



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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Administrative Directive Memorandum

Section 1

Transmittal:	23-ADM-03
To:	Social Services District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Employment and Income Support Programs
Date:	June 7, 2023
Subject:	Changes Authorized by Chapter 819 of the Laws of 2022 Regarding Home Visiting Services
Suggested Distribution:	Employment Coordinators, SNAP Directors, Temporary Assistance Directors, Staff Development Coordinators
Contact Person(s):	Employment and Advancement Services Bureau at: (518) 486-6106 or otda.sm.eisp.eas@otda.ny.gov
Attachments:	Attachment A – “Let’s Talk About Home Visiting Benefits” Flyer Attachment B – NYS Parent Portal Flyer

Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
22-ADM-08 11-ADM-06 08-ADM-07		18 NYCRR §385.2 §385.3 §385.5 §385.6, §385.8, §385.9	Social Services Law (SSL) §332 §335 §335-b §336	Employment Policy Manual Sections 2,3,5, 6, 8 & 9	7 CFR 273.7 7 CFR 273.24

Section 2

I. Summary

This Administrative Directive (ADM) is to inform social services districts (districts) of the following changes resulting from amendments to Social Services Law (SSL) made by Chapter 819 of the Laws of 2022 regarding voluntary parental, infant, and early childhood home visiting services.

- Section 332 of SSL was amended to provide that applicants and recipients (A/R) of Public Assistance (PA) may receive voluntary parental, infant, and early childhood home visiting services if they meet the eligibility criteria and such services are available. Districts are

required to provide information about such home visiting services that use an evidence-based or evidence-informed service delivery model, to A/Rs of PA who may be interested in such services. In addition, districts are required to help determine the most appropriate program in which to refer the A/R based on their needs. These services are available to A/Rs whether exempt or non-exempt from work activities.

- Section 335 of SSL was amended to require that districts include a review during the assessment process regarding whether home visiting services would be appropriate and beneficial and if so, encourage participation in such programs that are available. The amendments also require that such participation in home visiting programs count toward the individual's work requirement.
- Section 336 of SSL was amended to include home visiting services as part of the work activity definition of job search and job readiness.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this ADM is to inform districts of changes to sections 332, 335 and 336 of the SSL as authorized by Chapter 819 of the Laws of 2022 regarding voluntary parental, infant, and early childhood home visiting services, and to provide direction to districts for implementing these new provisions. Districts must implement these changes as soon as possible, but no later than sixty days from the issuance of this ADM.

III. Background

Voluntary parental, infant, and early childhood home visiting programs, using an evidence-based or evidence-informed service delivery model, are proven to have positive impacts on a variety of child and family well-being outcomes. Some of these include improved parental and child health; enhanced parent-child relationships; improved child development and increased school readiness; family economic self-sufficiency; and a reduction of child abuse and neglect reports and incidents.

Home visiting programs partner with families to build on their strengths by assessing their resources and needs, developing individual and family goals, accessing health care (including assistance with health insurance enrollment), providing information on various health topics including prenatal care and child development, supporting positive parent-child relationships, and connecting families to resources. Home visitors are trained in their specific model, and can be social workers, nurses, community health workers, and other professionals and paraprofessionals.

Eligibility for home visiting services varies by program, but generally include families with young children up to 5 years old and individuals who are pregnant. Below is a listing of some home visiting programs available in many parts of NYS:

- **Early Head Start** - Enrolls families who are pregnant or with a child up to 3 years old. The type of services the program provides may include comprehensive health/nutrition care for pregnant individuals, infants/toddlers and their families; weekly 90-minute home visits with a Family Development Specialist; opportunities for parents to learn more about their child's development and learn to plan parent/child activities to enhance their child's growth.
[Head Start Locator](#)
- **Healthy Families NY** - Enrolls families who are pregnant or with a child less than 3 months old. The Healthy Families New York home visiting program matches parents with knowledgeable and caring workers who provide information and support during pregnancy and early childhood. Services include helping families access community resources and services, educating families

on parenting and child development, developing individual and family goals, connecting families with medical providers, and assessing children for developmental delays.

<https://www.healthyfamiliesnewyork.org/>

- **Newborn Home Visiting Program** - NYC based program that is open to first-time parents who live in a Taskforce on Racial Inclusion and Equity (TRIE) neighborhood. It is also available to families who have a baby 0-to-3 months old and who are:
 - New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents in a TRIE neighborhood
 - Currently receiving help from the Administration for Children's Services
 - Residing in a Department of Homeless Services shelter

<https://growingupnyc.cityofnewyork.us/programs/newborn-home-visiting-program/>
- **Nurse-Family Partnership** - Enrolls first time parents who are less than 28 weeks pregnant. Nurse-Family Partnership uses specially educated nurses who regularly visit a first-time parent, starting early in the pregnancy and continuing until the child's second birthday. Research consistently proves that the partnership between a nurse and the parent is a winning combination that makes a measurable, long-term difference for the whole family.

<https://www.nursefamilypartnership.org/locations/New-York/>
- **ParentChild+** - Enrolls children 16-48 months. Works with families facing significant obstacles to school and life success including poverty, low literacy, limited education, language barriers, and/or homelessness.

<https://www.parentchildplus.org/state/ny/>
- **Parents as Teachers** - Enrolls families who are pregnant or with children who are infants or up to starting kindergarten. The evidence-based program model provides a wide array of services to families with children from prenatal through kindergarten and offers deep insights into early childhood development.

<https://parentsasteachers.org/>
- **Perinatal & Infant Community Health Collaborative (PICHC)** - Enrolls pregnant or parenting individuals with infants or young children until their needs are met or their youngest child is age 2. PICHC programs use strategies to improve the health and well-being of individuals of reproductive age and their families with a focus on individuals in the prenatal, postpartum, and interconception periods. PICHC programs use individual-level approaches to improve perinatal health behaviors, and community-level approaches to address the social factors that impact health outcomes ([Social Determinants of Health | CDC](#)). The core individual-level strategy is the use of Community Health Workers (CHWs) to provide outreach and support to eligible individuals at risk for, or with a history of, poor birth outcomes, or those not already connected to care.

<https://www.health.ny.gov/community/adults/women/pichc>
- **Power of Two** - Enrolls parents/caregivers of children ages 6-48 months. Parent Coaches partner with caregivers to deliver [Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-Up](#) (ABC), an evidence-based, rigorously tested program that helps caregivers tap into their inherent potential to parent sensitively. The program combines science with a community-centered approach that contributes to healing from trauma, builds parental confidence and pride, reduces parental depression, and strengthens the emotional bonds between caregivers and children.

<https://powerof2.nyc/>
- **SafeCare** - Enrolls parents and their children from birth through age 5. An evidence-based, parent-training program for parents of children ages 0–5 who are at risk for, or have been reported for, child neglect or physical abuse. SafeCare providers work with families in their homes to improve parents' skills in three areas: parent-child interaction, child health and home safety. The program is conducted in weekly home visits for about 18 weeks.

The programs listed above are the most widely used in NYS, but there may be other home visiting models operating in various counties.

IV. Program Implications

The amendments to SSL made by Chapter 819 of the Laws of 2022 require districts to modify their eligibility interview, orientation, assessment, and employment plan processes to provide information and referrals, where beneficial and appropriate to A/Rs for available home visiting programs. Under these amendments, districts are required to provide every A/R who is the parent or caretaker of a child under age five with information on home visiting services to the extent that these programs are available locally. In addition, home visiting services have been added as an allowable activity under the job search and job readiness work activity definition, and time spent in home visiting activities must be counted toward the individual's work requirement.

All home visiting programs are voluntary. While districts are required to provide information, encourage participation, and make referrals to appropriate and available home visiting programs, individuals cannot be mandated to participate. No negative action can be taken if an individual is referred to but fails/declines to participate in a home visiting program.

Districts should be aware of which providers offer services in their county and should reach out to them to get an understanding of the capacity and eligibility requirements of those programs. To assist counties with obtaining this information, a county-by-county list can be found at the NYS Child Care, After School, and Parent Support (Home Visiting) Programs Locator which can be accessed through www.nysparenting.org or the direct link below under the Locate Parent Support (Home Visiting) Programs tab:

[NYS Home Visiting Program Locator](#)

V. Required Action

Initial Screening and Referral- (intake/certification/recertification)

To encourage households to use these valuable services, districts are required to consider whether a PA A/R may be a candidate to receive voluntary parental, infant, and early childhood home visiting services. While the recently enacted legislation requires that PA A/Rs be screened for applicability of these services during the assessment, certain employment-exempt populations may not initially be referred for district employment services. In such cases, districts should review their local processes and consider providing information and referrals for home visiting services during the PA eligibility interview or make changes to their employment orientation procedures to ensure exempt eligible PA A/Rs receive such information in a timely manner. Specifically, this should be reviewed at application, recertification, and any time the district is aware that the client's status may have changed to warrant a referral to home visiting services. If the PA A/R appears to be a candidate for such services and an appropriate home visiting program is available, the district worker should encourage participation. If the PA A/R is interested in voluntarily participating in a home visiting program, the district worker should provide information and a referral to an appropriate home visiting program in the county.

Districts are strongly encouraged to reach out to local home visiting providers to discuss program design, eligibility, services offered, consent for information sharing, capacity for referrals, and to establish a formal referral process. This will ensure that appropriate referrals are provided, and a more coordinated service process is established for clients. This referral process can be implemented in accordance with current district operations. There is no mandated method for the

referral process, however referrals must be offered to all families considered appropriate candidates for the home visiting services. Districts should consider assigning a staff member to be the lead contact responsible for reaching out to local home visiting programs to obtain program details, establish a referral process, and discuss information sharing implications.

All home visiting programs are voluntary. While districts are required to provide information, make referrals to appropriate and available home visiting programs, and should encourage participation, individuals cannot be mandated to participate. No negative action can be taken if an individual chooses not to participate in a home visiting program.

To further support district efforts, attached to this ADM is an outreach poster with general information regarding the benefits of home visiting programs. OTDA encourages districts to post this in local district offices in a prominent location(s) where visitors will be likely to see it. Also included is a flyer that provides information about the NYS Parent Portal. The NYS Parent Portal contains information and links to home visiting providers as well as childcare providers, after school providers, and other valuable services/information for parents. This flyer can be printed and posted or provided to workers and clients.

Employment Orientation

Districts must update their employment orientation process to provide information about locally available home visiting programs including eligibility requirements and the types of services offered through these programs so individuals interested in receiving such services are educated on the available options. Districts may need to make changes to their orientation procedures to ensure that exempt PA A/Rs who appear to be a good fit for home visiting services receive information about locally available programs in their county in a timely fashion.

Assessment and Employability Plan

SSL §335 requires that districts complete assessments within 90 days of the date on which eligibility is determined for households with dependent children. However, districts are encouraged to prioritize the completion of the assessment to begin connecting individuals to needed services and activities as soon as possible. While reassessments must be completed no less frequently than annually, districts should conduct a reassessment anytime they become aware of a change in individual or case circumstances.

Districts may choose to use the LDSS-4980, a locally developed assessment tool, the Welfare-to-Work Caseload Management System (WTWCMS) or New York City Work Accountability and You (NYCWAY) assessment functions to record the information gathered during the client assessment. Prior to the completion of the assessment, the district may assign the A/R to work activities.

While conducting an assessment with a PA A/R, districts must evaluate whether a referral to locally available home visiting services is appropriate and whether the individual is interested in participating. Evidence-based and evidence-informed home visiting programs are shown to have many positive outcomes with long lasting impacts for both the parent and child. OTDA intends to make updates to the Assessment function in WTWCMS to include questions regarding home visiting. Until those system changes in WTWCMS are completed, districts must ensure that each A/R is assessed to determine whether home visiting services may be suitable for them and if so, make sure they are referred to the most appropriate available program if interested in participating. This assessment should be documented in the client's case record.

Assignment to Home Visiting

Section 336 of SSL was amended to include home visiting services as part of the job search and job readiness work activity definition. Participation in the home visiting program as a job readiness activity is strictly voluntary for both exempt and non-exempt A/Rs who may be eligible to receive these services. If an individual is interested in participating and there is an appropriate program available to refer the individual to, districts must include the activity of home visiting in the individual's Employment Plan (EP). If an individual who is participating in a home visiting program fails to comply with the activity, the district is not permitted to initiate a conciliation or impose a sanction, as the activity is voluntary. Should the client stop attending a home visiting program as assigned in their EP, the district may assign the individual to another activity as deemed appropriate based on their assessment and employability status. Districts may also assign individuals who are participating in home visiting activities to other concurrent activities so long as the activities do not conflict with the home visiting services.

Due to the voluntary nature of home visiting activities, districts will not be reporting actual hours of participation in such activities into WTWCMS and/or New York City Department of Social Services Human Resources Administration (NYC DSS/HRA) systems, regardless of whether the individual is determined to be exempt or non-exempt from PA work requirements.

Districts should accept client self-attestation of participation in such activities for individuals who are exempt from work activities and document information provided by the client regarding their participation into the case record. For clients who participate in home visiting activities when they are non-exempt from work activities, districts are required to take into consideration the time an individual spends in home visiting services toward their overall work requirement. In general, determination of the time a non-exempt individual participates in home visiting activities should be done through client self-attestation and documented in the case record. Districts can require the client to provide confirmation of home visiting participation if the client expresses that they have a conflict with participation in other district assigned activities due to receiving home visiting services, or if the client is self-reporting home visit hours but refuses to participate in other work activities assigned through their employability plan. The client would confirm the participation by obtaining verification from their home visiting provider. Should the client wish to have the district worker speak directly to the home visiting provider, a consent to share information with the home visiting program provider must be obtained. In general, districts should rely on self-attestation from the client regarding their participation in such programs and districts should only require verification when conflicts arise regarding client participation in other work activities.

SNAP E&T Work Requirement Implications

The time an individual spends attending home visiting services is not an allowable SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) activity, and thus cannot count toward the mandatory SNAP E&T work requirements. Consistent with federal regulations and reporting requirements for SNAP imposed by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), participation in home visiting services captured in WTWCMS and/or NYC DSS/HRA systems will not be reported as participation in SNAP E&T for individuals in PA/SNAP households. However, the time spent with a case manager to determine if an individual could benefit from a parenting skills class or home visiting services, including the time spent together to identify resources in the community, is considered part of SNAP E&T case management and should be reported as such.

VI. Systems Implications

OTDA has added a new activity to the Activity drop-down menu in WTWCMS titled Home Visiting Services. Please note that creating an enrollment for Home Visiting Services is used solely for State tracking and reporting. Hours reported as Home Visiting Services will not be included in the federal participation rate calculation at this time.

The assessment section of WTWCMS will also be updated to contain a new drop-down mandatory question set that directly relates to home visiting programs. The questions will address the eligibility requirements set forth by home visiting programs statewide for new and expecting parents, or households with children of various ages between 0-5 years old. These questions will aim to assist the district with determining the most appropriate home visiting program the client would be eligible for prior to making a referral. The referral section through WTWCMS is also being updated to allow districts to complete a referral to home visiting services in WTWCMS. After these changes are completed, district staff will be able to create and track/report referrals within this system. District staff will also be able to add their local home visiting providers into the WTWCMS provider directory to facilitate the referral and enrollment process. Districts should generate manual referrals until the systems changes are completed.

VII. Effective Date

All provisions in Chapter 819 of the Laws of 2022 as outlined in this ADM should be implemented within sixty days of the issuance of this ADM.

Issued By:

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Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Employment and Income Support Programs / Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance