



State of Vermont

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Agency of Human Services

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Designated Agencies and Specialized Service Agencies

FROM: Sarah Squirrel, Commissioner, Department of Mental Health
Monica Hutt, Commissioner, Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living

DATE: March 31, 2020

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Requests for Financial Relief

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) have been working to provide fiscal assistance and execute strategies within existing payment methods and available funding to DA's and SSA's. These Phase 1 efforts implemented to date are noted below:

Phase 1 Implemented week of March 16

- DMH & DAIL conducted an immediate assessment and communicated with DA/SSA's with the goal of ensuring fiscal solvency and stability and for providers to continue to deliver essential services and retain key health care staffing
- DMH & DAIL conducted twice weekly conference calls with DA/SSA leadership to understand provider needs and concerns
- DMH & DAIL implemented several key fiscal strategies utilizing existing payment methodologies within currently budgeted resources
- DMH & DAIL provided a comprehensive Guidance Document to DA's/SSA's
<https://mentalhealth.vermont.gov/sites/mhnew/files/documents/V.6%20DMH%20DDS%20Guidance%20Mar%2027%202020.pdf>

DMH and DAIL recognize that DA's and SSA's are grappling with additional fiscal pressures and revenue losses due to COVID-19 beyond the initial stabilization of their revenue and funding streams. Therefore, DMH and DAIL will be implementing Phase 2 as follows:

Phase 2: Implemented week of March 30th

- DA and SSA providers will submit documentation outlining fiscal pressures and/or revenue loss due to COVID-19 that are not remedied by the stabilization strategies outlined in Phase 1
- DMH and DAIL will develop a methodology to review and evaluate those requests
- Requests will be evaluated and prioritized based on available funds and coordinated with other financial relief efforts at AHS; considering both state and federal available dollars

Please submit this information by COB, Monday, April 6th, 2020. Documentation should be submitted electronically to:

Shannon Thompson, DMH Shannon.thompson@vermont.gov and
Jim Euber, DAIL jim.euber@vermont.gov

To ensure an efficient review, please include the following:

- Requested amount of financial relief and time period covered by the request, including details on how the amount was calculated.
- Narrative on what the financial relief will be utilized for.
- Brief narrative summary of practice changes and other activities underway in response to COVID-19 and relationship, if any, to the financial relief request.
- Data on service volume changes and data on organizational cost changes related to response to COVID-19 that support the financial relief request
- List of any other potential sources of funding currently available and potentially available in next 6-8 weeks (e.g. assets, grants, investments, endowments, etc.)
- A point of contact for questions and communications

This COVID-19 specific financial relief request option is one of several provider financial relief mechanisms that the Agency of Human Services is pursuing as part of a multi-phased plan with a track for different types of provider organizations. AHS will continue to assess the needs of all our providers and the various funding mechanisms that may become available to the State; AHS will respond accordingly with updated guidance and information about emerging opportunities.