

For publication on Sunday, October 25, 2015; and Wednesday, October 28, 2015

The U.S. Department of Public Health and Human Services' Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published regulations in the Federal Register (42.CFR 441.301(c)(4)-(6)) on 1/16/14, effective 3/17/14, and changed the definition of Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) settings for section 1915(c) Medicaid Waivers and approved state plans providing HCBS under section 1915(i).

These rules require a transition plan, allowing up to five years from the regulations' effective date for states to come into full compliance. The new rules also require states to develop and submit a transition plan identifying how their Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers and 1915(i) state plans providing HCBS services will be brought into compliance with the new outcome-oriented definition of HCBS settings. The transition plan is required in conjunction with any waiver amendment or renewal submitted following the implementation of the new regulation. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) previously provided an opportunity for public comment on Montana's HCBS Transition Plan and the Provider Self-Assessment Tool.

The next crucial next step in Montana's transition plan is to validate the provider self-assessments that occurred between 7/15/15 and 8/21/15, with the new regulations. DPHHS is now seeking input on the Validation Tool and the revised statewide transition plan.

This public notice, Validation Tool, revised statewide transition plan, and other related information for participating in and submitting comments are posted on the DPHHS website at: <http://dphhs.mt.gov/hcbs>. The state, upon request, will make available hard copies of the Validation Tool and revised statewide transition plan.

As an additional opportunity for public comment, DPHHS will hold a public meeting on 11/20/15 from 10 AM to 11:30 AM at the Department of Environmental Quality (Lee Metcalf Building), 1520 East 6th Ave., Helena, MT. Individuals who need assistance to participate during this meeting should call (406) 444-2584.

The public meeting can also be accessed via webinar by going to <http://dphhs.mt.gov/hcbs> and clicking on the webinar link.

The call in number and access code are:

Toll free#: 1-877-668-4490

Access code: 803 428 189

Comments and other input on this proposed Validation Tool and revised statewide transition plan should be submitted **by 5 pm on 11/25/15**, by phone at (406) 444-2584; email at MKulawik@mt.gov with Validation Tool in the subject line; or via mail to: Mary Eve Kulawik, DPHHS, 111 N. Sanders St., Room 301, PO Box 4210, Helena, MT 59604.