August 10, 2022

Critical Updates

Paid Sick Leave

On July 1, 2022, the Healthy Workplaces Act of 2021 went into effect in the State of New Mexico. The Healthy Workplaces Act is a law which requires all private employers in New Mexico to allow employees to accrue and use a benefit called earned sick leave. Employees may use this paid leave for various reasons, including illness or injury of the employee or their qualifying family member, and to deal with certain legal and family issues.

In general, employees can earn one hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked. Employees will accrue leave and may use up to 64 hours per year. In addition, employees may carry leave balances from year to year. Employees should speak to their employers to determine the process to request and use this leave. Additional information and a list of FAQs may be reviewed by visiting:

https://www.dws.state.nm.us/NMPaidSickLeave

Electronic Visit Verification for Personal Care and Respite Services

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, in compliance with the 21st Century Cures Act, require all states to use Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) for Personal Care (PCS) and Respite Services. EVV data is collected using the Fiserv/AuthentiCare system. Unless the EOR has an approved electronic timesheet exception, all SDCB PCS and respite employees should be using the EVV system and the EOR should be approving time AuthentiCare.

Training News

Are You Ready for Palco Phase II Go Live?

The transition from FOCoSOnline to Palco Connect is being delayed past the original projected go-live date. With recent wildfires and flooding impacting participants, employees, and provider agencies, the state is postponing the Phase II Go Live to ensure that all Self-Directed Community Benefit (SDCB) members are ready for the changes in Phase II.

The data transition moratorium has been lifted at this time. Members and Support Brokers should continue to submit budgets in the FOCoS online system for initial and revision budgets.

To make sure you're ready for this transition, you should continue to prepare by:
- ✓ Review a Participant/Employer training hosted by Palco
- ✓ Make sure your Worker(s) review a training hosted by Palco
- ✓ Visit www.PalcoFirst.com/New-Mexico to find helpful training resources including recorded training sessions, the Palco Connect user guide, the AuthentiCare mobile app user guide

Trainings for self-directing Employers and Workers have been posted on the Palco YouTube page that allows the individual viewing the trainings to turn on the Closed Caption feature.

Self-directing Employers can access these resources at the following links:
- New Mexico Employer Connect/EVV Training – Spanish (3/22) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsoSN66LeEY
- New Mexico Employer Connect/EVV Training – English (3/22) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7c3P956auU

Self-directing Workers can access these resources at the following links:
- New Mexico Worker Connect/EVV Training – Spanish (3/22) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=686hMIIGs1Y
- New Mexico Worker Connect/EVV Training – English (3/22) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0Xklc-dOMQ

As part of Phase II of this project, we will:

- Transition from FOCoSOnline to the Palco web portal
- Offer an online enrollment option using Palco Intake to enroll new members, employees, and Employers of Record
- Offer an online resource, Palco Connect, for electronic timesheet review and approval for Employers and Workers
- Offer an online administrative resource, Palco Case Management Portal, for professional users like State staff, MCO staff, Utilization Reviewers, Care Coordinators, Support Brokers, and CCSC
- Offer an Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) solution for SDCB Vendor Agency Providers called AuthentiCare

Please continue to review this newsletter for the latest information and updates about the Phase II Go-Live.