

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION
Olympia, Washington

TITLE: RESIDENTIAL ALLOWANCE REQUESTS POLICY 6.11

Authority: [Title 71A RCW](#) *Developmental Disabilities*
[Chapter 388-101 WAC](#) *Certified Community Residential Services and Supports*
[Chapter 388-101D WAC](#) *Requirements for Providers of Community Residential Services and Supports*
[Chapter 388-827 WAC](#) *State Supplementary Payment (SSP)*
[Chapter 388-845 WAC](#) *Home and Community Based Service Waivers*

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the process for submitting a residential allowance request to provide funding to help cover a client's essential expenses when their personal income and other types of resources are insufficient.

SCOPE

This policy applies to Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) case resource managers (CRMs), resource managers (RMs), and to the following contracted residential service programs for adults:

- Supported living (SL);
- Alternative living (AL); and
- State-operated living alternatives (SOLAs).

POLICY

- A. A client living in their own home is expected to pay for their own expenses. When a client does not have sufficient resources to pay for essential expenses, the service provider and CRM are expected to assist the client to explore all possible resources before submitting a residential allowance request.
- B. Types of resources and assistance include:
1. The client's personal resources, such as those available through a trust.

2. Social Security benefits, which are often a substantial resource for clients. To ensure this benefit is maximized, the client's representative payee should ensure that:
 - a. A timely application is submitted to the Social Security Administration (SSA). For a client moving to the community from an institution begin the application early according to the SSA's [prerelease procedures](#).
 - b. All potential benefits have been explored, including Disabled Adult Child (DAC) benefits, which are available to a person with a disability who has at least one parent deceased or of retirement age.
 - c. Timely communication occurs with SSA regarding changes in circumstances that may affect the client's benefits.
 3. Housing assistance. Rent is usually a substantial portion of a client's monthly expenses, so any assistance with reducing this expense is of great benefit to the client. Depending on local resources, subsidies may be available to help a client obtain affordable housing or pay rent at their current home.
 4. Utilities assistance programs. Upon request, many utility companies such as water, electric, gas, phone, and cable companies offer discounts to people with low income or disabilities.
 5. Basic Food benefits. An application for Basic Food benefits can be made through a local DSHS Community Services Office (CSO).
 6. Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance. With documentation from a prescribing physician, Medicare or Medicaid may cover the cost of a client's medications, and medical expenses, devices, and equipment. Approval must be obtained by DDA to use the client's own funds to pay for medical expenses.
- C. If the client's income and other available resources and assistance do not cover the cost of the client's essential expenses, the service provider may request financial assistance to support the client using a Residential Allowance Request (RAR).
- D. When reviewing a request to use state-only funds, DDA first explores the following funding sources in order:
1. Roads to Community Living (RCL);
 2. Waiver; then
 3. State Supplemental Payments (SSP).

Available RCL and waiver services and requirements for use of waiver funding are described in [WAC 388-845-0750 through -0760](#).

SSP financial eligibility can be located in chapter 388-827 WAC. An exception to policy must be approved by the DDA Central Office SSP Program Manager or designee before using SSP funds. SSP funds are subject to available funding. Current SSP funding availability is posted on the [SSP SharePoint site](#).

Under WAC 388-845-0115 an ETR is required when using state-only funds for a client on the Core and Community Protection waivers. The CRM submits the ETR in CARE, and includes required language in the assessment, and the client's person-centered service plan. The RM will verify that the ETR has been submitted and check the box on the request form. This ETR does not apply to clients receiving residential services funded through RCL or state-only funding.

E. Types of Residential Allowance Requests include:

1. Start-Up Allowance

This may be requested to assist in establishing a new residence. This may be used to cover pre-approved essential moving expenses, rent and utility deposits, installation charges, and to purchase personal items, such as furniture and household goods. The client owns any items purchased with an allowance.

2. Client Damage

This may be requested when a client damages personal or leased property of their own or that of another client, the provider, or the provider's employee and the client is unable to compensate for the loss. A client must not be coerced into payment; if the client is able but unwilling to pay damages, the service provider must inform the RM.

3. Insufficient Income Allowance

This may be requested when a client's income is inadequate to meet ongoing or one-time expenses. Insufficient income allowance may be used to cover the client's share of rent and utilities, and other essential living expenses.

4. Housemate Allowance

This may be requested when a client needs financial assistance to cover an absent housemate's share of joint expenses, including rent and utilities. A client who retains their Social Security benefits to maintain their home during a temporary stay in a facility continues to pay their portion of monthly household bills.

PROCEDURES**A. Start-Up Allowance**

1. Roads to Community Living (RCL) Transition reimburses reasonable costs as determined by DDA to establish a basic living arrangement when moving from an institutional setting or community-based facility to a certified DDA supported living agency. For RCL clients, the transition period begins the day the client enrolls in RCL while still living in the institution and includes the 365-day period after the client moves into the community. To receive RCL Transition:
 - a. The service provider must submit an itemized list with estimated costs to the RCL CRM.
 - b. The RCL CRM must review the list to confirm that items on the list are covered and let the provider know the list has been approved.
 - c. The provider purchases the items on the list and provides copies of the receipts to the RCL CRM.
 - d. The RCL CRM must process an authorization for the amount spent no more than 15 calendar days after receiving the receipts from the service provider.

2. Waiver Community Transition reimburses reasonable costs as determined by DDA to establish a basic living arrangement when moving from an institutional setting or a provider-operated setting (group home, staffed residential, adult family home, or companion home) to the client's own home where the client will receive services from a DDA-certified residential provider. To receive Waiver Community Transition:
 - a. The service provider must submit to the RM:
 - 1) An explanation of the client's unmet need;
 - 2) Alternatives explored, such as private pay or furniture banks; and
 - 3) An itemized list with estimated costs.
 - b. The RM must review the list to confirm that the items are covered under the Waiver Community Transition and let the provider know the list has been approved.
 - c. The provider purchases items on the list and provides copies of the receipts to the RM.

- d. The RM must process an authorization for the amount spent no more than 15 calendar days after receiving the receipts from the service provider.
3. If a client does not qualify for RCL Transition or Waiver Community Transition, state-only funding may be available. State-only funding is limited to a maximum of \$2,000 per person for necessary expenditures. To receive state-only funding all of the following must occur:
 - a. The provider must submit to the RM a residential allowance request using *Residential Allowance Request — Start-Up Cost*, including an itemized list of estimated costs.
 - b. The RM must:
 - 1) Review the list and cost estimates;
 - 2) Submit the request to the RMA or designee for approval; and
 - 3) Return the signed document to the service provider.
 - c. The provider purchases the items, completes the second portion of the form and provides copies of the receipts to the RM.
 - d. If during the exchange of information the amount is higher than the original approved amount, the provider may request a revision from the RM via email. The RM must evaluate the request and, if approved, document the change on *Residential Allowance Request – Start-Up Cost*, before returning it to the service provider.
 - e. The RM must process an authorization for the amount approved no more than 15 calendar days after receiving the receipts from the service provider.
 4. The service provider must file the original purchase receipts in the client’s file.

B. Client Damage

1. Any client damage repairs reimbursed by DDA must be completed by a:
 1. Licensed and bonded contractor; or
 2. Bonded service repair person.
2. The service provider must submit to the RM and RM supervisor a residential allowance request using *Residential Allowance Request-Damage and Major Expenses*, and include:

- a. Estimated cost of repair or replacement;
- b. The amount the client will contribute toward the cost of repairs or replacement; and
- c. A reference to an incident report related to the reimbursement request.

Note: Approval of a RAR is not based on the timing of the incident report submittal.

3. The RM reviews the request and makes a recommendation.
4. The RM submits the request to the RMA or designee for approval of estimated cost and returns the signed request to the service provider.
5. The provider:
 - a. Arranges for the repair or purchase;
 - b. Completes section three of *Residential Allowance Request — Damage and Major Expenses*; and
 - c. Provides copies of receipts, invoices, or other relevant documentation to the RM.
6. If during the exchange of information the amount is higher than the original approved amount, the provider may request a revision from the RM via e-mail. The RM must evaluate the request and, if approved, document the change on *Residential Allowance Request — Damage and Major Expenses*, before returning it to the service provider.
7. The RM must process an authorization for the exact amount spent no more than 15 calendar days after receiving the receipts from the service provider.
8. In addition to the items under subsection (2) of this section, a request that exceeds \$2000 must include:
 - a. At least two written estimates; and
 - b. An approved ETP.
9. Unless the damage is a result of an accident or isolated incident, the service provider must:

- a. Review the client's positive behavior support plan for possible changes; and
 - b. Submit a copy of the client's positive behavior support plan and, if needed, include revisions designed to respond to the target behavior that resulted in the damage.
10. The client, the client's legal representative, or the RM may request an additional estimate.
 11. The amount of reimbursement must not exceed the estimate or the replacement value of the article.
 12. If damage reimbursement is already reflected in a client's daily rate, DDA must not reimburse a service provider for damages caused by that client.
 13. When requesting reimbursement for damage caused by a client, the service provider must disclose the existence of any related insurance claim. The amount of reimbursement may be limited to the amount of the insurance deductible if an insurance claim has been made.
 14. DDA does not reimburse a provider for damages caused by a provider's negligence in following the support needs identified in a client's positive behavior support plan, person-centered service plan, or individual instruction and support plan.
 15. If approved, the RM must process an authorization for the amount spent no more than 15 calendar days after receiving receipts for the satisfactorily completed work.

C. Insufficient Income Allowance

1. To request insufficient income allowance, the service provider must submit to the RM a written request for pre-approval of the estimated amount the client needs. The request must state the approximate amount needed per month. A request for pre-approval can be made for up to three months.
2. The RM must review the request with the RM supervisor. If the RM supervisor approves the estimated amount, they must respond with their answer in writing to the RM and provider as the pre-approval.
3. After the client's bills are paid, the service provider must submit [DSHS 06-125](#), *Residential Allowance Request – Insufficient Income / Housemate Allowance* to the RM for review.

4. When evaluating the submitted information, the RM must:
 - a. Confirm that only allowable expenses are included in the request;
 - b. Confirm that the provider has received pre-approval for consideration of items in the other category on the RAR form; and
 - c. Confirm that guardian fees are not included in the request as guardian compensation at the state's expense is prohibited under RCW 11.92.180.
5. Upon request, the service provider must submit additional documentation or information to the RM, including:
 - a. Justification for selection of a specific living unit if other less expensive units are available;
 - b. Evidence of application for HUD Section 8 rent subsidies or a statement that applications are not being accepted; and
 - c. Receipts and other documents, such as a lease agreement or billing statement that verify expenses claimed on [DSHS 06-125](#), *Residential Allowance Request – Insufficient Income / Housemate Allowance*. If a receipt or other document is not available, the provider must document the expense in the client file.
6. The RM determines the allowed amount based on the information above.
7. The RM must authorize the allowance no more than 15 calendar days after receiving a complete RAR and additional documentation requested.

D. Housemate Allowance

1. The service provider must submit to the RM a written request for pre-approval of a housemate allowance. The service provider must include an estimated amount of the fixed monthly expenses that would normally be paid by an absent housemate and how long the need is expected to last. A request for pre-approval can be made for up to three months.
2. The RM reviews information with the RM supervisor. If the RM supervisor approves the estimated amount, they must respond with an answer in writing to the RM and provider as the pre-approval.
3. After the client's bills are paid, the service provider must submit DSHS 06-125, *Residential Allowance Request – Insufficient Income / Housemate Allowance* to the RM for review.

4. The allowance may be used to cover an absent housemate's share of basic joint expenses including rent and utilities. When calculating the housemate allowance the RM will consider timing of client contract cycle with the phone cable or internet provider. The RM will determine the cost effectiveness of paying the monthly rate or the broken contract fee.
5. The provider must reevaluate a housemate allowance every three months and the RM may authorize three months at a time for as long as necessary.
6. If the service provider anticipates the client will need a housemate allowance for more than three months, the service provider should discuss with the housemates or assist the client or clients in finding a residence that fits their budget and the size of their shared household.
7. If approved, the RM must authorize the allowance no more than 15 calendar days after receiving the request.

E. SOLA Authorizations

All RARs for SOLA are paid using funds through the State Supplemental Payment (SSP) program when the client meets financial eligibility under [chapter 388-827 WAC](#).

F. Processing Requests

1. All allowance requests must be reviewed and pre-approved by the Resource Manager Administrator or designee. Pre-approval for RARs submitted after August 31, 2019, must meet the requirements of this policy as issued on July 1, 2019.
2. For all types of residential allowance requests, the service provider must submit the final documentation of expenditures to the RM within 90 days of the end of the service month the RAR was utilized.
3. The service provider must retain the original purchase receipts and submit copies of the receipts to the RM upon request, unless otherwise specified.
4. Approval is contingent upon funding available within the region.
5. For a RAR that exceeds \$2000:
 - a. The service provider must submit written justification for the items or expenses; and

- b. The Community Residential Service Program Manager or designee will approve the exception to policy on the RAR form.
6. This policy creates no legal obligation on the part of the State of Washington to reimburse any individual or entity and does not give rise to a right of action under any legal or equitable theory.

EXCEPTIONS

Any exception to this policy must have prior written approval from the Deputy Assistant Secretary or designee.

SUPERSESSSION

DDA Policy 6.11
Issued July 1, 2017

Approved: /s/ Evelyn Perez
Assistant Secretary
Developmental Disabilities Administration

Date: July 1, 2019