



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Direct Care Worker Retention Bonus Payments

Open Date: October 14, 2022

Close Date: November 2, 2022



Department of Health Care Finance
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LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

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Section I: Funding Opportunity Description

A) Background

The mission of the Government of the District of Columbia's (DC) Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF) is to improve the health outcomes of District residents by providing access to comprehensive, cost effective, and quality healthcare services. As the single State Medicaid Agency, DHCF administers the Medicaid program and the State Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP). DHCF also administers the locally-funded Healthcare Alliance Program (Alliance). Through these programs, DHCF provides health care services to children, adults, elderly and persons with disabilities who have low-income. Over 300,000 District residents (more than forty percent of all residents) receive health care coverage through DHCF's Medicaid, CHIP, Alliance and Immigrant Children programs. DHCF strives to provide access to health care services in the most appropriate and cost-effective settings possible.

DHCF is committed to implement activities that enhance, expand, or strengthen Medicaid home and community-based services (HCBS) through increased federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) provided through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021. ARPA was signed into law on March 11, 2021 and Section 9817 of ARPA provides states with a temporary ten (10) percentage point increase to the FMAP for Medicaid HCBS. States must use funds equivalent to the amount of federal funds attributable to the increased FMAP to implement activities that enhance, expand, or strengthen Medicaid HCBS. The District is currently in the process of implementing the initiatives related to this section as described in the District's Initial Narrative and Spending Plan and its subsequent quarterly updates.

The District held multiple meetings to provide public notice and awareness of the ARPA Section 9817 funding opportunity before submission of its Initial Narrative and Spending Plan to CMS on July 12, 2021. In the lead up to the Initial Narrative and Spending Plan, the District presented on the funding opportunity and solicited stakeholder input at public hearings offered on different dates and times to maximize opportunity for public input. In addition to testimony presented during DDS and DHCF budget oversight hearings in June, the District also heard stakeholder feedback during 5 separate public hearings and provided multiple other opportunities for public comment. The District has kept a website on ARPA funding updated at <https://dhcf.dc.gov/page/arpa-hcbs-planning> and provides quarterly updates to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), which are posted publicly on the website.

B) Program Description

Through this RFA, the District will reimburse HCBS providers up to \$1,500 for annual retention bonuses paid to direct care workers remaining in full-time service. In accordance with the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Section 9817, the District shall fund up to two retention

bonus payments per eligible direct care worker for the covered period regardless of employing HCBS provider.

The Direct Care Worker Retention Bonus Payments are intended to maintain the pool of qualified staff available to DC Medicaid HCBS providers and ensure continuity of care for existing and future HCBS program participants by funding worker bonuses through disbursements to DC Medicaid HCBS providers for payment of retention bonuses to certified direct care staff. The grant will be awarded to qualifying DC Medicaid enrolled HCBS providers and will fund retention bonus payments to eligible Direct Care Workers who complete up to 2 continuous 12-month periods of continuous full-time employment, as defined by the Department of Health (a minimum of 32 hours per week). Each eligible Direct Care Worker is eligible for a maximum of 2 \$1,500 retention bonus payments for each continuous period of 12 months of full-time employment between January 27, 2020 and September 30, 2022. The Direct Care Worker must still be employed at your agency as of the date the grant application package is received by DHCF. Providers are required to pay bonuses to workers no later than December 31, 2022.

To be eligible for payment, HCBS providers will be required to attest and, upon request, demonstrate that funds received under this initiative were used or will be used to fund direct care worker retention payments to eligible workers. Providers must be able to demonstrate the grant award is used, in its entirety, to fund retention bonus payments to direct care worker staff. In the event a direct care worker (with an assigned NPI or otherwise identified) is employed or was employed by multiple provider agencies that are applying for bonus funds, the District will assign the direct care worker to a single agency based on hours worked over the months or years in question, or based on the date the first application is received by DHCF.

C) Program Benefits

The Direct Care Worker Retention Bonus Payments will benefit DHCF beneficiaries by ensuring that experienced workers stay in the program to deliver services. District residents who require HCBS services thus need a workforce of sufficient quantity and quality to deliver the services. This program is intended to keep workers in the HCBS program by increasing the financial incentive for staying.

D) Purpose of RFA

The purpose of this RFA is to solicit applications from qualified organizations to reimburse grantees for Retention Bonus Payments paid to eligible Direct Care Workers employed for at least one (1) and up to two (2) consecutive 12-month periods between January 27, 2020 and September 30, 2022 who are still employed by a qualified HCBS provider.

E) Key Dates and Information

RFA release	Friday, October 14, 2022
Pre-application meeting	Wednesday, October 19, 2022 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. WebEx: https://dcnet.webex.com/dcnet/j.php?MTID=m6b57877d13d96802b2382159a2b3a1b4
Deadline to submit written questions to Taylor Woods, taylor.woods2@dc.gov .	Friday, October 21, 2022 By 4:00 p.m., Eastern
Answers to questions available at https://dhcf.dc.gov/page/dhcf-grant-opportunities	On or before Tuesday, October 25, 2022
Application due	Wednesday, November 2, 2022 By 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.
Award announcement (expected)	Monday, November 21, 2022
Grant start and end dates	The performance period for eligible bonus payments is January 27, 2020 to September 30, 2022. Providers are expected to provide bonuses to their staff no later than December 31, 2022

Section II: Award Information

The total amount of funds available across the years of the Direct Care Worker Retention Bonus Program is up to seventeen million, seven hundred thousand dollars (\$17,700,000.00). DHCF will award as many grants as applicants who qualify in the amount of no more than \$17,700,000.00 total across all applicants and all years.

The grant will reimburse qualified applicants for up to two (2) retention bonus payments to each qualified direct care worker for each consecutive 12-month period of employment with the same HCBS provider during the grant performance period January 27, 2020 to September 30, 2022. The Direct Care Worker must still be employed at your agency as of the date the complete and timely application is received by DHCF. Providers are required to pay bonuses to eligible direct care workers no later than December 31, 2022.

The grant award for each grantee will be determined by calculating the number of consecutive 12-month time periods every eligible Direct Care Worker served, times \$1,500.00 per each 12-month period by workers at a HCBS provider. HCBS providers may be eligible for up to a \$3,000.00 payment per direct care worker, if they employed a direct care worker full-time for two consecutive 12-month periods within the performance period.

HCBS providers can include direct care workers who are employed on a part-time basis (less than 32 hours per week) on the basis that DHCF will recognize full-time equivalents (FTEs) in addition to staff who are, individually, employed on a full-time basis as long as all other criteria are met. The grant award for each grantee will be \$750.00 per eligible part-time direct care worker (less than 32 hours a week). HCBS providers may be eligible for up to a \$1,500.00 payment per direct care worker, if they employed a direct care worker part-time for two consecutive 12-month periods within the performance period.

The District will reimburse HCBS providers for the costs associated with the staff retention payments they made or will make. Providers must be able to demonstrate the grant award is used, in its entirety, to fund retention bonus payments to direct care worker staff. In the event a direct care worker (with an assigned NPI or otherwise identified) is employed or was employed by multiple provider agencies that are applying for bonus funds, the District will assign the direct care worker to a single agency based on hours worked over the months or years in question, or based on the date the first application is received by DHCF.

Bonuses for Participant Directed Workers (PDW) are not covered in this RFA, DHCF will use another mechanism to fund bonuses.

There is a chance that some Direct Care Workers hired between January 2, 2020 and April 1, 2021 will be eligible for both a Retention Bonus Payment and a Recruitment and Conversion Bonus Payment. The Recruitment and Conversion Bonus payment will be solicited in a separate RFA.

Section III: Eligibility Information

A) Qualified Organization

Applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements to apply for this grant:

1. Have the authority to enter into an agreement with DHCF and be in compliance with applicable District of Columbia laws and regulations.
2. Be a registered organization in good standing with the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA), Corporation Division, the Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR), the Department of Employment Services (DOES), and the Internal Revenue

Service (IRS), and be able to demonstrate Clean Hands certification, by both DCRA and OTR, at the time of application.

3. Be a DC Medicaid-enrolled provider organization that provides HCBS services through the following HCBS Medicaid provider types and corresponding eligible direct care workers:
 - i. Home Health Agency – Personal Care Aides; Home Health Aides
 - ii. Adult Day Health Providers – Personal Care Aides employed as Direct Care Support staff
 - iii. Rehabilitation: Behavioral Health (e.g. Mental Health Rehabilitation Services; Adult Substance Use Rehabilitation Services) – Certified Peer Specialists
 - iv. Supported Employment Providers - Certified Peer Specialists
 - v. Other 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Waiver Providers – Homemaker; Chore Aides; Direct Support Professionals in Residential Habilitation, Day and Employment Services, Assisted Living Facilities, Supported Living, Host Home settings or providing In-Home Supports, and Respite.
4. Employ eligible Direct Care Workers. Direct Care Workers are countable for purposes of this grant initiative if they:
 - i. Provide direct care services, as defined in item 3 above, to DC Medicaid beneficiaries for at least fifty percent (50%) of their work hours at the qualified organization;
 - ii. Be reimbursed at an hourly wage that is at or near the District of Columbia Living Wage or the District of Columbia Minimum Wage;
 - iii. Have a salary/wage which is reimbursed by a DC Medicaid service with a rate model that incorporates the District of Columbia Living Wage or District of Columbia minimum wage;
 - iv. Have been continuously employed on a full-time basis (a minimum of 32 hours per week) during at least one (1) and up to two (2) 12-month periods between January 27, 2020 and September 30, 2022;
 - a. HCBS providers can include direct care workers who are employed on a part-time basis (less than 32 hours per week) on the basis that DHCF will recognize full-time equivalents (FTEs) in addition to staff who are individually employed on a full-time basis as long as all other criteria are met.
 - v. Still be employed by the qualifying organization as of the date a timely and complete grant application is received by DHCF from the qualified organization with one exception defined in 4-v-a.
 - a. If the provider has paid a retention bonus to an employee that is no longer employed as of the date of grant submission, the provider may still

receive grant funds associated with the costs of that bonus if they are able to submit information on/demonstrate the following:

- 1) Identifying information (NPI, Other information) for the employee;
- 2) The period of employment.

vi. Are not a temporary or contracted employee.

B) Administrative Criteria

To be considered for review and funding, applications shall meet all of the administrative criteria listed below. **Failure to meet any one of the following criteria may mean the application is ineligible for further review and award.**

1. The application proposal format conforms to the "Proposal Format and Content" listed in Section IV.C of the RFA including filled, signed, and dated (as indicated) **Attachments A, B, C and D.**
2. The application proposal must consist of two documents:
 - i. The application proposal must be formatted on 8 ½ by 11-inch paper, double-spaced, using 12-point type with a minimum of one-inch margins, with all pages numbered. The applicant shall submit their proposal application electronically. The electronic copy must be submitted in .PDF format and must include RFA number, project name, items a., b., c., and d. outlined in Section IV.C. of the RFA and **Attachments A - C.** The title of the electronic application document must include the following information using the format provided:

"ProviderName-DCMedicaidID-RFANumber-ApplicationDate(mmddyy)".
For example, "ProviderHCBS-01234567-RFA#DHCF-RETENTION-2023-101422".
 - ii. **Attachment D** must be submitted in Excel format using the template provided. The title of the electronic application document must include the following information using the format provided:

"ProviderName-DCMedicaidID-RFANumber-ApplicationDate(mmddyy)".
For example, "ProviderHCBS-01234567-RFA#DHCF-RETENTION-2023-101422".
3. The application must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m., Eastern time by the deadline date of Wednesday, November 2, 2022 to DHCF c/o Taylor Woods, taylor.woods2@dc.gov. The subject of the email must include the applicant's name and the title of the RFA.

C) Privacy and Security

Grantee shall ensure the transmission of information about employment and health services through this grant protect worker and patient privacy.

D) Insurance

Where applicable, the applicant shall provide the name of all of its insurance carriers and the type of insurance provided (e.g., general liability insurance carrier, automobile insurance carrier, workers' compensation carrier, fidelity bond holder, cybersecurity liability).

E) Compliance with Tax Obligations

Prior to execution of a grant agreement as a result of this RFA, a recipient must be in compliance with tax laws and regulations.

1. If applicable, the tax exemption affirmation letter is the IRS's determination letter of non-profit status. If this letter is not available, then the Applicant should provide its most recent IRS Form 990 tax return, if one was submitted. If no return has yet been filed, the organization can submit its application for tax-exempt status. If the group has a supporting organization with an IRS tax-exempt status determination, then that organization's tax exemption affirmation letter should also be submitted.
2. The Applicant shall comply, where applicable, with any District licensing requirements.

F) Statement of Certification

Applicant shall submit a Statement of Certification (see **Attachment A**), signed by the duly authorized officer of the applicant organization, the truth of which is sworn or attested to by the applicant.

G) Federal Assurances

Applicant shall submit a Federal Assurances Certification (see **Attachment B**), signed by the duly authorized officer of the applicant organization, the truth of which is sworn or attested to by the applicant.

H) Certificate of Good Standing

Applicant and, if applicable, sub-grantee(s) shall represent that they are duly organized, validly existing, and in good standing under the laws of the jurisdiction they are organized or licensed, and they, their employees, agents, sub-grantees, representatives and members of their workforce are licensed and in good standing with the applicable agency, board, or governing body to perform their obligations. They shall also represent that they, their employees, agents, sub-grantees, representatives, and members of their workforce are in good standing with the District of Columbia, that they, their employees, agents, subcontractors, representatives and members of their workforce will submit a Certificate of Good Standing from the District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, and that they, their employees,

agents, sub-grantees, representatives, and members of their workforce have not been debarred from being employed as a Grantee by the federal government, the Government of the District of Columbia, or any government entity.

I) RFA Terms and Conditions

The terms and conditions of this RFA are as follows:

1. Funding for this award is contingent on availability of funds. The RFA does not commit DHCF to make an award;
2. DHCF reserves the right to accept or deny any or all applications if DHCF determines it is in the best interest of District to do so. DHCF shall notify the applicant if it rejects that applicant's proposal. DHCF may suspend or terminate an outstanding RFA pursuant to its own grant making rule(s) or an applicable federal regulation or requirement;
3. DHCF reserves the right to issue addenda and/or amendments subsequent to the issuance of the RFA, or to rescind the RFA;
4. DHCF shall not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of applications in response to the RFA. Applicant agrees that all costs incurred in developing the application are the applicant's sole responsibility;
5. DHCF may conduct pre-award on-site visits to verify information submitted in the application and to determine if the applicant's facilities are appropriate for the services intended;
6. DHCF may enter into negotiations with an applicant and adopt a firm funding amount or other revision of the applicant's proposal that may result from negotiations;
7. Any and all data requested by DHCF and provided during the grant term shall be made available in a format as requested and/or approved by DHCF;
8. If there are any conflicts between the terms and conditions of the RFA and any applicable federal or local law or regulation, or any ambiguity related thereto, then the provisions of the applicable law or regulation shall control and it shall be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance; and
9. Awardee will be required to participate in any DHCF-sponsored training related to this award.

J) Financial Management and System of Internal Controls

If selected for funding, the applicant must:

1. Establish and maintain effective internal control over the Federal award that provides reasonable assurance that the non-Federal entity is managing the Federal award in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions

of the federal award. These internal controls should be in compliance with guidance in the “Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government” issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and the “Internal Control Integrated Framework” issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO);

2. Comply with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal awards;
3. Evaluate and monitor the nonfederal entity’s compliance with statute, regulations and the terms and conditions of the Federal awards; and
4. Take prompt action when instances of noncompliance are identified including noncompliance identified in audit findings.

K) Funding Restrictions

Any award associated with this RFA is limited to the availability of funds during the duration of ARPA Section 9817 funding and the authority to appropriate those funds. Spending is restricted to line items in the approved budget in order to fulfill the requirements of the approved project plan.

Grant award money cannot be used for the following:

1. Duplication of services immediately available through city, or federal government;
2. Market research, advertising (unless public service related to grant program) or other promotional expenses; or
3. Unreasonable expenditures will not be reimbursed.
4. Any purpose other than funding or supporting the costs of retention bonus payments.

Section IV: Application and Submission Information

A) Pre-Application Conference

A pre-application conference is scheduled for *Wednesday, October 19, 2022 from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. online using the Webex program. Link:*

<https://dcnet.webex.com/dcnet/j.php?MTID=m6b57877d13d96802b2382159a2b3a1b4>

B) Application Delivery

The applicant shall submit **Attachment D** in excel format. All other application materials for the proposal shall be submitted in one file in .PDF format.

The application must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m., Eastern time by the deadline date of Wednesday, November 2, 2022 to DHCF c/o Taylor Woods, taylor.woods2@dc.gov.

Applications must be submitted in their entirety, including any supplemental documents as indicated in Section IV.C.

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted. Any additions or deletions to an application will not be accepted after the deadline.

C) Application Requirements

The applicant shall prepare a response to this RFA with the following content and in the format described:

- a. Table of Contents
- b. Program Narrative
- c. Applicant Qualifications
- d. Proposed Grant Amount and Justification
- e. Attachments
 - Attachment A: Signed Statement of Certification
 - Attachment B: Signed Federal Assurances
 - Attachment C: Application and Attestation
 - Attachment D: Health Care Worker List

Descriptions of each response element is detailed below:

a. Table of Contents

b. Program Narrative

The narrative section (limited to 1 page) should describe the applicant's approach to implementing its direct care worker recruitment bonus program.

c. Applicant Qualifications

Provide a short (no more than 2 pages) description of your systems capability, tools, and means to distribute these funds to workers. Please describe how the payments will be made or were made to current eligible direct care workers. This description should include the description of the payment method (check, direct deposit, VenMo, etc.) you made or will make to eligible direct care workers and include the ways you will contact workers eligible for grants via in-person conversations, text message, or email; the workers responsible for doing this at your agency; and the timeline for distributing funds to workers.

d. Proposed Grant Amount and Justification

The applicant must provide a short narrative justification (no more than 1 page) for the grant amount. The narrative justification should clearly state how the applicant arrived at the grant amount. The applicant must provide a list of eligible direct care workers

who have or will receive a retention bonus payment, in the format and using the instructions outlined in **Attachment D**. The narrative must reference and align with the list of eligible workers provided in **Attachment D**.

e. Attachments

Fillable PDF versions of the Certifications (**Attachment A**), Federal Assurances (**Attachment B**), Application and Attestation (**Attachment C**), and Health Care Worker List (**Attachment D**). Forms are available as part of the application packet published with this RFA. All attachments shall be completed and included in the applicant's response.

Section V: Application and Review Information

A) Review and Selection

Submitted applications will be screened for completeness. The initial review criteria are:

1. Is the applicant a qualified organization as described in Section III A?
2. Does the application request not exceed the total amount of funds available as specified Section II?
3. Was the application received on time and delivered in the format described in Section IV, subsection B?
4. Was the application submitted with all required elements outlined in section IV, subsection C of the RFA document?

Applications that satisfy all the above criteria will be eligible for the grant award. Qualified applicants will be awarded funding on a first come, first serve basis until the full grant amount described in Section II is exhausted. Applications that do not meet any one of the above requirements may be disqualified.

In the event an eligible health care worker is employed or was employed by multiple provider agencies that are applying for incentive funds, the District will assign the eligible employee to a single agency based on the date and time an application is received by DHCF.

The final decision to fund an application rests with the DHCF Office of the Director.

B) Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

The anticipated announcement date is Monday, November 22, 2022. The anticipated date of award is November 29, 2022. Both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing of the selection decision prior to the award date.

Section VI: Award Information

A) Award Notices

DHCF will provide the successful applicant(s) with a Notice of Grant Agreement (NOGA). The NOGA(s) shall be signed and returned to DHCF within 10 business days. Unsuccessful applications will be notified in writing. Grant proceeds will only be paid after receipt of the signed NOGA.

B) Programmatic, Administrative, and National Policy Requirements

The Grantee will be held to strict milestones and requirements in order to receive the full amount of the grant, including the requirement that the funds be distributed before December 31, 2022.

C) Reporting

The grantee will be required to submit an interim financial report within thirty (30) calendar days after the execution of the grant award and a final financial report within thirty (30) calendar days after the deadline for making all bonus payments to eligible direct care workers (December 31, 2022). The interim and final financial reports will include detailed accounting of all grant expenditures under this grant award including documentation of payments to individual eligible direct care workers. Awardees will be given a template with which to comply with the reporting requirements above.

Recipients of the grant will be required to provide any additional information upon request. This could include auditable financial statements -and more. DHCF reserves the right to require additional reporting prior to, and after, award of any grant. Grant applicants are expected to complete the report listed above on time. Failure to meet these requirements may result in withholding of grant funds and/or termination of the grant due to non-performance or lack of capacity.

D) Payment

Upon award, DHCF shall provide funding to the Grantee(s) according to the terms outlined in the grant agreement which will include a Fund Disbursement Schedule and Terms. All payments associated with this grant will be made through the MMIS system through financial transactions, unless the applicant requests otherwise.

Section VII: DC Agency Contacts

For additional information regarding this RFA, please contact Taylor Woods, Special Projects Officer, Health Care Policy and Research Administration, via email at taylor.woods2@dc.gov or by phone at (202) 442-9048.

Section VIII: Attachments

Fillable PDF versions of all the attachments are available as part of the application packet published with this RFA. All attachments shall be completed and included in the applicant's response.

Attachments included in the separate PDF available as part of the application packet published with this RFA include:

- A) Certifications**
- B) Federal Assurances**
- C) Application and Attestation Form**
- D) Health Care Worker List**