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**Sent:** Friday, April 17, 2020 4:07 PM

**To:** AHS - VDH Childrens Personal Care Svs <[AHS.VDHChildrensPersonalCareSvs@vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.VDHChildrensPersonalCareSvs@vermont.gov)>

**Subject:** IMPORTANT UPDATE to Children's Personal Care Services COVID changes

Hello,

I am writing to share a few updates regarding the recent changes to Children's Personal Care Services.

- **ARIS Solutions** has included this version of our [guidance document](#), along with a blank copy of the payment form and a prepaid return envelope in this week's round of spending reports mailed to families.
  - Going forward, families will need to request prepaid envelopes from ARIS on an individual basis. ARIS customer service can be reached at: 800-798-1658.
  - New versions of the CPCS guidance document will be uploaded to our website, emailed to this group, and mailed with ARIS spending reports as well.
- **\*\*\*\*CORRECTION:** upon further and ongoing legal review, **the State cannot guarantee these payments are tax-exempt.**
  - In the [Town Hall presentation](#) hosted by the Vermont Family Network, as well as in the initial version of the guidance document, we indicated these payments would be tax-exempt.
  - The State has requested additional waiver authority to classify these payments as "difficulty of care" payments. This would increase the probability that they could be considered tax-exempt, but as things stand, **families will need to consider the potential income and tax implications of accessing these payments on an individual basis.**
  - We will communicate updates when we have them via email, written notice (i.e. postal service), and online.
  - We understand this is a significant correction, during an already challenging time, and we are working to address the matter as quickly as possible.
- **Follow Up:** questions posed during the Town Hall.
  - Question: [What is the Office of Inspector General's \(OIG\)](#) exclusion list?
    - Context: there is no background check associated with these payments, unlike when a family hires a PCA to provide care. However, ARIS will check parents' names against the OIG exclusion list.
    - Answer: The OIG's exclusion list contains individuals who have been determined ineligible to receive Medicaid payments, most likely due to a prior fraud conviction.
  - Question: how will these payments impact my own benefits, such as social security, ReachUp, fuel assistance, etc.?
    - Answer: We are continuing to look into the benefits accessed through the Economic Services Division of the Department for Children and Families, but given all the variables used to determine an individual or family's eligibility, the State cannot provide guidance at this time. Families are encouraged to communicate with the Social Security Administration about their individual circumstances.

- **Communication Strategy:** we are working to ensure that all families with CPCS are made aware of the temporary changes.
  - In addition to the written notices included with the ARIS mailers and the online updates, CPCS is asking our partners at the regional Designated Agencies, as well as the CSHN Care Coordination Team, to help distribute these updates to families, medical homes, CIS teams, and special educators. If you are receiving this email, please feel free to share it with your community and neighbors!
  - The Communications Team at the Vermont Department of Health is presently translating our guidance document so that New Americans and non-English speaking community members are receiving meaningful updates as well.

We hope you are staying healthy and connected. We are here to answer questions about Children's Personal Care, so please don't hesitate to reach out.

Best, Adam

[Visit our website for information about changes to Children's Personal Care Services](#)

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