

CDS Community Attendant – COVID 19 in Healthcare Relief

Information Guide

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is accepting Applications for the CDS Community Attendants - COVID-19 in Healthcare Relief. The purpose of this Application is to distribute funding for Critical Staffing Needs to Consumer Directed Services (CDS) Employers receiving CDS Community Attendant Services in Texas whose Community Attendants have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

HHSC provided guidance can be view at the following

link: <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/PCS/HHS0011792/HHS0011792-rfa-addendum-1-attachment-1.pdf>

For additional questions you may email HHSC

at PCSHHS0011792@hhs.texas.gov . Please note: HHSC has stated they will not reply to any emails, they will post answers on the following website: <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/PCS/HHS0011792/> nor are you allow to call anyone within HHSC to discuss. HHSC has stated it could make you ineligible to receive funds.

Who is eligible for these funds?

To be eligible to apply:

1. Be a CDS Employer that, at the time of Application, is authorized by HHSC to receive Community Attendant Services through the CDS Option;
2. Be a CDS Employer for a member who had an active authorization by HHSC to receive Community Attendant Services through the CDS Option on any date in **November 2021**.

*****It is very important to note you must have had an active authorization for the month of November 2021 to be eligible.**

Fund award amount?

Eligible CDS Employers can submit one application per member they represent. During the application process the CDS Employer will be required to answer a series of questions that will be used to calculate how much they will receive in funding. **The minimum one will receive is \$345 and maximum is \$2,500 per applicant.**

Timelines and Important Dates?

- Application submission deadline is **September 26th, 2022 by 10:30am** Central Standard Time.
- Fund disbursements for accepted Applications will begin on **December 1st, 2022**.
- Required Reporting instructions will be sent by **August 31st, 2023**
- Required Reporting will be due back to HHSC by **September 30th, 2023 by 5:00pm** Central Standard Time.

How to apply?

HHSC has created the following Survey Monkey form. This form will be used to collect important contact information and calculate the amount of funding that will be awarded to each CDS Employer. **This is the only way to apply for funds.**

Application link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CSDCACOVID19>

*****Very Important Information – You must read and understand the following information.**

How will funds be released?

HHSC will be sending a paper check to the address provided in the Application. **It is very important to note that you as the CDS Employer should not deposit funds directly into your personal bank account. Since these funds are required to be paid to your employees, taxes are required to be deducted and deposited with the IRS and TWC.**

Do not give your employees cash.

An FMSA has many roles we play in the CDS model. One of those roles is making sure the CDS Employer stays in compliance with Federal and State guidelines. **Paying cash to your employees means you are not reporting employees' wages to the IRS and TWC.** You will also not be able to complete HHSC required reporting in order to avoid funds from being recouped.

How can these funds be used?

Funds are to be used for CDS Community Attendant Services staffing related needs. CDS Employers are permitted to use their discretion on how to utilize the funds for staffing related needs, provided they utilize funds for one of the identified purposes below:

1. CDS Community Attendant Services staffing-related needs and the costs of CDS Community Attendant **salaries and wages;**
2. **One-time recruitment and retention bonuses** for CDS Community Attendants;
3. **Overtime** costs of CDS Community Attendants; and
4. **Travel-related costs** directly related to the provision of **CDS Community Attendant Services.**

CDS Employers are permitted to use their discretion on how to use their funding as long as the funding is utilized in any of the four identified purposes above. It is not required that the funds are used for only one of the four identified purposes, but rather the funds can be used for any combination of the four identified purposes.

***** Funds may be recouped by HHSC if not used in the manners listed above and funds cannot be used to permanently increase employee's salaries/wages.**

Reporting Requirements

The HHSC will monitor CDS Employer's performance, including through review of the required report under any Funding Agreement awarded. Each CDS Employer awarded a Funding Agreement as a result of this Application must submit the following report by the noted due date:

CDS Employers must submit a Funding Utilization Report to HHSC. In the Funding Utilization Report, CDS Employers must enter requested information about CDS Employer's use of the funds. The information requested may include:

1. A description of how the funds were used;
2. A description of any accomplishments achieved as a result of the funds; and
3. Information about how long the funds lasted before they were fully expended.

HHSC will establish a tool that CDS Employers must use to report this information and will send an email with instructions for completing the Funding Utilization Report to the email address of the CDS Employers and, if applicable, to the email addresses of the Designated Representative and/or Legally Authorized Representative by August 31, 2023.

CDS Employer must follow the emailed instructions to complete the Report, which may take the form of an electronic questionnaire. CDS Employers must electronically submit the completed Funding Utilization Report by the due date specified by HHSC.

If requested by HHSC, CDS Employer shall report on the progress towards completion of the Project and other relevant information as determined by HHSC during the Project Period.

CDS Employer shall provide the applicable report in the format specified by HHSC in an accurate, complete, and timely manner and shall maintain appropriate supporting backup documentation. **Failure to comply with the submission deadline for the required report, or other requested information, may result in HHSC, in its sole discretion, recouping the awarded funds under the terms of the Funding Agreement**

How to avoid recoupments.

HHSC may recoup up to the full amount of the awarded funds in the event of the following:

1. The Beneficiary **does not spend all of the awarded funds** by the Project Period end date;
2. HHSC determines that **CDS Employers did not appropriately utilize the funds;**
3. The **CDS Employer does not submit a completed Funding Utilization Report by the specified deadline;** or
4. The **CDS Employer commits fraud** or made material misrepresentations in its Application.

If HHSC must recoup the funding for any of the reasons listed above HHSC will provide notification explaining why and how much of the funding HHSC will be recouping. The notification will be sent to the email address of the Beneficiary, and, if applicable, to the email addresses of the Designated Representative and/or Legally Authorized Representative provided to the System Agency at the time of Application.

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link: <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/PCS/HHS0011792/HHS0011792-rfa-addendum-1-attachment-1.pdf>

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NOTE: All CTD employers, CTD is NOT processing these Grant applications for you, nor is CTD processing payments on behalf on the employers. If you choose to apply for these funds, YOU (the Employer) are responsible for ALL items required within this document, including all tax reporting. Questions may be sent to EVV@TXDISABILITIES.ORG Please do not call your payroll administrator regarding this notice. ONLY EMAILS WILL BE ADDRESSED