SLIDE #1

The state has an obligation to ensure that enough highly qualified providers exist within the Medicaid network to serve Delaware families. The application process requires the applicant’s commitment of time and attention and the availability of staff and resources to complete the application. The application may seem daunting, and it will require a good bit of work. We hope that this session will give you the tools and information you need to create and submit a successful application.

Before you begin writing your application narrative, read through the entire application. Determine whether your agency has the capacity to complete the application in the existing time frame. If your agency has other pressing deadlines, or you have other high priority activities that are coming up, you may choose to submit this application at a future time.

Once you’ve decided that the time is right to start on your application, here are some key points to help you get started on the right foot.

SLIDE #2

Do Your Homework!

Solid preparation and research will make a difference as you plan and prepare your application. Not devoting enough time to this phase of your work will make writing your narrative harder. This homework will further help you determine whether you have the capacity to prepare an application and, if so, how to manage your time more effectively.

For example, the Provider Manual references several documents that will be helpful in your proposal writing. The narrative asks about your agency’s ability to comply with provider standards, the HCBS Waiver, and the HCBS Settings Rule. You must be familiar with those documents to respond adequately. Reviewers will know whether you’ve done your homework – and will score your application accordingly.

SLIDE #3

On the DDDS website, you will find information about how to become a HCBS Provider in Delaware. There are several resources on this page that are crucial in writing a successful application.

Provider Qualification Instructions give you a detailed explanation of the questions in the application and what document you need to include.

Provider Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Application is a required document that must accompany your narrative.

Provider Requirement Summary lists the licensure, certifications, or other documentation that DDDS requires for each service.

Provider Rates displays the DDDS Medicaid HCBS Waiver provider rates by service for each recent state fiscal year.

Table of Contents displays the list of contents that DDDS requires for a complete application, the order in which you should include each item, and how to label each item.

DDDS Policies include relevant Delaware Code Laws and Regulations, Department policy memoranda, Medicaid authorities documents, and DDDS policies. You should be familiar with these policies and be sure your agency has the capacity to comply with them. The “Medicaid Authorities” section includes the latest approved Section 1915(c) HCBS waiver and the latest Pathways state plan amendment. The HCBS Waiver is divided into appendices that include service specifications (Appendix C), participant-centered planning and service delivery (Appendix D), Participant Safeguards (Appendix G), and Quality Improvement Strategy (Appendix H).

Service Definitions provides a description of each waiver service and includes some of the required components of each service.

SLIDE #4

On the website main page, you will find a link to the DDDS Provider Standards. It is crucial that you review these standards and ensure that your agency can comply with them.

SLIDE #5

Read – and follow- the instructions.

Failure to read and follow the instructions will cause DDDS to reject your application or will negatively impact your application’s score so that DDDS cannot approve your application.

The provider manual includes examples to help you understand the instructions.

SLIDE #6

For example, applicants must submit their documentation in a specific format. The Provider Application Manual states that:

*Interested applicants should review the “Application Table of Contents”. The applicant must include all information and supporting documentation with its application. Appendix A displays a checklist of all documents that DDDS requires for a complete application. DDDS will return incomplete applications to the submitting agency. The division will not accept an incomplete application.*

 *The applicant must submit a Table of Contents that includes each question number and the page number(s) on which DDDS can find the response to that question. The applicant must answer the questions in the order found in the application.*

The Table of Contents should reflect the contents as outlined in Appendix B and should include the page numbers on which DDDS can find the response and that the applicant must answer the questions in the order found in the checklist.

Here are some common mistakes to avoid:

* Failure to include a Table of Contents
* Failure to include the page number of the response in the Table of Contents, or mis-labeling the page number
* Failure to label the response with the question number, or mis-labeling the question number
* Failure to answer the questions in the correct order

Review the instructions – several times! Then, make sure you are following them!

DDDS will not accept an incomplete application. You’ve done a lot of hard work on your application. Don’t let it be rejected for something simple.

SLIDE #7

Applicants must email the application to:

DDDS\_ProviderAuthCommittee@delaware.gov

Use the correct email address. Do not add spaces or

The subject line must be in the following format:

Company Name - comma - Service applying for

Example: ABC Agency, Residential Habilitation

Do not add text or other information

SLIDE #8

Submit each section in order as a .ZIP file.

For example, submit Section A as a .zip file that includes a separate .pdf document for A1, A2, A3, A4, A4.2, A4.6, A4.7, A5, A6, and A7 as shown here:



SLIDE #9

Preparing a successful proposal takes a lot of work. Budget your time. Consider working from a fake deadline that is at least one week prior to the actual deadline. This helps relieve stress from unexpected interruptions – because you have a few extra days. You might also consider setting aside some time each day to work on your proposal. This prevents you from burning out from spending 5 or 6 straight hours working on it.

There are at least 2 additional benefits from the fake deadline. Finish a draft of your proposal, set it aside for a few days, then return to it with a fresh set of eyes. You will likely catch errors or omissions you didn’t see before. Second, consider using that extra time to ask a trusted colleague or friend to proofread the proposal for you.

SLIDE #10

DDDS encourages both thoroughness and conciseness in applications. This can be challenging but you’d be surprised how well you can express an idea with just a few words.

The Spelling and Grammar and Thesaurus features in Microsoft Word can help.

Consider making an outline of key points you want to include. This will help you build your narrative by identifying what supports your key points and what is superfluous. Content is king! If it doesn’t make your proposal stronger, leave it out.

Use good grammar and sentence structure. Make sure subjects and objects match regarding singular or plural. Each sentence should have a subject and an object.

Avoid using passive language. According to The Writing Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, passive voice is not a grammatical error. It is a stylistic issue that pertains to clarity. Passive construction occurs when you make the object of an action into the subject of a sentence.

In passive voice, the road was crossed by the chicken.

In active voice, the chicken crossed the road.

Active voice adds clarity and often reduces the word count.

Here is another example:

Each provider will be monitored to ensure compliance. This statement leaves some questions. Who? When? How often?

DDDS will monitor each provider annually for compliance. Much clearer!

SLIDE #11

If you’ve done your homework, followed the directions, budgeted your time effectively, and paid attention to the writing style, you have a solid shot at submitting a successful proposal.

Your proposal is your agency’s story – be sure to tell it well!