



**Department  
of Health**

**Office for People with  
Developmental Disabilities**

April 5, 2016

Dear Provider:

The Department of Health (DOH) and the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) are writing to confirm that the Medicaid program is further delaying the termination of respite transportation to after-school programs from May 1 to the end of the school year to give providers and families more time to make alternative arrangements. Indeed, we are assuring that there will be no disruption in respite transportation services to and from after-school respite programs for the remainder of this school year.

The DOH will direct Medical Answering Services (MAS) to continue scheduling transportation for respite services, with Prior Authorization, through the end of the 2015-16 school year. By June 30, 2016, all Prior Authorizations for fee-for-service respite transportation will end.

The DOH and OPWDD will continue to work with affected providers and programs to identify possible alternative means by which this transportation can be offered. OPWDD Regional Offices are working with agencies to determine what possible other arrangements can be made.

Both DOH and OPWDD agree that Medicaid rules do not allow DOH to authorize Medicaid transportation to OPWDD respite services. Long-standing authorizations for transportation to after-school respite programs in some counties should never have been approved. When this issue was discovered, steps were taken to suspend future approvals. Please recognize this respite transportation concern does not emanate from a change in either DOH or OPWDD policy. Hence, this extension must be limited to individuals with existing transportation approvals. It does not apply to individuals recently added to your respite program nor to long-term participants who now express an interest in transportation assistance.

DOH and OPWDD values the importance of providing consistent access and quality services to the individuals we serve. We appreciate your partnership and advocacy on behalf of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Please let us know if there's any additional information required.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "JoAnn Lamphere".

JoAnn Lamphere, DrPH  
Deputy Commissioner  
Division of Person-Centered Supports  
Office for People with Developmental Disabilities

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gregory S. Allen".

Gregory S. Allen, Director  
Division of Program Development and Management  
Office of Health and Insurance Programs  
Department of Health