

BE EXCEPTIONAL LEARNING CORNER



Training Announcements

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), Office of Human Resources and Learning, are offering virtual and in-person trainings. Listed below are those currently scheduled. For more information regarding trainings, [click here](#).



If you have any questions, please contact DBHDDLearning@dbhdd.ga.gov.

Lighting the Path

2025 Georgia Suicide Prevention Conference Peachtree City, GA



Preconference: February 17, 2025 | **Conference:** February 18 – 20, 2025

SAVE THE DATE and plan to join us for Georgia's largest suicide prevention event of 2025, hosted by the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), Office of Federal Grant Programs & Suicide Prevention. A pre-conference day will be held on Monday, February 17, 2025, with the 2.5-day conference being held February 18 - 20, 2025.

This statewide learning and networking event brings together suicide prevention, mental health, and behavioral health stakeholders to examine emerging suicide data, learn about innovative prevention programs, and provide opportunities to engage with peers and subject-matter experts on practices and methods in suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. This event is intended to benefit suicide attempt/loss survivors, preventionists, clinicians, educators, community members, coalitions / task forces, researchers, administrators, first responders, crisis service providers, and all those invested in saving lives and preventing suicide in Georgia.

Registration and conference details to follow.

Visit the conference event page at Prevent Suicide GA for updates.

<https://preventsuicidega.org/event/conference-25/>

**Fall 2024
Technology For All**

Training Series

Important Opportunity for Self-Advocates and Others to Learn About the Use and Benefits of Technology



Sign up now for a FREE series of live internet-based training sessions on using technology. Learn how to use Zoom, Facebook, email, web browsers, Alexa, Google Search, SmartPhones and Tablets. Being included in the Internet is more important than ever for people with disabilities. **Don't be left behind!**

Join us for a series of tech training sessions for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, DSPs, and other allies to overcome the digital divide.

This series of training starts on Thursday November 7th, 2024, at 10 am. They will be held on the first Thursday of every month from November 2024 through May 2025. Each month will cover a different topic.

[Click the link](#) to register for the series.

More information on this series is available by [clicking here](#). For any questions, please contact mytechforall99@gmail.com.

Featured Article



988 Lifeline Sees Rising Call, Text and Chat Volume in Georgia

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, including GCAL services, has seen increased volume in Georgia this fall. September alone saw 26,627 contacts—a mix of calls, texts, and chats. This marks the highest monthly volume in 2024 thus far, highlighting both the increasing need for mental health support and the growing public awareness of 988 as a critical resource.

Year-to-date, the 988 Lifeline in Georgia has managed 217,785 contacts through calls, texts, and chats. This surge in outreach corresponds to a 17% increase compared to the average monthly volume in 2023, reflecting the impact of expanded outreach efforts and marketing campaigns.

Anna Bourque, Director of ASO Coordination, emphasized the importance of ongoing collaboration, stating, *“Georgia DBHDD has been working diligently to ensure that every resident in need can easily access critical mental health support through the 988 Lifeline. This continued rise in contact volume reflects both the trust individuals have placed in the service and the effectiveness of our statewide awareness efforts.”*

As awareness grows, so does the demand across the crisis continuum of care. Georgia’s DBHDD has been instrumental in raising statewide awareness, achieving a notable

increase from 67% to 84.7% in public recognition of the “Suicide & Crisis Lifeline” in Georgia over the past year. This awareness campaign, launched in November 2023, has effectively reached diverse communities, resulting in record contact volumes and reflecting the public’s growing trust in 988 as a vital mental health resource. The surge in September serves as both a testament to DBHDD’s impactful efforts and a reminder of the need for ongoing support to meet the mental health needs of all Georgians.

[To read more, click here.](#)

Division of Developmental Disabilities

Nationally Certified Crisis Curriculum Training Providers



Nationally Certified Crisis Training Providers that certify instructors to train on de-escalation and intervention techniques, as some interventions are physical, even if it is a safety hold or guided escort, have different requirements and stipulations for those certified as instructors/trainers. Some certified crisis training providers will only allow certified instructors to train within their own organization, while others provide a list of other trained crisis curriculum instructors in a specific state if an agency loses a trainer.

Please remember to contact the Certified Crisis Training Provider your agency has selected to ensure your agency is following their requirements for use of a certified curriculum instructor for staff training for your organization.

Nationally Certified Crisis Training Providers

HCBS Settings Rule Survey

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has introduced new regulations to improve the quality and protections associated with Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS), which cover long-term services and supports provided in home and community-based settings. The HCBS Final Rule is focused on enhancing the quality of life for individuals receiving these services through a person-centered planning approach and clearly defined setting qualifications.



Georgia is required to document that our HCBS settings that apply are meeting compliance and the initial compliance is going to be based on an assessment survey.

This was discussed at both the August and November 2024 provider meetings, and DCH has sent the HCBS provider survey to all NOW and COMP Waiver providers to whom the HCBS Settings Rule is applicable. Below are the services which are encompassed by the HCBS Settings Rule and require a survey for each service site:

- Community Residential Alternative including Host Home
- Community Access Group
- Community Access Group – Co-Employer
- Supported Employment Group
- Supported Employment Group – Co-Employer

- Out of Home Respite
- Out of Home Respite – Co-Employer
- Prevocational Service

**Please note each service site requires completion of the HCBS provider survey.*

Some provider locations were not polled, and the survey tool is being offered to those sites that were not polled in August 2024. If you have completed a survey for a specific service and site, you will NOT need to complete another survey.

The HCBS provider survey went to the contact email for each service site which is identified on the **Georgia Medicaid Management Information System (GAMMIS)** website. This email address can be found by hovering over the "**Provider Enrollment**" tab and selecting the link for "**Provider Contract Status**". Once on the webpage, enter the applicable Medicaid Provider ID for the site in question to obtain the email address of the staff which received the HCBS survey.

The surveys for each service site must be completed by Wednesday, November 20, 2024

Access to the survey may also be found by logging into the secure Web Portal and viewing and clicking on the message(s) with the subject title, "[Provider Number]: HCBS Assessment Required".

Messages						
Category	Subject	Sent Date	Effective Date	End Date	Remove	
INTRODUCTION	Provider Number : HCBS Assessment Required	10/31/2024	10/31/2024	11/20/2024	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Instructions on how to access secure provider messages are in the **Web Portal Navigational Manual**, available at the link below.

GAMMIS Web Portal Navigational Manual

For any questions or issues with completion of the survey, please contact HCBSTransition@dch.ga.gov.

DCH Banner Message: Revised Details and Dates Regarding the Rate Increase

Revised Information Noted in Red



Per the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) banner message dated 10/30/2024, DCH announced the completion of system programming to accommodate the 7/1/2024 increased rates for the NOW and COMP programs. **Some dates and details in the 10/30/2024 banner message have been REVISED as follows:**

Effective immediately, providers should bill the higher rate for dates of service on or after 7/1/2024. The billing procedure codes, and increased rate amounts can be found in DBHDD’s **Provider Relations Learning Corner for October 15, 2024**, under the heading, “NOW/COMP & State Funded Services Updated Rate Tables”. Rates are also accessible at <https://mmis.georgia.gov>> Provider Information> Provider Notices> “NOW/COMP July 1, 2024, Rate Increase Code listing”.

It is estimated that these updates will occur in multiple phases as needed:

- **Phase 1: 11/6/2024 – 11/25/2024**
 - During the week beginning 11/9/2024 through 11/13/2024, providers are asked to withhold submitting new claims or claims adjustments so updates to PAs can occur. Note, any claims received during this window will be held in suspense and not released until 11/14/2024. Providers can resume claims submission as of 9:00 am on the morning of Thursday, 11/14/2024.
 - An additional week will be needed between Saturday, 11/16/2024 and Wednesday, 11/20/2024 where providers will be asked to hold new claims. **Note, any claims received during this window will be held in suspense and not released until Thursday, 11/21/2024.** Providers can resume claims submission as of 9:00am on the morning of Thursday, 11/21/2024.
- **Phase 2: 12/4/2024 – 12/16/2024**
 - During the week beginning 12/7/2024 through 12/11/2024, providers are asked to withhold submitting new claims or claims adjustments so updates to PAs can occur. Note, any claims received during this window will be held in suspense and not released until 12/12/2024. Providers can resume claims submission as of 9:00 am on the morning of Thursday, 12/12/2024.
- **Phase 3: 1/8/2025 – 1/20/2025**
 - During the week beginning 1/11/2025 through 1/15/2025, providers are asked to withhold submitting new claims or claims adjustments so updates to PAs can occur. Note, any claims received during this window will be held in suspense and not released until 1/16/2024. Providers can resume claims submission as of 9:00 am on the morning of Thursday, 1/16/2024.
- **Phase 4: 1/22/2025 – 2/3/2025**
 - During the week beginning 1/25/2025 through 1/29/2025, providers are asked to withhold submitting new claims or claims adjustments so updates to PAs can occur. Note, any claims received during this window will be held in suspense and not released until 1/30/2024. Providers can resume claims submission as of 9:00 am on the morning of Thursday, 1/30/2024.

Additional communications will occur as these dates draw near.

Claim Voids & Mass Resubmission

Providers should be aware that there will be some claims that have to be voided to accommodate the PA updates referenced above. Previously paid claims have already posted against PA's that have not yet been updated. Providers will see those voided claims along with the resubmitted claims on Remittance Advices (RA's) on the payments occurring **Monday, 11/25/2024** for Phase 1.

All voided claims will be mass-resubmitted by Gainwell upon the completion of the PA load. Providers will not have to re-submit any voided claims.

Please note that the voided claims can be viewed in the web portal. These claims will be automatically re-submitted and will appear on the RAs on payments occurring Monday, 11/25/2024.

Providers should check banner messages frequently, as any additional updates regarding the NOW/COMP rate increase will be shared there. Providers needing billing assistance should reach out to their assigned Gainwell Field Representative via the '[Contact Us](#)' feature in the GAMMIS web portal.

Please review the above message on the [GAMMIS web portal](#) by hovering over "Providers" and selecting "Provider Messages" from the dropdown menu.

**DCH Extends Billing Authorization
Due to Hurricane Helene**

Due to the impact of Hurricane Helene, Governor Kemp and the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA) have declared a State of Emergency for all 159 counties throughout the State. Additionally, the Department of Health and Human Services has declared a Public Health Emergency, as authorized under section 319 of the public Health Service Act, for the State of Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina.

IN CASE YOU
MISSED IT ...

To review all the press releases regarding the statewide State of Emergency for Hurricane Helene, [click here](#).

Click the link below to review the updated letter from the Department of Community Health for more information on the continued authorization of Medicaid billing for the temporary emergency evacuation of the evacuating CRA and CAG settings due to Hurricane Helene.

Hurricane Helene: DCH Medicaid Billing
Directive

Office of Provider Relations & ASO Coordination

Question for your Provider Relations Team?

The Provider Issue Management System (PIMS) is your online source to have your questions answered in a consistent, reliable and timely way! In addition to providing a timely response, the information we gather from PIMS will assist DBHDD in trending common concerns, developing FAQs, and informing policy reviews. You can access the PIMS site directly by using the link below.

Provider Issue Management System

PIMS is also accessible through the [DBHDD website](#) by selecting the "Submit a Question to Provider Relations" tile on the DBHDD homepage.

Director
Anna Bourque

Senior Provider Relations Managers
Carole Crowley
Sharon Pyles

For Provider Relations inquiries,
please contact us at
DBHDD.Provider@dbhdd.ga.gov.



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