

Operations Memo 2025-01

TO: DDS Qualified Providers

FROM: Sean Bannon, Director, Operations Center

CC: Jordan Scheff, Commissioner; Elisa Velardo, Deputy Commissioner; Katie Rock-Burns, Chief of

Staff; Nicholas Jerard, CFO; Amber Carter, Director, Employment & Day Services Unit
Regional Directors; Private ARDs; Resource Administrators; The Alliance, The ARC CT

DATE: August 9, 2024

RE: Project SEARCH Funding Change

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) remains invested in the support and growth of Project SEARCH in Connecticut. DDS recognizes the outstanding outcomes for individuals who participate in these programs as they pursue competitive integrated employment.

Many agencies that provide Project SEARCH have expressed concerns about funding for these programs. These include questions about the varied approaches to payment, as well as current funding amounts not being enough to meet operational costs.

In response, DDS completed an internal assessment of Project SEARCH authorizations, to both streamline funding processes and ensure that programs are fiscally viable. It was determined that the most effective strategy to achieve these goals is to incorporate Project SEARCH into an existing Medicaid Waiver Service.

Effective September 1, 2024, DDS will use a prescribed and uniformed Medicaid rate of \$36.96/hour, for 30 hours per week per intern for the 9 month program. The rate was developed with the expectation of a minimum enrollment of 4 individuals per year, which is consistent with Project SEARCH best practices. The rate accounts for overhead expenditures pertaining to each program's operational needs, including the salaries of a teacher and skills instructor and other associated costs. This rate will negate the need for additional 1x funding requests.

Since Project SEARCH will be billed through the Medicaid Waiver, please be advised that individuals will need active HUSKY C *and* be enrolled on one of the three DDS Medicaid waivers before programming can begin.

Questions regarding the new funding structure can be directed to your agency's DDS resource manager.

