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D-2024-Rate Reform-004

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: RATE REFORM IMPLEMENTATION FOR ADAPTIVE SKILLS TRAINING
AND BEHAVIORAL SERVICES

As part of continued rate reform [implementation](#), this letter provides direction regarding the following areas:

- Adaptive Skills Training Professional & Specialist (service code 605)
- Behavior Analyst (service code 612)
- Associate Behavior Analyst (service code 613)
- Behavior Management Assistant (service code 615)
- Behavior Technician Paraprofessional (service code 616)
- Behavior Management Consultant (service code 620)
- Client/Parent Support Behavior Intervention Training (service code 048).

Beginning January 1, 2025, the service descriptions in this directive apply to all vendors of these services, along with the associated service and subcode combinations, rate models and billing units. This directive also may pertain to vendors currently providing these services under different service codes. Providers continue to be responsible for the requirements stated in Welfare and Institutions Code and Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). However, this directive supersedes any conflict regarding service descriptions and rate-setting in those other sources.

Regional centers and service providers shall follow this directive to affirm which updated service description and any staffing requirements most closely match the services actually being delivered. The regional center shall verify the rate for each service and subcode combination in the rate workbook. Reimbursement for services beginning January 1, 2025, will be claimed using the provider's current service code with an updated rate, unless the form described below is completed prior to that date.

By March 31, 2025, the Rate Reform Service Acknowledgement Form shall be completed by the regional center and service provider to acknowledge the service description, requirements that will need to be met, subcode combination(s), and the rate(s) established by the rate model. Please see Attachment A for the form and instructions, which includes attaching the rate workbook to the completed form. The rates for each type of service by regional center can be found [here](#). Providers with existing rates that are above 90 percent of the rate model for the service description to which they will align will maintain their existing rates (held harmless) until June 30, 2026. Otherwise, upon completion of the Rate Reform Service

Acknowledgement Form, the new service and subcode combination and rate will be used.

Individuals receiving services should not experience differences in how their services are delivered, where they are delivered from, and who they work with as a result of this directive.

Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) or Individual Program Plans (IPPs) must identify the type and the amount of service needed. Therefore, some IFSPs and IPPs will need to be updated to properly identify the type of service being delivered. If the only change is service delivery by a different level of staff, or use of a new service and subcode combinations and their rates, the IFSP or IPP does not need to be updated. These IFSP and IPP updates should be done at the next scheduled IFSP/IPP meeting, after which the regional center must update service authorizations. These updates must occur no later than December 31, 2025. In these cases, billing for services to individuals pending an IFSP or IPP update will continue under the current service code with an updated rate. Billing for services to individuals that do not need an IFSP or IPP update will use the new service and subcode combination and their rate.

Vendors and service providers operating as an agency must provide services and bill based on the staffing qualifications of the employees providing the direct services. The services may be provided using independent service code and subcode combinations under one vendorization.

Adaptive Skills Training Professional & Specialist (service code 605)

Service Description

Formerly known as Adaptive Skills Trainer, these services enhance an individual's existing skills. They also may remedy an individual's skill deficits in communication, social function, or other related skill areas, including, but not limited to, the following categories: (a) safety skills; (b) skills needed to access the community; (c) hygiene and dressing skills; (d) skills needed to access technology; (e) skills needed to buy and prepare food; (f) competency training; (g) housekeeping skills; (h) toileting skills; (i) feeding skills (including addressing picky eating, food refusal, and sensory-based issues with food); (j) staff and personnel training; (k) communication; (l) challenging behavior; (m) sleep and sleep hygiene; (n) choice making; and (o) specialty counseling.

An individual must have a master's degree to be vendored, and may hire individuals with a bachelor's degree to provide services.

- **Adaptive Skills Training Professional** designs and implements adaptive skills training plans and provides supervision to Adaptive Skills Training Specialists. Providers must have a master's degree in one of the following: education, psychology, counseling, nursing, social work, applied behavior analysis, behavioral medicine, speech and language, rehabilitation, marriage and family

therapy, or a comparable degree in a human services field; and at least one year of experience in the design and implementation of adaptive skills training plans.

- **Adaptive Skills Training Specialist** designs and implements adaptive skills training plans under the supervision of an Adaptive Skills Training Professional. Providers must have a bachelor's degree in one of the following: education, psychology, counseling, nursing, social work, applied behavior analysis, behavioral medicine, speech and language, rehabilitation, marriage and family therapy, or a comparable degree in a human services field; and at least one year of experience supporting individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Providers should have experience in the area for which adaptive skills training is to be provided.

Adaptive Skills Training Professionals & Specialists shall meet the staff requirements in Title 17 of the CCR section [54342\(a\)\(3\)](#), while including the new components listed below.

New Components

- *Services:*
 - Skills needed to access technology, competency training, and specialty counseling now are included within this service description.
 - Establishes the Specialist classification, with a bachelor's degree and related experience to staff qualifications.
 - Marriage and family therapy is now included as a qualifying degree.
 - A comparable degree in a human services field now is included as a qualifying degree, as approved by the regional center.
- *Billing:* Providers will bill services hourly based on service delivered by either the Professional or Specialist, and the ratio of employee to supported individuals. Please see Attachment B for the subcodes established for each combination.

Behavioral Analyst (service code 612)

Service Description

Assesses the function of a behavior of an individual and designs, implements, and evaluates instructional and environmental modifications to produce socially significant improvements in the individual's behavior through skill acquisition and the reduction of behavior. Duties and qualifications pursuant to Title 17 of the CCR section [54342\(a\)\(11\)](#) remain the same.

New Components

- *Services:* No changes to the requirements.
- *Billing:* Providers will bill services hourly based on the ratio of employee to supported individuals. Please see Attachment B for the subcodes established for each ratio ranging from 1:1-1:3.

Associate Behavior Analyst (service code 613)

Service Description

Assesses the function of a behavior of an individual and designs, implements, and evaluates instructional and environmental modifications to produce socially significant improvements in the individual's behavior through skill acquisition and the reduction of behavior, under direct supervision of a Behavior Analyst or Behavior Management Consultant who is within the same vendored group practice. Duties and qualifications pursuant to Title 17 of the CCR section [54342\(a\)\(8\)](#) remain the same.

New Components

- *Services:* No changes to the requirements.
- *Billing:* Providers will bill services hourly based on ratio of employee to supported individuals. Please see Attachment B for the subcodes established for each ratio ranging from 1:1–1:3.

Behavior Management Assistant (service code 615)

Service Description

Designs and/or implements behavior modification intervention services under the direct supervision of a behavior management consultant; or if the vendor assesses the function of a behavior of an individual and designs, implements, and evaluates instructional and environmental modifications to produce socially significant improvements in the individual's behavior through skill acquisition and the reduction of behavior, under direct supervision of a Behavior Analyst or Behavior Management Consultant. Duties and qualifications pursuant to Title 17 of the CCR section [54342\(a\)\(12\)](#) remain the same.

New Components

- *Services:* No changes to the requirements.
- *Billing:* Providers will bill services hourly based on ratio of employee to supported individuals. Please see Attachment B for the subcodes established for each ratio ranging from 1:1–1:3.

Behavior Technician Paraprofessional (service code 616)

Service Description

Implements instructional and environmental modifications to produce socially significant improvements in the individual's behavior through skill acquisition and the reduction of behavior. Practices under the direct supervision of a certified Behavior Analyst or a Behavior Management Consultant. Duties and qualifications pursuant to Title 17 of the CCR section [54342\(b\)](#) remain the same.

New Components

- *Services:* No changes to the requirements.

- *Billing:* Providers will bill services hourly based on ratio of employee to supported individuals. Please see Attachment B for the subcodes established for each ratio ranging from 1:1–1:3.

Behavior Management Consultant (service code 620)

Service Description

Designs and/or implements behavior modification intervention services. Duties and qualifications pursuant to Title 17 of the CCR section [54342\(a\)\(13\)](#) remain the same.

New Components

- *Services:* No changes to the requirements.
- *Billing:* Providers will bill services hourly based on ratio of employee to supported individuals. Please see Attachment B for the subcodes established for each ratio ranging from 1:1–1:3.

Client/Parent Support Behavior Intervention Training (service code 048)

This service will not be used in rate reform and is most likely included in other service descriptions of other types of services. Regional centers and providers of this service must work together to review other service descriptions to determine where the Client/Parent Support Behavior Intervention Training being provided fits and determine alignment by March 31, 2025. As mentioned above, IPPs for some individuals will need to be updated. When this occurs, billing for services to individuals pending an IPP update will continue under the current service code with an updated rate. Billing for services to individuals that do not need an IPP update will use the new service and subcode combination and the rate. Client/Parent Support Behavior Intervention Training providers with rates that are above 90 percent of the rate model for the service description to which they will align will maintain their rates (held harmless) until June 30, 2026.

Continued and new use of this service code for services that do not align anywhere else will require Department approval using the exemption process described in the Department's October 30, 2024 letter. Current providers may continue using this service code through the 2025 transition to a new service code and do not need to request an exemption.

Next Steps

Regional centers and service providers shall follow this directive to affirm which updated service description most closely matches the services actually being delivered, and follow the procedures described in this directive. If a provider's service does not fit into any of the updated service descriptions, or a provider or its staff do not meet the requirements of any of the updated service descriptions, the regional center and service provider shall refer to the exemption process described in the Department's October 30, 2024 [letter](#).

This letter should be shared with involved regional center personnel and the provider network. If providers, individuals and/or their families have questions regarding this letter, they should contact their regional center. Questions from regional centers should be directed to ratesquestions@dds.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

DANA SIMON
Deputy Director

Attachments

cc: Regional Center Administrators
Regional Center Directors of Consumer Services
Regional Center Community Services Directors
Association of Regional Center Agencies
Pete Cervinka, Department of Developmental Services
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