

252.46 PAYMENT RATES.

Subdivision 1. **Rates.** (a) Payment rates to vendors, except regional centers, for county-funded day training and habilitation services and transportation provided to persons receiving day training and habilitation services established by a county board are governed by subdivisions 2 to 19. The commissioner shall approve the following three payment rates for services provided by a vendor:

(1) a full-day service rate for persons who receive at least six service hours a day, including the time it takes to transport the person to and from the service site;

(2) a partial-day service rate that must not exceed 75 percent of the full-day service rate for persons who receive less than a full day of service; and

(3) a transportation rate for providing, or arranging and paying for, transportation of a person to and from the person's residence to the service site.

(b) Notwithstanding any law or rule to the contrary, the commissioner may authorize county participation in a voluntary individualized payment rate structure for day training and habilitation services to allow a county the flexibility to change, after consulting with providers, from a site-based payment rate structure to an individual payment rate structure for the providers of day training and habilitation services in the county. The commissioner shall seek input from providers and consumers in establishing procedures for determining the structure of voluntary individualized payment rates to ensure that there is no additional cost to the state or counties and that the rate structure is cost-neutral to providers of day training and habilitation services, on July 1, 2004, or on day one of the individual rate structure, whichever is later.

(c) Medical assistance rates for home and community-based service provided under section 256B.501, subdivision 4, by licensed vendors of day training and habilitation services must not be greater than the rates for the same services established by counties under sections 252.40 to 252.46. For very dependent persons with special needs the commissioner may approve an exception to the approved payment rate under section 256B.501, subdivision 4 or 8.

Subd. 1a. **Day training and habilitation rates.** The commissioner shall establish a statewide rate-setting methodology for all day training and habilitation services. The rate-setting methodology must abide by the principles of transparency and equitability across the state. The methodology must involve a uniform process of structuring rates for each service and must promote quality and participant choice.

Subd. 2. **Rate minimum.** Unless a variance is granted under subdivision 6, the minimum payment rates set by a county board for each vendor must be equal to the payment rates approved by the commissioner for that vendor in effect January 1 of the previous calendar year.

Subd. 3. **Rate maximum.** Unless a variance is granted under subdivision 6, the maximum payment rates for each vendor for a calendar year must be equal to the payment rates approved by the commissioner for that vendor in effect December 1 of the previous calendar year. The commissioner of management and budget shall include as a budget change request in each biennial detailed expenditure budget submitted to the legislature under section 16A.11 annual inflation adjustments in reimbursement rates for each vendor, based upon the projected percentage change in the Urban Consumer Price Index, all items, published by the United States Department of Labor, for the upcoming calendar year over the current calendar year.

Subd. 4. **New vendors.** (a) Payment rates established by a county for a new vendor for which there were no previous rates must not exceed 95 percent of the greater of 125 percent of the statewide median rates or 125 percent of the average payment rates in the regional development commission district under sections 462.381 to 462.396 in which the new vendor is located unless the criteria in paragraph (b) are met.

(b) A payment rate equal to 200 percent of the statewide average rates shall be assigned to persons served by the new vendor when those persons are persons with very severe self-injurious or assaultive behaviors, persons with medical conditions requiring delivery of physician-prescribed medical interventions at one-to-one staffing for at least 15 minutes each time they are performed, or persons discharged from a regional treatment center after May 1, 1993, to the vendor's program. All other persons for whom the new service is needed must be assigned a rate equal to 95 percent of the greater of 125 percent of the statewide median rates or 125 percent of the regional average rates, whichever is higher, and the maximum payment rate that may be recommended is determined by multiplying the number of clients at each limit by the rate corresponding to that limit and dividing the sum by the total number of clients. When the recommended payment rates exceed 95 percent of 125 percent of the greater of the statewide median or regional average rates, whichever is higher, the county must include documentation verifying the medical or behavioral needs of clients. The approved payment rates must be based on 12 months budgeted expenses divided by at least 90 percent of authorized service units associated with the new vendor's licensed capacity. The county must include documentation verifying the person's discharge from a regional treatment center and that admission of new clients to existing services eligible for a rate variance under subdivision 6 was considered before recommending payment rates for a new vendor. Nothing in this subdivision permits development of a new program that primarily results in refinancing of services for individuals already receiving services in existing programs.

Subd. 5. **Submitting recommended rates.** The county board shall submit recommended payment rates to the commissioner on forms supplied by the commissioner at least 60 days before revised payment rates or payment rates for new vendors are to be effective. The forms must include the county board's written verification of the individual documentation required under section 252.44, clause (a). If a vendor provides services at more than one licensed site, the county board may recommend the same payment rates for each site based on the average rate for all sites. The county board may also recommend differing payment rates for each licensed site if it would result in a total annual payment to the vendor that is equal to or less than the total annual payment that would result if the average rates had been used for all sites. For purposes of this subdivision, the average payment rate for all service sites used by a vendor must be computed by adding the amounts that result when the payment rates for each licensed site are multiplied by the projected annual number of service units to be provided at that site and dividing the sum of those amounts by the total units of service to be provided by the vendor at all sites.

Subd. 6. **Variances.** (a) A variance from the minimum or maximum payment rates in subdivisions 2 and 3 may be granted by the commissioner when the vendor requests and the county board submits to the commissioner a written variance request on forms supplied by the commissioner with the recommended payment rates.

(b) A variance to the rate maximum may be utilized for costs associated with compliance with state administrative rules, compliance with court orders, capital costs required for continued licensure, increased insurance costs, start-up and conversion costs for supported employment,

direct service staff salaries and benefits, transportation, and other program related costs when one of the criterion in clauses (1) to (4) is also met:

(1) a determination of need under section 252.28 is approved for a significant program change that is necessary for a vendor to provide authorized services to one or more clients who meet one or more of the following criteria:

(i) the client is a new client and:

(A) exhibits severe behavior as indicated on the screening document;

(B) periodically requires one-to-one staff time for at least 15 minutes at a time to deliver physician prescribed medical interventions; or

(C) has been discharged directly to the vendor's program from a regional treatment center or the Minnesota extended treatment option.

(ii) the client is an existing client who has developed one of the following changed circumstances which increases costs that are not covered by the vendor's current rate, and for whom a significant program change is necessary to ensure the continued provision of authorized services to that client:

(A) severe behavior as indicated on the screening document;

(B) a medical condition periodically requiring one-to-one staff time for at least 15 minutes at a time to deliver physician prescribed medical interventions; or

(C) a permanent decrease in skill functioning, as verified by medical reports or assessments;

(2) a licensing determination requires a program change that the vendor cannot comply with due to funding restraints;

(3) a determination of need under section 252.28 is approved for a significant and permanent decrease in licensed capacity and the vendor demonstrates the need to retain certain staffing levels to serve the remaining clients; or

(4) in cases where conditions in clauses (1) to (3) do not apply, but a determination of need under section 252.28 is approved for an unusual circumstance which exists that significantly impacts the type or amount of services delivered, as evidenced by documentation presented by the vendor and with the concurrence of the commissioner.

(c) A variance to the rate minimum may be granted when:

(1) the county board contracts for increased services from a vendor and for some or all individuals receiving services from the vendor lower per unit fixed costs result; or

(2) the actual costs of delivering authorized service over a 12-month contract period have decreased.

(d) The written variance request under this subdivision must include documentation that all the following criteria have been met:

(1) the commissioner and the county board have both conducted a review and have identified a need for a change in the payment rates and recommended an effective date for the change in the rate;

(2) the vendor documents efforts to reallocate current staff and any additional staffing needs cannot be met by using temporary special needs rate exceptions under Minnesota Rules, parts 9510.1020 to 9510.1140;

(3) the vendor documents that financial resources have been reallocated before applying for a variance. No variance may be granted for equipment, supplies, or other capital expenditures when depreciation expense for repair and replacement of such items is part of the current rate;

(4) for variances related to loss of clientele, the vendor documents the other program and administrative expenses, if any, that have been reduced;

(5) the county board submits verification of the conditions for which the variance is requested, a description of the nature and cost of the proposed changes, and how the county will monitor the use of money by the vendor to make necessary changes in services;

(6) the county board's recommended payment rates do not exceed 95 percent of the greater of 125 percent of the current statewide median or 125 percent of the regional average payment rates, whichever is higher, for each of the regional commission districts under sections 462.381 to 462.396 in which the vendor is located except for the following: when a variance is recommended to allow authorized service delivery to new clients with severe behaviors or with medical conditions requiring delivery of physician prescribed medical interventions, or to persons being directly discharged from a regional treatment center or Minnesota extended treatment options to the vendor's program, those persons must be assigned a payment rate of 200 percent of the current statewide average rates. All other clients receiving services from the vendor must be assigned a payment rate equal to the vendor's current rate unless the vendor's current rate exceeds 95 percent of 125 percent of the statewide median or 125 percent of the regional average payment rates, whichever is higher. When the vendor's rates exceed 95 percent of 125 percent of the statewide median or 125 percent of the regional average rates, the maximum rates assigned to all other clients must be equal to the greater of 95 percent of 125 percent of the statewide median or 125 percent of the regional average rates. The maximum payment rate that may be recommended for the vendor under these conditions is determined by multiplying the number of clients at each limit by the rate corresponding to that limit and then dividing the sum by the total number of clients.

(e) The commissioner shall have 60 calendar days from the date of the receipt of the complete request to accept or reject it, or the request shall be deemed to have been granted. If the commissioner rejects the request, the commissioner shall state in writing the specific objections to the request and the reasons for its rejection.

Subd. 7. Rate reconsiderations. A host county that disagrees with a rate decision of the commissioner under subdivision 6 or 9 may request reconsideration by the commissioner within 45 days after the date the host county received notification of the commissioner's decision. The request must state the reasons why the host county is requesting reconsideration of the rate decision and present evidence explaining the host county's disagreement with the rate decision.

The commissioner shall review the host county's evidence and provide the host county with written notification of the decision on the request within 60 days. The commissioner's decision on the request is final.

Until a reconsideration request is decided, payments must continue at a rate the commissioner determines complies with this section. If a higher rate is approved, the commissioner shall order a retroactive payment as determined in the commissioner's decision.

Subd. 8. **Commissioner's notice to boards, vendors.** The commissioner shall notify the county boards and vendors of the average regional payment rates, 95 percent of 125 percent of the average regional payments rates for each of the regional development commission districts designated in sections 462.381 to 462.396, 95 percent of 125 percent of the statewide median rates, and 200 percent of the statewide average rates.

Subd. 9. **Approval or denial of rates.** The commissioner shall approve the county board's recommended payment rates when the rates and verification justifying the projected service units comply with subdivisions 2 to 18. The commissioner shall notify the county board in writing of the approved payment rates within 60 days of receipt of the rate recommendations. If the rates are not approved, or if rates different from those originally recommended are approved, the commissioner shall within 60 days of receiving the rate recommendation notify the county board in writing of the reasons for denying or substituting a different rate for the recommended rates. Approved payment rates remain effective until the commissioner approves different rates in accordance with subdivisions 2 and 3.

Subd. 10. **Vendor's report; audit.** The vendor shall report to the commissioner and the county board on forms prescribed by the commissioner at times specified by the commissioner. The reports shall include programmatic and fiscal information. The audit must be done according to generally accepted auditing standards to result in statements that include a balance sheet, income statement, changes in financial position, and the certified public accountant's opinion. The county's annual audit shall satisfy the audit required under this subdivision for any county-operated day training and habilitation program. Except for day training and habilitation programs operated by a county, the audit must provide supplemental statements for each day training and habilitation program with an approved unique set of rates.

Subd. 11. **Improper transactions.** Transactions that have the effect of circumventing subdivisions 1 to 18 must not be considered by the commissioner for the purpose of payment rate approval under the principle that the substance of the transaction prevails over the form.

Subd. 12. [Repealed, 1Sp1993 c 1 art 4 s 14]

Subd. 13. [Repealed, 1Sp1993 c 1 art 4 s 14]

Subd. 14. [Repealed, 1Sp1993 c 1 art 4 s 14]

Subd. 15. [Repealed, 1992 c 513 art 9 s 44]

Subd. 16. **Payment rate criteria; allocation of expenditures.** Payment rates approved under subdivision 9 must reflect the payment rate criteria in paragraphs (a) and (b) and the allocation principles in paragraph (c).

(a) Payment rates must be based on reasonable costs that are ordinary, necessary, and related to delivery of authorized client services.

(b) The commissioner shall not pay for:

(1) unauthorized service delivery;

(2) services provided in accordance with receipt of a special grant;

(3) services provided under contract to a local school district;

(4) extended employment services under Minnesota Rules, parts 3300.1950 to 3300.3050, or vocational rehabilitation services provided under Title I, section 110 or Title VI-C, Rehabilitation

Act Amendments of 1992, as amended, and not through use of medical assistance or county social service funds; or

(5) services provided to a client by a licensed medical, therapeutic, or rehabilitation practitioner or any other vendor of medical care which are billed separately on a fee for service basis.

(c) On an annual basis, actual and projected contract year expenses must be allocated to standard budget line items corresponding to direct and other program and administrative expenses as submitted to the commissioner with the host county's recommended payment rates. Central or corporate office costs must be allocated to licensed vendor sites within the group served by the central or corporate office according to the cost allocation principles under section 256B.432.

(d) The vendor must maintain records documenting that clients received the billed services.

Subd. 17. **Hourly rate structure.** Counties participating as host counties under the pilot study of hourly rates established under Laws 1988, chapter 689, article 2, section 117, may recommend continuation of the hourly rates for participating vendors. The recommendation must be made annually under subdivision 5 and according to the methods and standards provided by the commissioner. The commissioner shall approve the hourly rates when service authorization, billing, and payment for services is possible through the Medicaid management information system and the other criteria in this subdivision are met. Counties and vendors operating under the pilot study of hourly rates established under Laws 1988, chapter 689, article 2, section 117, shall work with the commissioner to translate the hourly rates and actual expenditures into rates meeting the criteria in subdivisions 1 to 16 unless hourly rates are approved under this subdivision. If the rates meeting the criteria in subdivisions 1 to 16 are lower than the county's or vendor's current rate, the county or vendor must continue to receive the current rate.

Subd. 18. **Pilot study rates.** By January 1, 1994, counties and vendors operating under the pilot study of hourly rates established under Laws 1988, chapter 689, article 2, section 117, shall work with the commissioner to translate the hourly rates and actual expenditures into rates meeting the criteria in subdivisions 1 to 16 unless hourly rates are approved under subdivision 17.

Subd. 19. **Vendor appeals.** With the concurrence of the county board, a vendor may appeal the commissioner's rejection of a variance request which has been submitted by the county under subdivision 6 and may appeal the commissioner's denial under subdivision 9 of a rate which has been recommended by the county. To appeal, the vendor and county board must file a written notice of appeal with the commissioner. The notice of appeal must be filed or received by the commissioner within 45 days of the postmark date on the commissioner's notification to the vendor and county agency that a variance request or county recommended rate has been denied. The notice of appeal must specify the reasons for the appeal, the dollar amount in dispute, and the basis in statute or rule for challenging the commissioner's decision.

Within 45 days of receipt of the notice of appeal, the commissioner must convene a reconciliation conference to attempt to resolve the rate dispute. If the dispute is not resolved to the satisfaction of the parties, the parties may initiate a contested case proceeding under sections 14.57 to 14.69. In a contested case hearing held under this section, the appealing party must demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence that the commissioner incorrectly applied the governing law or regulations, or that the commissioner improperly exercised the commissioner's discretion, in refusing to grant a variance or in refusing to adopt a county recommended rate.

Until the appeal is fully resolved, payments must continue at the existing rate pending the appeal. Retroactive payments consistent with the final decision shall be made after the appeal is fully resolved.

Subd. 20. Study of day training and habilitation vendors. The commissioner shall study the feasibility of grouping vendors of similar size, location, direct service staffing needs or performance outcomes to establish payment rate limits that define cost-effective service. Based on the conclusions of the feasibility study the department shall consider developing a method to redistribute dollars from less cost-effective to more cost-effective services based on vendor achievement of performance outcomes. The department shall report to the legislature by January 15, 1996, with results of the study and recommendations for further action. The department shall consult with an advisory committee representing counties, service consumers, vendors, and the legislature.

Subd. 21. Managed care pilot. (a) The commissioner may initiate a capitated risk-based managed care option for persons with developmental disabilities, which includes capitated payments for day training and habilitation and alternative active treatment services. The commissioner may permit the health plan, care system, or other health plan network participating in this managed care option to negotiate day training and habilitation rates. The commissioner may grant a variance to any of the provisions in sections 252.40 to 252.46 and Minnesota Rules, parts 9525.1200 to 9525.1580, necessary to implement the pilot.

(b) The commissioner shall report to the legislature financial and program results along with a recommendation as to whether the pilot should be expanded.

History: 1987 c 403 art 5 s 14; 1988 c 532 s 3-8; 1988 c 689 art 2 s 114-117; 1989 c 282 art 2 s 93-98; 1990 c 568 art 3 s 8-12; 1991 c 292 art 4 s 9-11; art 6 s 40; 1992 c 513 art 7 s 12; 1Sp1993 c 1 art 4 s 6; 1Sp1993 c 6 s 42; 1995 c 207 art 3 s 6-11; 1997 c 7 art 1 s 99; 1997 c 36 s 1; 1999 c 245 art 5 s 11; 2003 c 47 s 1; 1Sp2003 c 14 art 3 s 10; 2005 c 56 s 1; 2005 c 98 art 3 s 17; 2009 c 79 art 8 s 10; 2009 c 101 art 2 s 109