



Far Northern Regional Center

Providing services and supports that allow persons with developmental disabilities to live productive and valued lives

Melissa Gruhler
Executive Director

April 2020

Dear Service Providers,

Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) received the attached State of Emergency (SOE) Declaration from the Department of Developmental Services on March 12, 2020. As a result, FNRC is authorized to pay service providers for increased absences that are the direct result of the COVID-19 outbreak in California.

FNRC will pay State of Emergency (SOE) billings for affected service providers experiencing increased absences in all counties for the month of **April 2020**. Updated information for future service month(s) will be provided later.

Providers can bill for absences related to the SOE using the guidelines in this memo. Providers must keep clear and complete supporting documentation for any absences billed under the SOE in the event of an audit by FNRC, state, or federal authorities.

Residential Care Facility Providers (service codes 096, 113, 114, 904, 905, 910, 915, 920, 930, 935):

- Bill for absences due to the SOE as days the client resided in the facility.

Day Programs, Supported Employment, Community Integration and Work Activity Programs (service codes 055, 094, 505, 510, 515, 525, 950, 952 and 954) and Transportation Providers (service codes 875, 880, 882, 885, 890, and 895):

Follow these steps to bill for SOE related absences:

1. Calculate the actual attendance for the month.
2. Calculate the absences in the month that are due to the SOE.
3. Calculate the total absences for the 12-month period from March 1, 2019 through February 29, 2020.
4. Divide the 12-month total absences (from Step 3) by 12. This provides the average monthly absences for this 12-month period.
5. Take the absences due to the SOE (from Step 2) and subtract the average monthly absences from March 1, 2019 through February 29, 2020 (from Step 4). The difference is the absence amount that you may bill for (it must be rounded to the nearest whole number and cannot be negative).
6. Bill for the actual attendance for the month (from Step 1) plus the difference between the absences due to the SOE the average monthly absences during March 1, 2019 through February 29, 2020 (Step 5).

www.farnorthernrc.org

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REGIONAL OFFICES in: Lake Almanor, Mount Shasta and Yreka

Follow these steps to bill for a client's related absences (continued):

The objective is to bill only for absences in excess of the average number of absences normally experienced in a given month.

Early Start Vendors, including Behavioral Services, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, and/or Occupational Therapy (service code 116). Nursing, Infant Development Programs, and Individual and Family Training programs (Service Code 102).

- Bill the average monthly billable number of hours for the client. Calculate the average monthly billable number of hours from March 1, 2019 through February 29, 2020 by calculating the total number of billable hours for that period and dividing by 12.
- For service codes 025, 048, 612, 613, 615, 616, 620, 625 and 680, the Parental Verification Form should include the statement "Average monthly billable hours per SOE declaration."

Supported Living Service, Independent Living and Personal Assistance Services (service codes 894, 896, 520 and 062):

- Bill the average monthly billable number of hours for each client. Calculate the average monthly billable number of hours from March 1, 2019 through February 29, 2020 by calculating the total number of billable hours for that period and dividing by 12.

Additional Program Support (service codes 062, 109, 110 and 111):

- In the event that additional hours were needed to assist clients not attending programs as a direct result of the SOE, please contact the Service Coordinator for authorization.

Respite (service codes 862 and 864) and all other providers (all other service codes not listed above):

- If client services were cancelled due to the SOE, bill the average monthly billable number of hours for each client. Calculate the average monthly billable number of hours from March 1, 2019 through February 29, 2020 by calculating the total number of billable hours for that period and dividing by 12.
- If additional services are needed due to the SOE, please contact the Service Coordinator to request authorization. Bill for the actual service hours provided.

Thank you for your efforts during difficult times. If you have any questions on how to bill, please contact me for assistance.

Michael Mintline
Chief Financial Officer
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DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

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March 12, 2020

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: STATE OF EMERGENCY STATEWIDE

On March 4, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency for California, as a result of the global COVID-19 outbreak that began in December 2019. The State of California has been working in close collaboration with the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), with the United States Health and Human Services Agency, and with local health departments since December 2019, to monitor and plan for the potential spread of COVID-19 to the United States.

The Governor's proclamation states, in part, that experts anticipate that while a high percentage of individuals affected by COVID-19 will experience mild flu-like symptoms, some will have more serious symptoms and require hospitalization, particularly individuals who are elderly or already have underlying chronic health conditions. It is imperative to prepare for and respond to suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases in California, to implement measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and to prepare to respond to an increasing number of individuals requiring medical care.

As a result of the State of Emergency declared for California, the Department of Developmental Services (Department) is authorizing, pursuant to Title 17, California Code of Regulations section 54326(a)(11), regional centers to pay vendors for absences that are the direct result of the COVID-19 outbreak in California. The applicable regulation section reads as follows:

"[All vendors shall...] Not bill for consumer absences for nonresidential services. The Department shall authorize payment for absences which are the direct result of situations and/or occurrences for which a State of Emergency has been declared by the Governor. If payment for absences due to a State of Emergency is authorized by the Department, the vendor shall bill only for absences in excess of the average number of absences experienced by the vendor during the 12-month period prior to the month in which the disaster occurred."

"Building Partnerships, Supporting Choices"

Regional Center Executive Directors
March 12, 2020
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If you have questions about this correspondence, please contact me at ernie.cruz@dds.ca.gov
or (916) 838-8960.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

ERNIE CRUZ
Assistant Deputy Director
Office of Community Operations

cc: Regional Center Administrators
Regional Center Directors of Consumer Services
Regional Center Community Services Directors
Association of Regional Center Agencies