

# **Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA) Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance for Specific Participant Directed Services (PDS) Effective October 1, 2024**

## **ODP Announcement 24-086**

### **AUDIENCE:**

- Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA) Financial Management Services (FMS) organizations,
- Participants<sup>1</sup> utilizing the VF/EA FMS model,
- Common Law Employers (CLEs),
- Support Service Professionals (SSPs),
- Administrative Entities (AEs),
- Supports Coordination Organizations (SCOs),
- Supports Brokers (SBs)

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1 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.

**PURPOSE:**

This Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) communication is intended to provide the hourly wage and benefits ranges for specific participant directed services (PDS) provided to participants utilizing the VF/EA FMS model, effective October 1, 2024.

**DISCUSSION:**

The hourly wage and benefit ranges in this communication are effective October 1, 2024. These are used to pay SSPs and to support claims processing in the Provider Reimbursement and Operations Management Information System in electronic format (PROMISE™) by the VF/EA FMS organization. ***This communication will only be updated when changes occur to the information contained within.***

**Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance Attachments and Tables**

There are ODP established wage ranges with an optional benefit allowance for six participant directed services for participants using the VF/EA FMS model.

***Attachment #1 VF/EA Wage Range Effective October 1, 2024*** indicates the services for which ODP has established wages and benefit allowances (with the assigned procedure code for each service). Participants enrolled in the Consolidated, Participant/Family Directed Support (P/FDS), or Community Living waiver will use the wage and benefit ranges in Attachment #1. These are effective October 1, 2024. Attachment #1 will be the appropriate table to use for most participants.

***Attachment #2 VF/EA Wage Range Effective October 1, 2024 for Enhanced Communication Services*** was developed for participants who have been assessed as needing a direct service by staff proficient in Sign Language. The wage and benefit

ranges (with the assigned procedure code for each service) for enhanced communication services in Attachment #2 are effective October 1, 2024.

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

- Enrolled in the Consolidated, P/FDS, or Community Living Waiver
- d/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, needs enhanced communication supports and if the SSP has been determined by ODP to be qualified to provide the service. The ISP Team must discuss the need for an enhanced service, and it must be approved and authorized on the ISP. The common law employer should contact the Supports Coordinator to discuss if the participant may be eligible to receive enhanced communication services.

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

**The Supports Coordinator shall explain the use of the wage and benefit ranges to the designated common law employer.** It is important that the common law employer understand how to use the wage and benefit range when negotiating rates of pay with their SSPs. For example, the common law employer can use the wage range to promote

recruitment, retention, and staff morale. Standard employer practices show that varied rates of pay among workers are most effective in recruiting and retaining staff. It would, therefore, not be expected that every staff person will receive the same wages and benefits. In addition, the common law employer needs to take into consideration how the negotiated wage impacts the ISP budget, especially if the participant is in the P/FDS or Community Living waiver. For example, if the maximum wage and benefit allowance is offered to the SSP, the amount of service that will be available to the participant may be limited.

**The Supports Coordinator and the Administrative Entity, when necessary, shall work with the common law employers to ensure the common law employers use the appropriate wage and benefit range for each service.** The common law employer must inform the SSP, who is eligible to be paid by the VF/EA FMS organization, of the wage in advance of the work being performed. The information must be discussed at the next ISP meeting, although common law employers and participants are welcome to ask that a separate meeting be scheduled.

**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 staff members who have a high school diploma and are not certified, do not have a bachelor's degree, or are not a nurse.

**The wage and benefit allowance ranges apply to new hires and existing SSPs.** All SSPs' wages/benefits allowance must be within the ODP established ranges. If the common law employer decides to reduce the SSP wage/benefit allowance, the reduction must be

made in accordance with Labor and Industry standards. Those standards include but are not limited to a disallowance for a retroactive reduction.

**The benefit allowance, if offered, must be adjusted for a pay date following October 1, 2024.** The common law employer may not negotiate a benefit allowance that is different than the established benefit allowance. The benefit allowance includes consideration for paid time-off and insurance benefits including health insurance, disability insurance, life insurance, or retirement savings. **The common law employer needs to explain to the SSP that the cost of the benefit allowance is added to the wage.**

While the rates identified in the attachments are effective October 1 , 2024, an increase or reduction to the wages of an SSP within the ODP established wage ranges will occur at a future point in time. If the ISP team determines that there is a change in need which requires a revision to the ISP or if the common law employer elects to adjust an SSP wage range/benefit allowance, the “total amount” on the service details page of the ISP will need to be adjusted to reflect the total of the new wage ranges and benefits allowance. There may be reasons common law employers decide to wait to change SSP wages or benefits. For example, a decision may be made to wait until the anniversary date of the SSP’s employment or the date of the annual review ISP meeting. The increase or reduction of wages within the ODP established wage ranges is only effective from the date the increase or reduction is made and going forward. This typically occurs at the next (future) pay period. Increases/reductions in wage cannot be applied to wages earned prior to the date the decision was made to change the wage.

If a common law employer chooses to increase or reduce a SSPs hourly wages, the common law employer shall complete the *Support Service Professional (SSP) services and rates form* and send it to the Supports Coordinator or Administrative Entity. The

*Support Service Professional (SSP) services and rates form* may be obtained from the VF/EA organization. The common law employer must also keep a copy of the *SSP services and rates form* for each SSP.

The Administrative Entity shall forward a copy of the negotiated hourly wage or the *SSP services and rates form* to the VF/EA FMS organization. The *SSP services and rates form* is a mandatory form for a newly hired SSP and when requesting a change in the hourly wage of a current SSP. The Administrative Entity should not add the employer-related taxes and workers' compensation costs on the *SSP services and rates form* that is forwarded to the VF/EA FMS organization. Only the hourly wage and benefit allowance is included on the *SSP services and rates form*. Note: If a new service is being added that the SSP has never provided previously, a new SSP Qualification Form will need to be completed for the new service.

**Each new or revised *SSP services and rates form* must include an hourly wage for each service, including 24-hour Respite services.** Even though the waivers state that most services are either 15-minute units or 24-hour units, all services under the VF/EA FMS model are covered by hourly wages and benefit allowances.

New or revised *SSP services and rates forms* must be submitted to the VF/EA FMS organization with time allotted for the SC and AE to review and sign-off on the new rate of pay. Anytime a new services and rates form is submitted, the pay period indicated on the form must be a future pay period. If the revised *SSP services and rates forms* are not submitted timely, the changes may not be applied to the pay period indicated on the services and rates form. If no changes are necessary to the *SSP services and rates forms*, then the existing rate of pay for each SSP will carry forward until such time a rate change occurs.

- CLE submits fully signed and completed SSP Services and Rates Form to PPL, Inc. prior to the pay period indicated on the form.
- Starting for the pay period indicated on the form, PPL, Inc. enters the new wage for SSPs for whom a form was submitted by the CLE.
- SSP(s) receive paycheck reflecting new wage at date of pay for the pay period the new wage was completed for.

The Supports Coordinator can utilize the budget calculation tool that is currently posted at: <https://www.myodp.org/course/view.php?id=261> to assist in the calculation of the cost of services to be authorized on the ISP. The Supports Coordinator will input the current calendar year State Unemployment Tax Act (SUTA) percentage, the wage plus optional benefit allowance and number of units into the tool. The tool will then automatically calculate the total budget amount to be authorized on the ISP. Instructions are included with the tool on the first tab.

Wage ranges were not developed for the following participant directed services identified as 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

The VF/EA FMS organization is required to process all vendor service claims for participants who are self-directing waiver-funded services that are authorized in the approved ISP. This function is included as part of the VF/EA FMS organization's monthly administrative fee. The VF/EA FMS organization must process all vendor service claims at the cost of the good or service.

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

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

**LOCATION OF THIS COMMUNICATION:**

This communication may be accessed through the VF/EA FMS organization or on MyODP at <https://www.myodp.org/>.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment #1: *VF/EA Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance Effective October 1, 2024*
- Attachment #2: *VF/EA Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance for Enhanced Communication Services Effective October 1, 2024*



## **OBSOLETE COMMUNICATION**

This communication obsoletes ODP Announcement 22-025: *Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA) Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance for Specific Participant Directed Services Effective March 1, 2022*

## **QUESTIONS:**

Questions about this announcement should be directed to the appropriate ODP Regional Program Office PDS Lead:

- Briana Smith, Central Regional PDS Lead: [sbriana@pa.gov](mailto:sbriana@pa.gov)
- Shawn Lynn, Northeast Regional PDS Lead: [shlynn@pa.gov](mailto:shlynn@pa.gov)
- Nathifa Castro, Southeast Regional PDS Lead: [ncastro@pa.gov](mailto:ncastro@pa.gov)
- Nancy Hampson, Western Regional PDS Lead: [nhampson@pa.gov](mailto:nhampson@pa.gov)

**ATTACHMENT #1 VF/EA Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance Effective October 1, 2024**

Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent								
STATEWIDE								
Service	Procedure Code	Modifier	Staffing Level	Unit	Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage Range		Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage and Benefits Range <sup>2</sup>	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Supports Broker	W7096		1:1	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$25.09	\$9.18	\$31.76
Companion Services	W1726		1:1	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$17.62	\$9.18	\$22.38
Supported Employment <sup>3</sup> - Career Assessment	W7235		1:1	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$25.84	\$9.18	\$32.82
Supported Employment <sup>3</sup> - Job Finding and Development	H2023		1:1	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$25.84	\$9.18	\$32.82
Supported Employment <sup>3</sup> - Job Coaching and Support	W9794		1:1	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$25.84	\$9.18	\$32.82
In-Home and Community Supports	W7060		1:1	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$22.58	\$9.18	\$28.67
	W7068		2:1	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$22.58	\$9.18	\$28.67

2 The lower bound of the hourly wage and benefits range represents the low hourly wage with no benefits, while the upper bound represents the high hourly wage with consideration for a 27.0% benefits allowance.

3 Support Service Professionals must have one of the following within nine months of hire: 1. Hold a Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) credential from the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) OR 2. Have been awarded a 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. Newly hired Support Service Professionals 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 nine months from the date of hire to allow the new Support Service Professional time to obtain the certification.

Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent								
STATEWIDE								
Service	Procedure Code	Modifier	Staffing Level	Unit	Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage Range		Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage and Benefits Range <sup>2</sup>	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
In-Home and Community Supports - Enhanced	W7061	TD <sup>4</sup> and TE	1:1(enhanced)	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$29.60	\$9.18	\$37.59
	W7069	TD and TE	2:1 (enhanced) <sup>5</sup>	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$29.60	\$9.18	\$37.59
			2:1 (enhanced) <sup>6</sup>	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$22.58	\$9.18	\$28.67
In-Home Respite and Unlicensed Out-of-Home Respite Services	W9862		1:1	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$14.66	\$9.18	\$18.62
	W9864		2:1	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$14.66	\$9.18	\$18.62
	W9798		1:1	24 Hours	\$7.25	\$14.66	\$9.18	\$18.62
	W9800		2:1	24 Hours	\$7.25	\$14.66	\$9.18	\$18.62
	W9863		1:1 (enhanced)	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$31.02	\$9.18	\$39.39

4 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.

5 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.

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

**Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent**

**STATEWIDE**

Service	Procedure Code	Modifier	Staffing Level	Unit	Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage Range		Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage and Benefits Range <sup>2</sup>	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
In-Home Respite and Unlicensed Out-of-Home Respite Services - Enhanced	W8095		2:1 (enhanced) <sup>5</sup>	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$31.02	\$9.18	\$39.39
			2:1 (enhanced) <sup>6</sup>	15 Minutes	\$7.25	\$14.66	\$9.18	\$18.62
	W9799		1:1 (enhanced)	24 Hours	\$7.25	\$31.02	\$9.18	\$39.39
	W9801		2:1 (enhanced) <sup>5</sup>	24 Hours	\$7.25	\$31.02	\$9.18	\$39.39
			2:1 (enhanced) <sup>6</sup>	24 Hours	\$7.25	\$14.66	\$9.18	\$18.62
Homemaker	W7283		1:1	Hourly	\$7.25	\$11.37	\$9.18	\$14.44
Chore	W7282		1:1	Hourly	\$7.25	\$11.37	\$9.18	\$14.44

ATTACHMENT #2 VF/EA Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance for Enhanced Communication Services  
Effective October 1, 2024

Enhanced Communication Services (with U1 modifier) Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent STATEWIDE								
Service	Procedure Code	Modifier	Staffing Level	Unit	Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage Range (Enhanced Communication)		Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage and Benefits Range <sup>7</sup> (Enhanced Communication)	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
<b>Supports Broker</b>	<b>W7096</b>	<b>U1</b>	<b>1:1</b>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$28.23	\$12.39	\$35.74
<b>Companion Services</b>	<b>W1726</b>	<b>U1</b>	<b>1:1</b>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$22.45	\$12.39	\$28.51
<b>Supported Employment<sup>8</sup> - Career Assessment</b>	<b>W7235</b>	<b>U1</b>	<b>1:1</b>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$33.02	\$12.39	\$41.94

<sup>7</sup> The lower bound of the hourly wage and benefits range represents the low hourly wage with no benefits, while the upper bound represents the high hourly wage with consideration for a 26.6% benefits allowance.

<sup>8</sup> Support Service Professionals must have one of the following within nine months of hire: 1. Hold a Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) credential from the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) OR 2. Have been awarded a 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. Newly hired Support Service Professionals 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 nine months from the date of hire to allow the new Support Service Professional time to obtain the certification.

**Enhanced Communication Services (with U1 modifier)  
Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent**

**STATEWIDE**

Service	Procedure Code	Modifier	Staffing Level	Unit	Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage Range (Enhanced Communication)		Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage and Benefits Range <sup>7</sup> (Enhanced Communication)	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
<b>Supported Employment<sup>8</sup> - Job Finding and Development</b>	<b>H2023</b>	<b>U1</b>	<b>1:1</b>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$33.02	\$12.39	\$41.94
<b>Supported Employment<sup>8</sup> - Job Coaching and Support</b>	<b>W9794</b>	<b>U1</b>	<b>1:1</b>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$33.02	\$12.39	\$41.94
<b>In-Home and Community Supports</b>	<b>W7060</b>	<b>U1</b>	<b>1:1</b>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$28.80	\$12.39	\$36.58
	<b>W7068</b>	<b>U1</b>	<b>2:1</b>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$28.80	\$12.39	\$36.58
<b>In-Home and Community Supports - Enhanced</b>	<b>W7061</b>	<b>U1, TD<sup>9</sup> and TE</b>	<b>1:1 (enhanced)</b>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$37.85	\$12.39	\$48.07

9 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.

**Enhanced Communication Services (with U1 modifier)  
Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent**

**STATEWIDE**

Service	Procedure Code	Modifier	Staffing Level	Unit	Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage Range (Enhanced Communication)		Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage and Benefits Range <sup>7</sup> (Enhanced Communication)	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	W7069	U1, TD and TE	2:1 (enhanced) <sup>10</sup>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$37.85	\$12.39	\$48.07
			2:1 (enhanced) <sup>11</sup>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$28.80	\$12.39	\$36.58
In-Home Respite and Unlicensed Out-of-Home Respite Services	W9862	U1	1:1	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$18.60	\$12.39	\$23.62
	W9864	U1	2:1	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$18.60	\$12.39	\$23.62
	W9798	U1	1:1	24 Hours	\$9.79	\$18.60	\$12.39	\$23.62
	W9800	U1	2:1	24 Hours	\$9.79	\$18.60	\$12.39	\$23.62
	W9863	U1	1:1 (enhanced)	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$39.67	\$12.39	\$50.38
	W8095	U1	2:1 (enhanced) <sup>10</sup>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$39.67	\$12.39	\$50.38

10 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.

11 These wage ranges apply to SSPs that have a high school diploma and are not a nurse, 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)**

**Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent**

**STATEWIDE**

Service	Procedure Code	Modifier	Staffing Level	Unit	Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage Range (Enhanced Communication)		Effective 10-1-2024 Hourly Wage and Benefits Range <sup>7</sup> (Enhanced Communication)	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
<b>In-Home Respite and Unlicensed Out-of-Home Respite Services - Enhanced</b>			<b>2:1 (enhanced)<sup>11</sup></b>	15 Minutes	\$9.79	\$18.60	\$12.39	\$23.62
	<b>W9799</b>	<b>U1</b>	<b>1:1 (enhanced)</b>	24 Hours	\$9.79	\$39.67	\$12.39	\$50.38
	<b>W9801</b>	<b>U1</b>	<b>2:1 (enhanced)<sup>10</sup></b>	24 Hours	\$9.79	\$39.67	\$12.39	\$50.38
			<b>2:1 (enhanced)<sup>11</sup></b>	24 Hours	\$9.79	\$18.60	\$12.39	\$23.62