STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Home and Community Living Administration
Residential Care Services • P.O. Box 45600 • Olympia, Washington 98504

08/07/2026

HCLA: AFH #2026-031
HCLA: ALF #2026-032
HCLA: CCRSS #2026-016
HCLA: ICF/IID #2026-010
HCLA: NH #2026-030
CMS Emergency Approvals and Payment for Services

Dear Provider/Administrator:

Due to the wildfires that are occurring in Washington state and affecting clients and providers in Chelan, Ferry, Okanogan, Spokane, Stevens, and Yakima counties, as well as the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakima Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservations, and the Spokane Tribe of Indians, Washington state is seeking emergency approvals to our personal care programs from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid to support individuals receiving Long-Term Services and Supports through Home and Community Living Administration, an Area Agency on Aging, or Developmental Disabilities Administration and contracted and licensed providers.

As we request emergency approvals from CMS, we are reminding you to only claim payment for services you provide.

- If your residents were evacuated to another residential facility (adult family home, assisted living facility, enhanced services facility) that is licensed and contracted with the Department of Social and Health Services, do not claim on the authorization. The new facility caring for the residents will be authorized for services the individual is eligible for. If you are able and intend to accept residents back to your facility, DSHS is asking CMS to allow retainer payments. A retainer payment allows the state to issue payment to you, to hold the resident's spot at your facility when the person can't receive services for a short period of time but does plan to return. If CMS approves this request and you plan to hold the individual's bed for them to return to, you may be eligible to receive a retainer payment. More information on this will be shared when it is available. It is important for you to keep records up to date and communicate with the resident's case manager.

- If your residents were evacuated to another location but you or your facility's staff continue to provide care at that new location, you will be able to continue to claim payment for each resident you are providing services for at the authorized CARE daily rate. It is important for you to keep records up to date and communicate with the resident's case manager.

Thank you for your continued commitment to residents' health and safety.

Please also see the Dear Provider Letter issued by Residential Care Services on August 4, 2026, with the subject: Emergency Evacuation Reporting.

For questions related to the CMS Emergency Approvals, please contact Becca Howard, HCBS Waiver Program Manager, 564-263-0839 or rebecca.howard@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

for Amy Abbott

Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: *"Partnering with People"*