

FAQs for Supported Employment and Employment Assistance in the Medically Dependent Children Program

Q: Why are employment assistance (EA) and supported employment (SE) offered in the Medically Dependent Children Program (MDCP)?

A: Senate Bill (S.B.) 45, passed by the 83rd Texas Legislature, requires that all Medicaid waivers offer EA and SE.

Q: Is providing SE/EA optional for Home and Community Support Services Agencies (HCSSAs)?

A: All HCSSAs contracted to provide MDCP must provide SE/EA to individuals who receive MDCP services.

Q: Does the HCSSA actually provide the EA?

A: Yes, the HCSSA service provider provides EA if the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) does not accept the individual. They also provide it while the individual is waiting to find out if DARS will accept them. **Q: When the presentation references “service provider,” do you mean a home health agency?**

A: The presentation is referring to the HCSSA employee or sub-contractor that is providing SE/EA services or to the employee working for a consumer-directed employer using the Consumer Directed Services (CDS) option of service delivery who is providing SE/EA services.

Q: When the HCSSA is providing SE/EA would the service provider be a registered nurse, licensed vocational nurse, a person with a master’s degree in social work, an attendant or some other job title? What are the qualifications for this person?

A: The HCSSA provides this service using a service provider with the qualifications found in the Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapter 51, [Rule §51.485](#), Service Provider Qualifications for Providing Employment Assistance and Supported Employment.

Q: Who authorizes the HCSSA to provide EA or SE?

A: The DADS case manager authorizes the service on Form 2430, Employment Assistance and Supported Employment Authorization.

Q: If the HCSSA uses a contractor, will their MDCP contract have to be amended?

A: No, you do not need to amend your contract if you use a contractor.

Q: Must individuals start at DARS before receiving EA or SE from us as the MDCP provider?

A: Individuals can receive waiver-provided EA through the HCSSA provider until DARS has developed an individualized plan for employment (IPE) and the individual has signed the document. The DADS case manager is responsible for developing the MDCP individual plan of care (IPC) which authorizes EA and SE services to be provided by the HCSSA agency or, in the case of the CDS option, the CDS employer. The DADS case manager is responsible for coordinating the end date of the service by the HCSSA or CDS employer with the begin date of the service through DARS.

Q: Who determines or calculates the maximum amount offered with the earned income allowed?

A: The DADS case manager.

Q: What Medicaid waiver programs have SE/EA in their service array?

A: All of the DADS waiver programs -- MDCP, Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS), Deaf Blind with Multiple Disabilities (DBMD), Home and Community-based Services (HCS) and Texas Home Living (TxHmL) -- provide SE/EA services.

Q: What age does the individual have to be to receive SE/EA through the MDCP waiver?

A: To qualify for SE/EA through MDCP, the individual must be 18-20 years old.

Q: If a client already has graduated, will DARS and the school district assist with the employment process?

A: DARS may assist; however, once the individual graduates from high school, the school district has no more responsibility for assisting with the employment services and supports.

Q: The presentation indicated that SE/EA could not be provided “simultaneously” while receiving respite or flexible family support. Does this mean the individual can’t have SE/EA authorized if they are receiving respite or flexible family support services?

A: No, the individual can be authorized to receive SE/EA, respite and flexible family support services during the same time frame. However, when the program provider is actually providing the SE/EA service, the respite or flexible family support attendant cannot also be providing services at the same time. The services cannot overlap when looking at the start time and end time of each service.

Q: Does the HCSSA work with DARS or the DADS case manager when providing SE/EA?

A: The HCSSA will work with the DADS case manager.

Q: If the DARS vocational rehabilitation counselor determines that their agency is not the appropriate resource to meet the individual's needs, where is the documentation of this decision kept?

A: The DADS case manager and would keep this documentation in the individual's case file. The HCSSA or CDS employer receives the MDCP service authorization to provide EA or SE through the signed IPC, just as with flexible family support or respite services.

Q: The presentation indicated that the service provider for EA and SE would need 2 years of paid or unpaid experience providing services to people with disabilities. What kind of services would they need experience providing?

A: Experience providing services to people with disabilities could include such areas of work as day habilitation, attendant services, educational services, social work, case management and nursing services.

Q: In the presentation, there is a long list of available training. Does the program provider have to take all of the trainings listed?

A: No, the trainings listed in the presentation are not required. The resources are provided to assist interested CDS employers and HCSSAs develop employment services skills for their service providers. Because this is a new service for the MDCP waiver, DADS recognizes that some employers may want to explore training options to develop employment services skills within their workforce.

Q: We are located in a rural area where the unemployment rate is quiet high and there are few places to work. How long would the HCSSA be expected to help find the individual employment?

A: DADS recognizes that employment opportunities vary greatly around the state. Employment assistance initially will be authorized for a minimum of 10 hours so that an individual's preferences and skills can be thoroughly assessed and the specific training needs and employment goals can be agreed upon. Additional EA hours often will be required, and there is no service authorization limit for hours of service. However, there is a maximum of 180 days that may be authorized by the DADS case manager.

Q: The presentation indicates that the individual may need training to help resolve deficiencies found when identifying an individual's employment preferences, job skills, and requirements for a work setting and work conditions. The presentation also mentions training on viable coping strategies. What is an example of training and who will conduct the training?

A: The service provider will conduct the individualized training when they identify the individual's needs. For example, if an individual has poor interviewing skills, the service

provider would work on the individual's interviewing skills. If the individual has difficulty concentrating or remaining calm in a loud, busy environment, but the individual's job choice requires working at times in such conditions, the service provider would explore possible coping skills that they could use within the specific job situation to help the individual stay focused and/or calm.

Q: Where are the rates posted for SE/EA provided under the agency option? The only rate on the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) website is \$25.27 for Consumer Directed Services option.

A: The rates for SE/EA are:

- Employment Assistance - \$25.27 per hour
- Supported Employment - \$25.27 per hour

The rates will be added to the MDCP HHSC rate page at a later date.

Q: The presentation indicates that transportation has to be provided to support the individual's efforts to be self-employed, work from home or perform in a work setting. Is the HCSSA responsible for transporting the client or just making transportation arrangements?

A: The HCSSA or CDS employer provider is responsible for transporting the individual specific to the service definition for EA and SE. The program provider would provide the transportation or explore and coordinate other transportation arrangements with people who normally provide natural supports, such as family members, friends or co-workers who may be willing to fulfill this need to some degree.

Q: Are the HCSSAs required to provide transportation for any other DADS programs?

A: Transportation is only part of the SE and EA service definition in the MDCP waiver. Other community-based waiver programs that do not involve a HCSSA have other services for which transportation is included in the service definition.

Q: If HCSSA program provider transports the individual, what happens if there's an accident?

A: The transporter would need to have insurance, as required by state law.

Q: Is SE/EA going to be offered to STAR+Plus and STAR+Plus waiver clients?

A: Yes, S.B. 45, passed by the 83rd Texas Legislature, requires that all Medicaid waivers offer EA and SE.

Q: What happens when MDCP goes to Star Kids? Is SE/EA still going to be a benefit?

A: Yes, S.B. 45, passed by the 83rd Texas Legislature, requires that all Medicaid waivers offer EA and SE.

Q: What happens when the Individual ages out of MDCP?

A: The services provided through MDCP would stop when MDCP ends. If the person transitions into another program that offers SE/EA, it may be authorized with the new program.