

## STEP TA Webinar: Investing STEP Incentives

STEP (Supporting Transformation to Empower People) Technical Assistance (TA) Summary

March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### Session Description

This TA session focused on what the STEP incentives are and how to earn them.

1. Transition Incentives (Residential STEP and Day STEP Incentive) are received 60 days after an individual successfully transitions from a congregate residential, day or employment support into a non-congregate, individualized support or from a non-employment day support into a vocational support.
2. Provider Transition Incentives enable a provider to maintain program viability during a transition period and promote flexibility for transitioning individuals to return to their original support.
3. Placement Incentives (New Residential Placement, New Employment-Focused Placement, and New Individualized Employment Placement Incentives) are calculated as enhanced hourly rates paid to the provider of the new supports following a transition.
4. Non-Transition Incentives (Restructuring and Scope Incentives) are not directly tied to individual transitions but are options as part of STEP Plans.

Please see the [STEP Incentives Quick Guide](#) for more details on each incentive.

### Poll Results

To open the session, participants answered a poll asking, “**How far along are you in developing your STEP Plan?**” A surprising number of approved providers attended this session because they are staff supporting STEP who did not create the plans. See details in the table:

Haven't Started	In Progress	Submitted	Submitted and Approved
4	1	0	3

At the end of the session, participants responded to the poll, **Which incentives do you think your agency will qualify for?** The poll did not list Provider Transition and Placement Incentives since they are earned with Transition Incentives. See details in the table:

Day Transition	Residential Transition	Restructuring and/or Scope
7	2	3

### Examples of Earned Incentives

The presenters provided examples of incentives from approved STEP Plans. The session did not include specific examples for placement incentives since they are tied directly to supports for individuals.



#### 1. Residential Step Incentive

The ARC of Eastern Connecticut’s STEP Plan supports individuals to transition from CLA supports to cluster IHS with assistive technology capabilities. They were able to leverage STEP funding to accelerate long-term priorities that existed prior to STEP.



## 2. Day STEP Incentive

The Kennedy Collective plans to support individuals to transition from GSE supports into competitive ISE. They will use STEP funding for additional staff hours to provide on-site onboarding for individuals who are moving into ISE who may need extra job coaching. This approach will support individuals to feel comfortable in the new setting and set them up for success.



## 3. Provider Transition Incentive

Abilis supported two individuals to transition from CRS supports. New individuals moved into the CRS after two months and after four months. The provider received the transition incentives for the months with vacancies. The maximum provider transition incentive for each transitioning individual is six months for residential and four months for day.



## 4. Restructuring Incentive

Following STEP transitions that create vacancies in a CLA, FAVARH will update the CLA to be more accessible for individuals with greater medical needs currently on the DDS wait list.

Please note that providers may submit STEP Plans focused only on restructuring without any STEP transitions. For example, transforming a GSE program from subminimum wage to competitive wages for existing and future participants without anyone moving to other supports.



## 5. Scope Incentive

The Scope Incentive is based on the number of programs transformed. Ability Beyond's STEP Plan is eligible for the maximum Scope Incentive for three or more programs. They have both day and residential transitions and are transforming several settings including, a CLA to support individuals with more complex needs, a DSO to focus on employment-based services, and ending a subminimum wage arrangement.

Definitions for additional settings are available in the FAQs posted on the [Provider Gateway](#).

## Receiving Incentives

- Providers must have an approved STEP Plan to be eligible for STEP Incentives. They should communicate closely with DDS Regional staff about updates and changes to keep the STEP Plan up to date and approved.
- DDS pays STEP incentives as one-time payments. Providers must request these one-time payments through the usual process.
- If you already have an approved plan and have not received the initial \$7,500 scope incentive, please email [sarah.ullom-minnich@ct.gov](mailto:sarah.ullom-minnich@ct.gov) to inquire about the status. You will receive these payments through manual adjustment once your region has shared your approved plan with Central Office.
- Transitions are considered complete 60 days following the initial change in billing code for the individual. Providers may submit separate one-time requests for each individual when a transition is complete or wait to request multiple incentives together.
- For Placement Incentives calculated based on actual hours of support, work with your region on the calculations and request. Eligibility for these incentives starts immediately after the transition, even prior to the 60 days.