing employer may not negotiate a benefit allowance that is different than the established benefit allowance. The AWC FMS organization or managing employer needs to explain to the SSP that the benefit allowance is an increase to the wage. The benefit allowance includes consideration for paid time-off and benefits including disability insurance, life insurance, or retirement savings.
- After negotiating the wages, and, the benefit allowance when offered, for each SSP, the managing employer and the AWC FMS organization shall keep a record of the final wage and benefit allowance paid for each employed SSP.
- The AWC FMS organization shall ensure that the SC has the necessary information to complete the ISP which includes the total units and total dollar amount for the corresponding service, procedure code and modifier, as appropriate, (e.g. U4, when a benefit allowance is not included) to the ISP.
- When the benefit allowance is not offered by the managing employer and the AWC FMS is billing with two modifiers, the U4 is listed first and the U1 modifier is listed second.

Neither wage and benefit allowance nor Department-established fees were developed for the following outcome-based participant directed vendor services:

- Transportation (public)
- Respite camp
- Home accessibility adaptations
- Vehicle accessibility adaptations
- Assistive technology
- Specialized supplies
- Education Support Services

- Family/Caregiver Training and Support – registration and fees
- Participant-Directed Goods and Services (P/FDS and Community Living waivers only)

An AWC FMS organization is required to manage and process all the authorized vendor services/claims for the vendor services noted above for participants who are self-directing waiver-funded services with the AWC FMS organization. This function is included as part of the AWC FMS organization's monthly administrative fee. The AWC FMS organization must process all PDS vendor service claims at the cost of the good or service charged to the general public.

**NOTE:** Transportation mileage is reimbursed at the established rate for Department of Human Service's employees for business travel.

ODP issues AWC FMS Department established fees for waiver eligible services in a public notice in *the Pennsylvania Bulletin*. *The Pennsylvania Bulletin* may be accessed on the Internet at: <http://www.pabulletin.com>.

Questions regarding this communication should be directed to the appropriate ODP Regional Program Manager or Regional Financial Management Services Lead.

AWC FMS Department-established fees may be found on the Department of Human Service website at:

<http://dhs.pa.gov/provider/developmentalprograms/feeschedulerates/currentrates/index.htm>

**LOCATION OF THIS COMMUNICATION:**

This communication may be accessed on MyODP at <https://www.myodp.org>.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment #1: *AWC Wage Ranges and Benefit Effective July 1, 2019*
- Attachment #2: *AWC Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance Effective July 1, 2019 for Enhanced Communication Services*

**OBSOLETE:**

Effective July 1, 2019, *Obsolete ODP Announcement #057-18, Agency with Choice (AWC) Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance for Specific Participant Directed Services Effective July 1, 2018*

**ATTACHMENT #1 AWC Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance Effective July 1, 2019**

| Agency with Choice July 1, 2019                          |                |                                |                |            |                                      |         |   |         |
|--|----------------|--------------------------------|----------------|------------|--------------------------------------|---------|---|---------|
| STATEWIDE  |                |                                |                |            |                                      |         |   |         |
| Service  | Procedure Code | Modifier                       | Staffing Level | Unit       | Effective 7-1-2019 Hourly Wage Range |         | Effective 7-1-2019 Hourly Wage and Benefits Range |         |
|  |                |                                |                |            | Low                                  | High    | Low   | High    |
| Supports Broker  | W7096          | U4 <sup>2</sup>                | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$19.49 | \$9.35  | \$21.59 |
| Companion Services                                       | W1726          | U4                             | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$10.32 | \$9.35  | \$12.42 |
| Supported Employment <sup>3</sup> -<br>Career Assessment | W7235          | U4                             | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$19.49 | \$9.35  | \$21.59 |
| Supported Employment - Job<br>Finding and Development    | H2023          | U4                             | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$19.49 | \$9.35  | \$21.59 |
| Supported Employment - Job<br>Coaching and Support       | W9794          | U4                             | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$19.49 | \$9.35  | \$21.59 |
| In-Home and Community<br>Supports                        | W7060          | U4                             | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$17.04 | \$9.35  | \$19.14 |
|  | W7068          | U4                             | 2:1            | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$17.04 | \$9.35  | \$19.14 |
| In-Home and Community<br>Supports - Enhanced             | W7061          | TD <sup>4</sup> , TE and<br>U4 | 1:1 (enhanced) | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$28.20 | \$9.35  | \$30.30 |

<sup>2</sup> For services without the Benefit Allowance, the Procedure Code would contain the modifier "U4".

<sup>3</sup> Support service professionals providing W7235, H2023 or W9794 must have one of the following by July 1, 2019, or within six months of hire if hired after January 1, 2019. Effective 7/1/19, newly hired SSPs who do not have the required certification when hired must work under the supervision of someone who is certified. This can occur no longer than six months from the date of hire to allow the new SSP time to obtain the certification : 1. Hold a Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) credential from the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) OR 2. Have been awarded the Basic Employment Services Certificate of Achievement or a Professional Certificate in Employment Services from an Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) organizational member that has ACRE-approved training.

<sup>4</sup> Codes that have an enhanced staffing level can be utilized when the individual has behavioral or medical support needs that require a staff member who is certified, has a bachelor's degree, or is a nurse. While these ranges apply to any staff who meet this criteria, the TD modifier should only be used when the staff member is a RN and the TE modifier should only be used when the staff member is an LPN.

**Agency with Choice July 1, 2019**

**STATEWIDE**

| Service  | Procedure Code | Modifier      | Staffing Level              | Unit       | Effective 7-1-2019 Hourly Wage Range |         | Effective 7-1-2019 Hourly Wage and Benefits Range |         |
|--|----------------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|---------|---|---------|
|  |                |               |                             |            | Low                                  | High    | Low   | High    |
|  | W7069          | TD, TE and U4 | 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>5</sup> | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$28.20 | \$9.35  | \$30.30 |
|  |                |               | 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>6</sup> | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$17.04 | \$9.35  | \$19.14 |
| In-Home Respite and Unlicensed Out-of-Home Respite Services            | W9862          | U4            | 1:1                         | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$11.72 | \$9.35  | \$13.82 |
|  | W9864          | U4            | 2:1                         | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$11.72 | \$9.35  | \$13.82 |
|  | W9798          | U4            | 1:1                         | Day        | \$7.25                               | \$11.72 | \$9.35  | \$13.82 |
|  | W9800          | U4            | 2:1                         | Day        | \$7.25                               | \$11.72 | \$9.35  | \$13.82 |
| In-Home Respite and Unlicensed Out-of-Home Respite Services - Enhanced | W9863          | U4            | 1:1 (enhanced)              | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$25.14 | \$9.35  | \$27.24 |
|  | W8095          | U4            | 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>5</sup> | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$25.14 | \$9.35  | \$27.24 |
|  |                |               | 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>6</sup> | 15 Minutes | \$7.25                               | \$11.72 | \$9.35  | \$13.82 |
|  | W9799          | U4            | 1:1 (enhanced)              | Day        | \$7.25                               | \$25.14 | \$9.35  | \$27.24 |
|  | W9801          | U4            | 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>5</sup> | Day        | \$7.25                               | \$25.14 | \$9.35  | \$27.24 |
| 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>6</sup>  |                |               | Day                         | \$7.25     | \$11.72                              | \$9.35  | \$13.82   |         |
| Homemaker  | W7283          | U4            | 1:1                         | Hour       | \$7.25                               | \$11.28 | \$9.35  | \$13.38 |
| Chore  | W7282          | U4            | 1:1                         | Hour       | \$7.25                               | \$11.28 | \$9.35  | \$13.38 |

<sup>5</sup> These wage ranges apply to SSPs that are a nurse, are certified, or have a bachelor's degree in accordance with the qualification criteria in the waiver. Enhanced services by a nurse are only available to participants age 21 and older.

<sup>6</sup> These wage ranges apply to SSPs that have a high school diploma and are not a nurse, are not certified or do not have a bachelor's degree in accordance with the qualification criteria in the waiver.

| Enhanced Communication Services (with U1 modifier)    |                |                        |                |            |   |         |  |         |
|---|----------------|------------------------|----------------|------------|---|---------|--|---------|
| Agency with Choice                                    |                |                        |                |            |   |         |  |         |
| STATEWIDE   |                |                        |                |            |   |         |  |         |
| Service   | Procedure Code | Modifier               | Staffing Level | Unit       | Effective 7-1-2019 Hourly Wage Range (Enhanced Communication) |         | Effective 7-1-2019 Hourly Wage and Benefits Range (Enhanced Communication) |         |
|   |                |                        |                |            | Low   | High    | Low  | High    |
| Supports Broker                                       | W7096          | U4 <sup>7</sup> and U1 | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$21.93 | \$10.26  | \$24.03 |
| Companion Services                                    | W1726          | U4 and U1              | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$11.61 | \$10.26  | \$13.71 |
| Supported Employment <sup>8</sup> - Career Assessment | W7235          | U4 and U1              | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$21.93 | \$10.26  | \$24.03 |
| Supported Employment - Job Finding and Development    | H2023          | U4 and U1              | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$21.93 | \$10.26  | \$24.03 |
| Supported Employment - Job Coaching and Support       | W9794          | U4 and U1              | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$21.93 | \$10.26  | \$24.03 |
| In-Home and Community Supports                        | W7060          | U4 and U1              | 1:1            | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$19.18 | \$10.26  | \$21.28 |
|   | W7068          | U4 and U1              | 2:1            | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$19.18 | \$10.26  | \$21.28 |

<sup>7</sup> For services without the Benefit Allowance, the Procedure Code would contain the modifier "U4".

<sup>8</sup> Support service professionals providing W7235, H2023 or W9794 must have one of the following by July 1, 2019, or within six months of hire if hired after January 1, 2019. Effective 7/1/19, newly hired SSPs who do not have the required certification when hired must work under the supervision of someone who is certified. This can occur no longer than six months from the date of hire to allow the new SSP time to obtain the certification: 1. Hold a Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) credential from the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) OR 2. Have been awarded the Basic Employment Services Certificate of Achievement or a Professional Certificate in Employment Services from an Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) organizational member that has ACRE-approved training.



| Enhanced Communication Services (with U1 modifier)                     |                |                                 |                              |            |   |         |  |         |
|--|----------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|---|---------|--|---------|
| Agency with Choice   |                |                                 |                              |            |   |         |  |         |
| STATEWIDE  |                |                                 |                              |            |   |         |  |         |
| Service  | Procedure Code | Modifier                        | Staffing Level               | Unit       | Effective 7-1-2019 Hourly Wage Range (Enhanced Communication) |         | Effective 7-1-2019 Hourly Wage and Benefits Range (Enhanced Communication) |         |
|  |                |                                 |                              |            | Low   | High    | Low  | High    |
| In-Home and Community Supports - Enhanced                              | W7061          | TD <sup>9</sup> , TE, U4 and U1 | 1:1 (enhanced)               | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$31.73 | \$10.26  | \$33.83 |
|  | W7069          | TD, TE, U4 and U1               | 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>10</sup> | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$31.73 | \$10.26  | \$33.83 |
|  |                |                                 | 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>11</sup> | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$19.18 | \$10.26  | \$21.28 |
| In-Home Respite and Unlicensed Out-of-Home Respite Services            | W9862          | U4 and U1                       | 1:1                          | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$13.19 | \$10.26  | \$15.29 |
|  | W9864          | U4 and U1                       | 2:1                          | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$13.19 | \$10.26  | \$15.29 |
|  | W9798          | U4 and U1                       | 1:1                          | Day        | \$8.16  | \$13.19 | \$10.26  | \$15.29 |
|  | W9800          | U4 and U1                       | 2:1                          | Day        | \$8.16  | \$13.19 | \$10.26  | \$15.29 |
| In-Home Respite and Unlicensed Out-of-Home Respite Services - Enhanced | W9863          | U4 and U1                       | 1:1 (enhanced)               | 15 Minutes | \$9.21  | \$28.28 | \$11.31  | \$30.38 |
|  | W8095          | U4 and U1                       | 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>11</sup> | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$28.28 | \$10.26  | \$30.38 |
|  |                |                                 | 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>12</sup> | 15 Minutes | \$8.16  | \$13.19 | \$10.26  | \$15.29 |
|  | W9799          | U4 and U1                       | 1:1 (enhanced)               | Day        | \$8.16  | \$28.28 | \$10.26  | \$30.38 |
|  | W9801          | U4 and U1                       | 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>11</sup> | Day        | \$8.16  | \$28.28 | \$10.26  | \$30.38 |
| 2:1 (enhanced) <sup>12</sup>   |                |                                 | Day                          | \$8.16     | \$13.19   | \$10.26 | \$15.29  |         |

<sup>9</sup> Codes that have an enhanced staffing level can be utilized when the individual has behavioral or medical support needs that require a staff member who is certified, has a bachelor's degree or is a nurse. While these ranges apply to any staff who meet these criteria, the TD modifier should only be used when the staff member is a RN and the TE modifier should only be used when the staff member is an LPN.

<sup>10</sup> These wage ranges apply to SSPs that are a nurse, are certified or have a bachelor's degree in accordance with the qualification criteria in the waiver.

<sup>11</sup> These wage ranges apply to SSPs that have a high school diploma and are not a nurse, certified or have a bachelor's degree in accordance with the qualification criteria in the waiver.