

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

NOTICE OF INTENT TO RENEW AND AMEND THE HOME AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTS WAIVER FOR PERSONS WITH AUTISM (“AUTISM WAIVER”)

In accordance with the provisions of section 17b-8(c) of the Connecticut General Statutes, notice is hereby given that the Commissioner of Social Services intends to submit a renewal of the Home and Community Supports Waiver for Persons with Autism (commonly referred to as the “Autism Waiver”) to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (“CMS”), to be effective January 1, 2023.

The Department of Social Services is proposing the following changes upon renewal:

- Adding Nutrition as a service. The service includes the clinical assessment and development of special diets; positioning techniques for eating; recommendations for adaptive equipment for eating and counseling for dietary needs related to medical diagnosis for participants; and training for paid support staff to ensure compliance with the participant's dietary needs. These services are not covered in the Medicaid State Plan.
- Adjusting the maximum total number of participants. The waiver was expanded legislatively to add 50 slots beginning July 1, 2021, and an additional 150 slots beginning July 1, 2022.
- Amending the service definitions of social skills groups, life skills coach and clinical behavioral support services to permit these services to be provided by alternate means beyond face-to-face, including virtually. The alternate means of service delivery is currently permitted for life skills coaching services on a temporary basis pursuant to an Appendix K Emergency Preparedness and Response Amendment, however such authority will expire six months after the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Amending the qualifications for individual and agency providers of life skills coaching. The amendment removes the requirements that providers must have a bachelor's degree and pass competency tests for Autism Program Orientation Training Level I and II within three months of working with an individual. The qualifications have been updated to include the requirement that providers have a high school diploma or equivalent and have experience with those on the autism spectrum.
- Technical updates.

A copy of the complete text of the waiver is available, at no cost, upon request to: Department of Social Services, Community Options Unit, 55 Farmington Ave, Hartford, CT 06105, Attention: Jennifer Cavallaro, Director; or via email to Jennifer.Cavallaro@ct.gov. It is also available on the Department of Social Services' website, www.ct.gov/dss, under “News and Press,” as well as the following direct link: <http://portal.ct.gov/DSS/Health-And-Home-Care/Medicaid-Waiver-Applications/Medicaid-Waiver-Applications>.

All written comments regarding this renewal application must be submitted by August 25, 2022, to: Department of Social Services, Community Options Unit, 55 Farmington Ave, Hartford, CT 06105, Attention: Jennifer Cavallaro, Director; or via email to Jennifer.Cavallaro@ct.gov.