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November 16, 2020

Dear Health Authority Representatives:

On April 1, 2020, the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) sent a letter to health authorities (HAs) outlining temporary policy amendments for the Choice in Supports for Independent Living (CSIL) program, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. These temporary policy amendments were then extended to expire on December 31, 2020. Given the ongoing pandemic and the challenges that CSIL clients continue to experience in maintaining continuity of care and safety, the Ministry is extending these temporary policy amendments through to July 1, 2021. Please inform all CSIL clients of this change, as soon as possible.

The Ministry has worked with the HAs to allow exceptions to CSIL policy in the [Home and Community Policy Manual \(HCCPM\)](#) and the [CSIL Expense Guidelines](#) on a time-limited basis, during COVID-19 and at the Ministry's discretion. All exceptions must be reported to HA case managers for monitoring purposes. To receive additional funding from HAs, CSIL clients must provide adequate justification and supporting evidence of need. Time-limited exceptions that pertain to CSIL are as follows:

- In the current [CSIL Expense Guidelines](#), sick pay is listed as an optional expense at 2%-3% per year, to a maximum of five days per year. This pay is required to be expensed from the overall funding that is provided to CSIL employers
Exception to Policy: HAs to allow a time-limited exception and permit CSIL employers to allocate surplus funding towards two weeks of pay for CSIL employees required to self-quarantine. If a CSIL employer lacks adequate surplus to cover the payroll burden, the HAs will provide temporary financial relief on a case by case basis, with adequate justification and supporting documentation from CSIL employers.

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- Current HCC policy: CSIL employers are responsible for creating a respite plan and a backup service plan to ensure care needs are met on a continuous basis and HAs may authorize home support services from an agency in exceptional circumstances, such as short-term acute illness, to augment CSIL funding.
Exception to Policy: The Ministry allows HAs to temporarily suspend the requirement to obtain prior approval to use agencies for emergency staffing.
- Current Home and Community Care (HCC) policy states that “an immediate family member cannot be paid to provide care for a client unless an exception is approved by the HA.”
Exception to Policy: The Ministry allows CSIL Employers to temporarily pay immediate family members (including an immediate family member who has been appointed power of attorney or representative of the CSIL employer) to provide care, without the requirement to obtain prior approval, if their supply of regular staff and back up care plan staff has been impacted.
This is recommended for a time-limited duration (3 months), during the COVID-19 outbreak. CSIL employers must continue to inform their case managers of any changes in their care, including the hiring of immediate family members
- *CSIL Expense Guidelines* allow employees to expense \$20-\$40 per month for supplies required for universal precautions and safety such as disposable gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer.
Exception: CSIL clients will temporarily be permitted to expense greater than \$40 per month towards universal precautions and safety. If needed, HAs will provide additional funding for gloves, masks and hand sanitizer on a case by case basis, to help preserve the health care supply chain of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), with adequate justification provided by CSIL employers.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,



Teri Collins
Assistant Deputy Minister
Health Services Division