

MEMORANDUM



DATE: September 4, 2024

TO: Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Stakeholders
Assisted Living Waiver (ALW) Care Coordination Agencies
California Community Transitions Lead Organizations

FROM: Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), Integrated Systems of Care Division (ISCD)

SUBJECT: Important Information Regarding Prospective ALW Enrollments

This memo serves to notify HCBS stakeholders, ALW Care Coordination Agencies (CCA), and California Community Transitions (CCT) lead organizations that the Section 1915(c) ALW is nearing maximum enrollment capacity for the current waiver year one, ending February 28, 2025. The maximum enrollment capacity for the current waiver year is 14,544 participants, and DHCS expects to reach capacity by the end of September.

As a result, DHCS must immediately stop the direct submission of new ALW applications that meet the ALW reserve capacity criteria for long-term care stays (institutional stays of 60 or more days) and incorporate them into the existing ALW waitlist monthly slot release process. Effective immediately, CCAs must submit a waitlist request to reserve a slot for any new applications for institutional transfers, as is currently done with all other ALW applications. The September slot release will include only those applicants on the waitlist who meet reserve capacity criteria (i.e., institutional transitions, Adult Protective Services referrals, and Long-Term Care Ombudsman referrals).

Additionally, DHCS will revise slot release policies to decrease the number of waitlist slots released monthly to ensure that continued waiver growth aligns with annual slot increases already included in the approved waiver. Additional instructions and guidance regarding the revised slot release policies will be released soon.

DHCS currently has waiver and budget authority for an additional 1,800 waiver slots effective March 1, 2025 (waiver year two). DHCS plans to submit a waiver amendment to the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to request waiver authority to make the slot increase authorized for waiver year two available in the current year to avoid limiting the monthly slot releases to only account for attrition until March 1, 2025.

DHCS recognizes there will be significant concerns and frustration regarding limited access to HCBS due to this action. DHCS welcomes any feedback and is committed to addressing these concerns directly. Please submit any feedback or questions to DHCS via email at ALWP.IR@dhcs.ca.gov.

Thank you,

Original signed by Joseph Billingsley

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