



**Guidance on Eligible Workforce Funding Activities
(Enhanced FMAP)**

Issued: October 29, 2021; Last Revised: March 27, 2023

The purpose of this memo is to provide information and guidance for Office of Mental Health (OMH) licensed, regulated, and designated providers who are eligible to receive funds to be used for workforce recruitment and retention activities under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021. This legislation provides supplemental funding for mental health services through the time-limited expansion of the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) share of funds for Medicaid programs.

OMH hosted multiple stakeholder feedback meetings with over 700 stakeholders to solicit extensive feedback in regard to these funding opportunities and identified *Workforce Investment/System Capacity Building Priorities* as one of four key priority areas.

Eligible OMH entities will include all Medicaid eligible home and community-based providers will receive, specifically:

- Adult Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)
- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)
- Rehabilitation in Community Residence (CR)
- Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS)
- Mental Health Outpatient Treatment and Rehabilitative Services (MHOTRS)

Providers will receive these funds through service rate increases. In addition, certain clinics and other community support programs experiencing operating deficits may be eligible for grant-based awards and will be notified subsequent to this guidance.

Eligible OMH entities may use workforce investment rates for the activities described in this guidance and must file all required documentation. Additionally, eligible providers must commit to efforts to recruit a workforce that is representative of the people they serve and to develop cultural competency skills in their current and prospective workforce through staff development and training.

I. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

The following strategies comprise a list of eligible workforce development initiatives permitted under this contract for OMH-licensed providers. Contracted entities may choose to offer one or more of the following incentives to recruit and retain employees in their eligible programs. These initiatives may be implemented in a manner that meets the needs of each program within the guidelines described below.

Such initiatives may include, but are not limited to:

A. *Recruitment and Retention Incentives*

Funds may be utilized for recruitment and retention bonuses for staff titles as specified by CFR title codes 100 to 500. These incentives are limited to:

- Retention and hiring bonuses, which are limited to no more than 10 percent of an individual's annual salary, not to exceed \$10,000 per employee. Bonuses may be spread out over time;
- Longevity Pay;
- Retirement Contributions and other one-time fringe benefit payment*;
- Differential Pay;
- Hazard Pay;
- Relocation incentives;
- Additional bonus if fully vaccinated.

B. *Educational Expenses*

Funds may be used for tuition, loan forgiveness, and exam and application fees for new and/or existing staff, as long such expenses are directly related to a job requirement or for career advancement, including courses related to cultural competency and diversity trainings. Funds may also be used for registration fees for conferences, tuition for professional development college level courses, and other professional trainings including continuing education courses.

C. *Career Development and Support*

Funds may be used for the creation, promotion, and/or enhancement of internship, fellowship, and/or other career development programs. Providers may collaborate with academic and policy institutions to develop strategies for training staff based on needs assessments and provider interest. Funds may also be used for additional employee engagement and workforce development strategies such as developing or acquiring training curriculum, funding registration fees, and covering expenses for employees to attend or provide training events.

***Due to the time-limited nature of these funds it is strongly recommended that these funds are not used for on-going salary or fringe benefit increases that cannot be supported beyond the grant period. Funds awarded under this scope of work may not be transferred or used for any other project or purpose.**

II. TIMEFRAME AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

A. *Timeframe*

- Rates for programs other than Mental Health Outpatient Treatment and Rehabilitative will be effective October 2021
- Rates for Mental Health Outpatient Treatment and Rehabilitative will be effective February 2022
- Completed attestation form is due by March 31, 2022
- Target date for expending Workforce Recruitment & Retention (WRR) funds December 31, 2023. Please note: MHOTRS programs are required to expend WRR funds by June 30, 2024.

B. Documentation

- Providers must respond to the Workforce Investment Award notification by completing the attestation form by March 31, 2022.
- OMH will be electronically transmitting an Excel file ('WRR Reporting Template) to all providers receiving Workforce Recruitment and Retention funds, whether through State Aid, Medicaid or a combination of both. Additionally, the file is available on the OMH website at <https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/planning/cmhsbg-fmap/> under "Workforce Funding Information".
- Providers in receipt of Workforce Recruitment and Retention funds must complete the expenditure report, and are encouraged to submit to OMH at the earliest practicable date, but no later than March 31, 2024. Please note: MHOTRS programs are required to submit the expenditure report by September 30, 2024.