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**LME-MCO Joint Communication Bulletin # JCB365**

Date: May 14, 2020

To: Local Management Entities-Managed Care Organizations (LME/MCOs)

From: Renee Rader, Assistant Director for Policy and Programs, DMH/DD/SAS  
Deb Goda, Behavioral Health Unit Manager, NC Medicaid

Subject: Department of Health and Human Services COVID-19 Service Guidance for IDD Supported Employment Services

This guidance is intended to help agencies that provide IDD supported employment services, make informed decisions about COVID-19 and minimize the risk of exposure to individuals served and staff. [Interim Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Guidance for Home and Community Based Care Providers including family members](#) should also be utilized while providing Supported Employment. Additionally, providers may reference [Interim Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Guidance on Personal Protective Equipment for Non-Medical Setting, including In-Home Service and Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Providers](#) for additional information regarding Personal Protective Equipment.

Retroactive to March 13, 2020, LME/MCOs may apply the same flexibilities to State-funded IDD Supported Employment and Long-Term Vocational Supports as those allowed under the NC Medicaid NC Innovations Appendix K to the extent that funding is available.

The following guidance applies to Medicaid Innovations, Medicaid 1915(b)(3) and State-funded Supported Employment and Long-Term Vocational Support services for the IDD populations:

- Tele-health (two-way real-time interactive audio and video, and/or telephonic) may be used to provide Supported Employment services to individuals to:
  - Support with navigating job search, applying for job, application follow-up, interview preparation, interview support (during interview), and assistance with pre-hire packages in person or electronically at companies continuing to hire during the

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- COVID-19 pandemic. Consideration should be taken regarding accessing the employment site and the individual's capacity to work independently. If short-term or long-term onsite support is needed, consideration should be made prior to supporting the individual with obtaining employment and further discussed with the individual and the person-centered planning team.
- Support can be provided in person or live two-way real-time interactive audio and visual interface, as deemed clinically appropriate and effective for the individual served. If in person services are not clinically appropriate or the individual refuses, attempts should be made to engage the individual in live two-way real-time interactive audio and visual interface. The following activities may be done via telehealth:
    - Support the individual to learn new job duties, monitor progress, and gain employer feedback on work performance.
    - Support the individual with communicating with current employer regarding working status.
    - Support to train on social distancing practices of the employer site and workplace safety related to COVID-19.
    - Support to apply for unemployment benefits as deemed appropriate for the individual served.
    - Support with fulfilling everyday service delivery functions related to their current place of employment.
    - Support the individual to enroll in classes or training programs that align with their employment/Career Profile goals.
    - Support the individual to link to resources that either help the individual stay employed or help the individual work towards employment/education goals.
    - Support the individual with finding the job, talking with the employer or preparing employee checklist for the individual, as well as recording verbal prompting instructions or videos for the individual served.

Supported employment services may be provided by the residential service provider.

Additional hours for supported employment will require prior authorization.

Information regarding Medicaid flexibilities, including Innovations Waiver and the TBI Waiver flexibilities, can be found at the following link:

<https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/about-us/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-and-nc-medicaid/covid-19-policy-flexibilities>

If you have any questions, please contact LaToya Chancey at [latoya.chancey@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:latoya.chancey@dhhs.nc.gov) or Kenneth Bausell at [kenneth.bausell@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:kenneth.bausell@dhhs.nc.gov).

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Previous bulletins can be accessed at: [www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/mhddsas/joint-communication-bulletins](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/mhddsas/joint-communication-bulletins)

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