

WE NEED YOUR HELP! TAKE ACTION TODAY: APPENDIX K IS IN JEOPARDY!

Your immediate action is needed to ensure that the flexible supports and services allowed under Appendix K for people with developmental disabilities continue until 6 months after the federal Public Health Emergency (PHE), as approved by the federal government (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services/CMS). Appendix K is critical to the ability of providers and people who self-direct to come through the COVID-19 pandemic and successfully transition to full community supports

What is Appendix K, and why is it important?

- Appendix K is the document that allows for a number of key flexibilities in how DDA services are provided and billed for during the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Key flexibilities include (but are not limited to):
 - remote/virtual supports
 - providers allowed to bill for a day of service if at least one hour of meaningful day service is provided
 - day supports allowed to be provided in someone's home
 - additional 8 hours of funding provided for people who are spending daytime hours at home in residential settings
 - family members allowed to act as paid staff
- Thousands of people with developmental disabilities, their families, and community providers have relied on Appendix K to provide flexible supports during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- People with developmental disabilities are at a higher risk of serious illness and death from COVID-19, and as a result, have been far more cautious in returning to "pre-pandemic" community activities.
- Community providers are struggling to return to full operations due to a historic loss of direct support staff on the heels of the pandemic.

Why Is Action Needed?

- Maryland received approval from the federal government for Appendix K to be in place until 6 months after the end of the **federal** Public Health Emergency (PHE). Maryland's approval for Appendix K is thus expected to end on June 30, 2022.
- Last week, we learned that state leadership might decide to end Appendix K flexibilities far earlier than both expected and promised – possibly as soon as August 15, 2021.
- If Governor Hogan and MDH Secretary Dennis Schrader decide to end some or all of Appendix K sooner than approved by the federal government, thousands of people with developmental disabilities, their families, and community providers will be left in a crisis situation, without the flexibility needed to continue to safely transition from COVID-19 precautions to more normal activities and living.

TAKE ACTION ASAP!

Take all three actions listed below. Time is of the essence, so please take time to do so as soon as possible!

1) Write to Governor Larry Hogan

Use this [link](#) to write to the Governor through his website, and choose the Developmental Disabilities Administration as the message topic in the drop down box.

Ask Governor Hogan to continue Appendix K for DDA waiver services until 6 months after the federal Public Health Emergency, as approved in the State's request.

Explain how the loss of Appendix K flexibilities will affect you as a person with a disability / family member / provider. Consider including some of the following information:

Providers:

- Are you currently experiencing staff shortages that would make it difficult/impossible to continue to provide services to the people you are currently supporting if Appendix K flexibilities are removed ahead of what was planned? Can you give an example(s)?
- In what ways would the billing flexibilities permitted under Appendix K impact your ability to continue to support people if those flexibilities were lifted early?
- What obstacles or barriers are you experiencing in re-integration?
- What is the status of the direct support professionals' (DSPs) workforce capacity?
- Do you have immediate capacity or financial challenges that are creating barriers to service delivery?

People with Disabilities and Families:

- Are family members providing paid support as a caregiver? Why is it important they be allowed to continue providing support right now?
- Do you have concerns about direct support staff coming to your home? Does this affect your comfort being out and about, and (if so) in what ways?
- What flexibilities in Appendix K have, and continue to be, life savers for you?

2) Write to MD Department of Health Secretary Dennis Schrader

Email Secretary Schrader at Dennis.Schrader@maryland.gov, also urging him to support the continuation of Appendix K until 6 months after the end of the federal public health emergency. Explain how the loss of Appendix K flexibilities will affect you as a person with a disability / family member / provider.

3) Share this alert broadly through email and social media.

When you post on social media, please tag Governor Hogan and Secretary Schrader in your posts if possible, and use the following hashtags:

#KeepYourPromise
#AppendixKisKey
#PeoplewithDDMatter
#ReopenWithCare