



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Elisa Velardo
Deputy Commissioner

To: DDS Qualified Providers

From: Jordan A. Scheff, DDS Commissioner

CC: Elisa Velardo, Deputy Commissioner; Katie Rock-Burns, Chief of Staff; Krista Ostaszewski, Health Management Administrator; Sean Bannon, Operations Center Director; Regional Directors; Assistant Regional Directors; Regional Resource Administrators

Date: August 3rd, 2023

RE: **Information on the HCBS ARPA Training Related Incentives**

Dear Providers,

DDS recently issued a [memo](#) announcing the approval of the revised ARPA Appendix K amendments, which included additional financial incentives connected to the Supporting Transformation to Empower People (STEP) initiative.

This communication is to provide more information on the two training-related incentive provisions that were new additions to the ARPA plan. As noted in the approved plan, there is now one incentive-based payment focused on **training qualified provider staff on employment** and a separate incentive-based payment focused on **training qualified provider staff on Assistive Technology**. Both payments also cover the cost of such training and will be available on a first come-first served based until funds are exhausted.

Below please find a more detailed description of the approved provision and criteria that qualified providers will need to follow to meet the requirements for incentive payments.

- 1. An incentive payment for any DDS qualified provider for each job coach or job developer that completes training expectations consistent with professional standards from accepted accreditation or certification entities such as the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE), Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE), or other similarly recognized organizations.**

This does NOT need to be a component of an approved plan. Payment for completion will be a flat outcome payment of \$3,000 per employee trained, up to a total of \$30,000 per qualified provider agency once

verification of completion is received by the department. The incentive payment also includes reimbursement for the cost of such training, separate from the outcome payment.

A qualified provider that submits the documentation for each job coach or developer that completes the approved training expectations, including exam if applicable, consistent with professional standards from accepted accreditation or certification after 2/1/2023 and before 3/31/2025 and is verified by DDS will be eligible for an incentive payment while funds last. Providers will need to submit a one-time request for the training reimbursement and the incentive payment in advance when possible. For training that has already occurred, submit a one-time request along with the invoice and verification that the course, and exam if applicable, was completed.

The following training programs are pre-approved:

ACRE approved training: [View All Training Providers - Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators \(acreducators.org\)](#)

APSE: Emerging Leaders in Employment Services [Emerging Leaders - Association of People Supporting Employment First \(apse.org\)](#)

APSE: Certified Employment Professional [CESP™ - Association of People Supporting Employment First \(apse.org\)](#)

State of CT: Customized Employment Training – [Customized Employment Information for Provider Staff \(ct.gov\)](#)

Training from the pre-approved list is preferred. Any other training program must be pre-approved in writing by contacting DDS.Employment-DayServices@ct.gov.

- 2. An incentive payment for any DDS qualified provider that has one or more of their staff complete training expectations consistent with Technology First SHIFT LLC, Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) Assistive Technology professional, or other similarly recognized organizations that focus on utilization of assistive technology.**

This does NOT need to be a component of an approved plan. Payment for completion will be a flat outcome payment of \$3,000 per employee, up to a total of \$30,000 per qualified provider agency, once verification of completion is received by the department. The incentive payment also includes reimbursement for the cost of such training, separate from the outcome payment.

A qualified provider that submits documentation for each staff member that completes approved training expectations, including exam if applicable, consistent with professional standards from accepted accreditation or certification after 2/1/2023 and before 3/31/2025 and is verified by DDS will be eligible for an incentive payment while funds last. Providers will need to submit a one-time request for the training reimbursement and the incentive payment in advance when possible. For training that has already occurred, submit a one-time request along with the invoice and verification that the course, and exam if applicable, was completed.

The following training programs are pre-approved:

Technology First SHIFT: An online education and accreditation platform focused on advancing and standardizing Technology First best practices and programming. [Credentials & Certifications — Shift \(techfirstshift.com\)](#)

Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA): Offers the RESNA Assistive Technology Professional (ATP) certification. This certification focuses on assistive technology service delivery, including assessment, intervention, and training. [Assistive Technology Professional \(ATP\) \(resna.org\)](#)

Center on Disabilities at California State University, Northridge CSUN: Offers a variety of assistive technology courses and workshops, including the Assistive Technology Applications Certificate Program (ATACP). This program covers topics such as assistive technology assessment, implementation, and integration. [Assistive Technology Certificate Program | California State University, Northridge \(csun.edu\)](#)

The Living in Place Institute: Offers the Certified Living in Place Professional (CLIPP) certification that is designed to help professionals in the home healthcare industry create safe and accessible living environments for individuals of all abilities. This certification provides knowledge in universal design, home modifications, and assistive technologies. It allows professionals to evaluate and address specific needs to improve independence, convenience, and safety in residential settings. [Certified Living in Place Professional \(CLIPP\)](#)

Training from the pre-approved list is preferred. Any other training program must be pre-approved in writing by contacting DDS.AssistiveTechnology@ct.gov.

You can find updated versions of the STEP Guide and the STEP Budget on the [DDS Website Provider Gateway](#) that reflect these changes. As a reminder, you are invited to join open Technical Assistance office hours for more guidance on developing your transition plans on Fridays from 10:00 to 11:00 am. [Use this link to join](#). You can also [request one on one Technical Assistance](#).

We are excited to continue this journey with you and hope that the updates provided help improve and expand supports for the individuals we support.

Looking forward to our continued work together!