



Creating Opportunities for Happy Lives

November 19, 2021

Dear EEDA Staff,

The Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) is pleased to announce essential investments in the Direct Support workforce of service providers. OPWDD is making these needed investments to help immediately address the workforce shortage our service system currently faces. The new investments include:

Vaccination Incentive Payment

The Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) has guaranteed the following payments for all DSP/200 Code staff (including self-direction) employed by an eligible, OPWDD-certified provider who have **completed the COVID-19 vaccination** (both doses of Pfizer or Moderna or a single dose of Johnson & Johnson/Janssen) regimen as of the first payroll ending on or after December 1, 2021. These guidelines have been dictated by OPWDD.

To find a vaccine location, please visit: www.vaccines.gov

Payments will be available as follows:

- A payment of \$500 per employee who is employed on a full-time basis
- A payment of \$250 per employee who is employed at least, but not less than 20 hours/week
- A payment of \$125 for part-time employees who are employed less than 20 hours/week

A distribution date for these payments has not yet been provided by OPWDD.

Workforce Investments

OPWDD has also announced essential investments in the direct support workforce of our service providers. OPWDD is making these needed investments to help immediately address the workforce shortage our service system currently faces. The new investments include:

- **Employee service during the COVID emergency:** A payment of \$1,000 per full-time employee who served in the capacity of a DSP/200 code staff for at least 90 days within the period of March 17, 2020 and September 1, 2021 and is **still employed by the provider**. Part-time employees will receive a prorated share.
- **Longevity and retention payment:** An additional payment will be forthcoming to qualified workers who are employed by an eligible OPWDD provider in a DSP/200 code capacity. We are awaiting further details from OPWDD regarding eligibility, payment amount, and distribution date.

The vaccination incentive payments and the workforce investments will be available to DSPs hired by individuals self-directing their services.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your supervisor and they will secure an answer.

These are very challenging times, and much of what confronts us remains outside of our control. However, we remain strong through the sense of community that has historically defined us and the strength of our staff and leadership. Please be assured that you have our support and confidence.



Lisa Meyer Fertal
CEO