



December 15, 2021

## **Notice of New Base Wage Requirement for Direct Care Workers**

Dear Direct Care Worker,

I am pleased to announce that starting January 1, 2022, Colorado is instituting a required base wage of \$15 per hour for direct care workers in home and community-based services through Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program).

In September 2021, the Joint Budget Committee approved a plan proposed by the Department of Health Care Policy & Financing to use American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to strengthen the direct care workforce by instituting a \$15 per hour base wage requirement. If you are not being paid \$15 per hour, please contact [HCPF\\_WageCompliance\\_FCU@state.co.us](mailto:HCPF_WageCompliance_FCU@state.co.us). You can also visit the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (<https://cdle.colorado.gov/wage-and-hour-laws>) for more information.

As a direct care worker providing essential services to the most vulnerable Coloradans, you play an instrumental role in ensuring older adults and people with disabilities can live independently in their communities.

I am so pleased to be able to make this change that recognizes the hard work that direct care workers do every day and the essential contribution they make to the care, safety and wellbeing of vulnerable Coloradans.

On behalf of my administration and Coloradans everywhere, thank you for supporting individuals in your work as a direct care worker. We value and appreciate you.

Sincerely,

Governor Jared Polis



### **Additional Important Information**

Effective January 1, 2022, Health First Colorado will increase provider reimbursement rates for these services:

- Adult Day Services
- Alternative Care Facility (ACF)
- Community Connector
- Consumer Directed Attendant Support Services (CDASS)
- Group Residential Support Services (GRSS)
- Homemaker
- Homemaker Enhanced
- In-Home Support Services (IHSS)
- Job Coaching
- Job Development
- Mentorship
- Personal Care
- Prevocational Services
- Respite, In-Home
- Specialized Habilitation
- State Plan Personal Care
- Supported Community Connections
- Supported Living Program

Providers receiving the rate increase must use this funding to meet the new required base wage for employees or independent contractors who provide the services listed above. The base wage is \$15.00 per hour effective January 1, 2022. Providers may pay you more than the base wage, but not less.

### **Per Diem Rates**

If you receive a per diem wage for Individual Residential Support Services (IRSS), your employer is required to increase your per diem wage by the percent of the Department's January 1, 2022 reimbursement rate increase.

### **Minimum Wage**

If you are eligible for a minimum wage that exceeds the base wage requirement, your employer is required to pay the higher wage. Please refer to the links below to see the state and local minimum wage requirements.

[State of Colorado Minimum Wage](#)

[City and County of Denver Minimum Wage](#)

### **Questions or Concerns**

The new regulations can be found here: 10 C.C.R. 2505-10 Section 8.511.

If you have questions about how this impacts you, please contact your employer. If you still have more questions after you talk to your agency, please email [HCPF\\_dcworkforce@state.co.us](mailto:HCPF_dcworkforce@state.co.us).

If you are concerned that your per hour wage does not meet this new requirement that you did not receive the appropriate increase to your per diem wage, please email [HCPF\\_WageCompliance\\_FCU@state.co.us](mailto:HCPF_WageCompliance_FCU@state.co.us). Include your contact information, employer information, and a short summary of the concern.