

Personal Care Attendant Workforce Council

MINUTES February 5, 2016

Held at:
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Members IN ATTENDANCE: Susan Weisselberg (Chair); Mary Caruso (*via phone*); Carl Noll (*via phone*); Greg McMahon (*via phone*); Sheila Mulvey (*via phone*); Kathy Flaherty; Kathy Bruni (*via phone*); Therese Nadeau (employer, *via phone*); Rev. Joshua Pawelek

Members not in ATTENDANCE: William Meyerson

Other Participants: Deborah Schwartz local 1199; Steve Bender, 1199 Training and Upgrading Fund; Eric Gervais, Allied; Chris Drake, Office of Policy and Management, Counsel; George Chamberlin (*via phone*)

➤ **Called to Order 10:03 am**

Introductions for new member of the Council Kathy Flaherty.

➤ **Public Comment**

- No public comments made.

➤ **Approval of Minutes:**

Motion to approve minutes from January, 8, 2016 meeting made by Kathy Flaherty and Seconded.
No changes to the minutes. **Minutes Approved.**

➤ **Review and Approval of Consumer Opt-Out Procedures for PCA Orientation**

- **Per Collective Bargaining Agreement, to be established by PCA Workforce**

Chris Drake provided a brief update of the work that's been performed since the last meeting of the Council.

- OPM and 1199 Training and Upgrading Fund (TUF) in process of getting PCA orientation program off the ground. One provision of the collective bargaining agreement is that: a.) it

exists, b.) group sessions will be offered, and c.) there needs to be a consumer opt-out option.

- There are two categories of PCAs that have to be treated differently:
 - Backlog category– people that have come on board before the program has been established.
 - Go-forward category – people that come on board after the program has already been established.

Chris provided a recap of a recent meeting with the two Fiscal Intermediaries (DSS & DDS), 1199, and the TUF. Chris announced that the group walked through the orientation process and how it would work administratively. Chris discussed the issues that came up and described the opt-out procedure for both categories. He also described the timeline that was developed with regard to outreach (because there is no employment packet there is a need to conduct mass mailings). The timeline was described as follows:

- 14 days before the go-live date the FI will send a notice to employers informing them about the mandate for the orientation program.
- 1 week later the TUF will send a notice to the employees.
- Employers will receive the opt-out form which needs to be returned on a specific date. Chris explained that there is a 14-day window to opt-out.
- If FI's have not received form back from employers within 19 days, PCA name will be sent to TUF.
- Two documents will be sent to those that opted out: Curriculum; and Employer Certification form.

The council members asked questions about the timeline/process.

- Mary asked if an additional notice will go out to ensure receipt of the first notice.
- Kathy Flaherty asked why we don't we hold off on sending until the 19 days. Chris explained that there's a 90 day clock ticking.
- Mary asked if the second notice would offer another opportunity to opt-out.
- Members discussed whether the notice should be included in employee paycheck.
- Steve Bender, 1199, explained that the TUF is hiring two enrollment staff who will conduct outreach via phones & email.
- Chair stated that a list of those that have not responded would need to be obtained from the FI's. Chair stated that they will work with the FI's on timing to do the second outreach.

Council members discussed when the 90 day clock starts. **Members agreed that the trigger of the 90 days would be when the program goes live.**

The group discussed whether to include the second notice in the employee's paycheck. Steve suggested the paycheck notice include the schedule and contact info of the TF. Deborah flagged the issue that paychecks are distributed every other week.

Sheila left the meeting at 10:45.

Sue polled the members to determine if the opt-out procedure for the backlog individuals would work for them. Dialogue ensued.

Kathy F. left the meeting at 11 a.m.

- Deborah suggested outreach from the PCA workforce council to inform employees/ers of what is coming, with a suggestion to contact their FI if the notification is not received. Notice 1 would communicate that orientation is coming. Notice 2 would request that they sign up or opt out.
- Chris defined the “Go-forward” category. Chris explained that employers are provided with new-EE packets. The forms will become part of this packet.

Conversation ensued around the orientation program verification process and communications between entities related to same.

Chair asked if members were comfortable with the process. All members expressed agreement with the process.

Terminology

Chair initiated a discussion around the various terms used to describe the same thing, i.e., Consumers, consumer-employers, PCA’s, providers. Chair suggested consistency and agreement with which terms to use for each party. **All members expressed agreement to use the terms “employer” and “employee”.** It was agreed that for the curriculum the term “employer” will be used. The other terms used will be identified/defined within the document. For employees, “PCA” or “homecare worker” would be used. A glossary of terms would be provided within the documentation.

Payment during orientation

Deborah indicated that a \$37.50 stipend would be provided to PCAs who attend the session. When they attend an orientation with employer they will receive it as their hourly rate.

Wrap-up

Chair indicated that the cover letter and communications will be revised.

Chair polled members regarding the procedure as outlined. Josh Pawelek stated that he is comfortable but pointed out that the role of the employer needs to be clearly identified. **All members expressed satisfaction with procedure as outlined.**

Chair requested a motion to approve procedures. Motion made by Carl. Seconded by Josh and Therese. Procedures approved. Revised documentation will be sent to members.

The next meeting will be April 8, 2016.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.