

**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES**

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August 24, 2021

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGES TO THE PAID  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM EFFECTIVE JULY 2021

A. PURPOSE

Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code section 4870 (Enclosure A) was amended as of July 16, 2021, pursuant to Assembly Bill 136. W&I Code section 4870(d) authorizes funding to the Department of Developmental Services (Department) for a paid internship program (PIP). The purpose of the program is to increase the vocational skills and abilities of consumers who choose, through the Individual Program Plan (IPP) process, to participate in a paid internship. Goals of this program include the acquisition of experience and skills for future paid employment, or for the internship itself to lead to full- or part-time paid employment in the same job. The purpose of this correspondence is to delineate changes to W&I Code section 4870 and the subsequent changes to the "Guidelines for Implementation of the Paid Internship Program" issued by the Department on July 28, 2016 (Enclosure B).

B. IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING

Internship Funding

Internships are predicated on the person-centered planning process. Regional centers are responsible for informing consumers and the community about changes to the PIP. A consumer may participate in more than one paid internship, as determined through the IPP process.

As of July 16, 2021, the revised funding guidelines for the PIP are as follows [W&I Code sections 4870(a)(1) to (3)]:

- (1) Internships shall not exceed 1,040 hours per year for each individual placed in an internship.
- (2) Payments for internship hours under this program shall include all required employer-related costs.
- (3) Individuals participating in an internship shall be paid at or above minimum wage and equal to the customary wage paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who do not have disabilities.
- (4) The sub-code "PIPW" should be added to existing service codes to indicate payment of wages and employer-related costs. This new sub-code is available for use now.

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Current paid internships that began prior to July 16, 2021, should be converted to the maximum number of hours (1,040), including the number of hours already completed.

#### Placement Incentive Funding

W&I Code sections 4870(a)(4) and (5) authorize payments to regional center service providers for placement of an individual in a paid internship.

- (1) A payment of seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750) shall be made to the regional center service provider if both of the following apply:
  - The regional center provider places an individual in a paid internship opportunity on or after July 1, 2021.
  - That individual remains in the paid internship after 30 consecutive days.
- (2) An additional payment of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) shall be made to the regional center provider for an individual described in paragraph (1) who remains in the paid internship for 60 consecutive days from the date of placement.
- (3) The sub-code "PIP30" should be added to existing service codes to indicate achievement of the 30-day milestone. The sub-code "PIP60" should be added to existing service codes to indicate achievement of the 60-day milestone. These new sub-codes are available for use now.

If you have questions about this correspondence, please contact Michael Luna at (916) 654-2208, or email at [Michael.Luna@dds.ca.gov](mailto:Michael.Luna@dds.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

*Original Signed by:*

ERICA REIMER SNELL  
Deputy Director  
Community Services Division

Enclosures

cc: Regional Center Administrators  
Regional Center Directors of Consumer Services  
Regional Center Community Services Directors  
Amy Westling, Association of Regional Center Agencies  
Brian Winfield, Department of Developmental Services  
Maricris Acon, Department of Developmental Services  
Ernie Cruz, Department of Developmental Services  
Michael Luna, Department of Developmental Services