



Disability Waiver Rate System Frequently Asked Questions

Jan. 2014

General Questions

Q: Does the DWRS apply uniformly to all providers?

A: Yes

Rate Management System (RMS)

Q: Who is responsible for data entry into the Rate Management System?

A: Lead Agencies

Q: Do providers have access to the Rate Management System?

A: No

Q: After implementation, does the authorized MMIS rate need to be the rate calculated by the Rate Management System (including banding and any approved exception)?

A: Yes. DHS will audit MMIS authorizations to assure that they match Rate Management System calculations.

Q: How does a lead agency correct an error in the Rate Management System?

A: For records which are locked in RMS, the lead agency will create a new service record. If the record is not yet locked in RMS, the lead agency can edit the existing record.

Q: Do lead agencies need to enter changes in the number of units of a service authorized in the Rate Management System for an increase or decrease in units?

A: No, you need only enter changes into the Rate Management System when they affect the rate calculation.

Q: Why do lead agency staff need to click the “lock record” button in RMS and what will happen if we don’t?

A: It is important to lock records. If Records are not locked in the Rates Management System they will not match records in MMIS which could trigger an audit.

Service Planning

Q: How will service rates change during 2014 with implementation of DWRS?

A: People do not automatically get a new rate on Jan. 1, 2014. The DWRS has rolling implementation as follows.

Beginning January 1, 2014:

- all new service authorizations for framework services must use the Rate Management System
- all changes to service authorizations that affect the unit rate must use the Rate Management System
- all renewing service authorizations for framework services must use the Rate Management System as reassessment and reauthorization occurs
- By December 31, 2014, all service authorizations for framework services must use the Rate Management System

Q: What communication is required between providers and lead agencies to establish service level inputs required by the Rate Management System to calculate rates?

A: The Provider, using information from the Community Support Plan, generates the initial recommendation of service levels needed to determine rates. If the lead agency agrees with the information provided, they enter it into the Rate Management System to calculate a rate. If the lead agency does not agree, they continue negotiations with the provider to reach agreement on a service plan.

Q: How should Lead Agencies and Providers proceed if there are differences between the worksheets the provider submitted and the assessed needs in the ISP/CSP?

A. If the Lead Agency does not agree with the information provided on the worksheets, they should discuss the differences, continue service planning, and come to an agreement about what is going to be entered into RMS.

Minnesota Statutes 256B.4914 states the following:

Subd. 4. Data collection for rate determination.

- (a) Rates for applicable home and community-based waived services, including rate exceptions under subdivision 12, are set by the rates management system.
- (b) Data for services under section 256B.4913, subdivision 4a, shall be collected in a manner prescribed by the commissioner.
- (c) Data and information in the rates management system may be used to calculate an individual's rate.
- (d) Service providers, with information from the community support plan and oversight by lead agencies, shall provide values and information needed to calculate an individual's rate into the rates management system.

Q: Are there worksheets for all services that require RMS entry?

A: No, there are no worksheets for unit-based services because they do not require inputs to determine the rate.

Q: What should a provider do if a county has not requested worksheets and when should they do it?

A: If a county has not made arrangements for submitting worksheets, providers may complete the worksheets found by searching DHS Forms for the term “RMS Worksheets” and then send the forms to the lead agency.

Service Specific Questions

Q: Does DWRS require use of the customized living tool?

A: No. DWRS uses the rate management system in place of the customized living tool.

Q: How should customized living services be recorded in the rate management system when those services are not provided every day?

A: The lead agency enters the agreed upon average daily amount of time for each service. As an example, for a service in which 3 episodes of 30 minutes are planned each week, you calculate the average daily amount (1.5 hours/7 days) for an average daily amount of 0.21.

Banding/Service Change Questions

Q: What is banding and why is it part of DWRS rate calculations?

A: Banding creates limits to changes in framework service payment rates that would otherwise change because of DWRS implementation. A 0.5% rate stabilization adjustment (band) applying to the unit rate is in effect for all of 2014. This 0.5% band will take effect when you create a new waiver span or renew a waiver span. This means that in 2014, existing payment rates for framework services will not increase or decrease by more than 0.5%.

Banding will occur over the first 5 years of DWRS implementation as follows:

- 0.5% change for 2014
- An additional 0.5% change for 2015
- An additional 1.0% change for 2016
- An additional 1.0% change for 2017
- An additional 1.0% change for 2018
- All framework rates unbanded by 2019

Q: Historic 2013 rates are a critical component of banding calculations. What is the source of historic rates and is there a plan to update them?

A: Historic rates are rates authorized in MMIS prior to January 1, 2014. There is no plan to update historic rates in the system.

Q: Does banding apply to new services that are added to a consumer's service plan?

A: Banding does not apply to new Residential services which are added to a consumer's service plan after Jan. 1, 2014

For all day services, banding is applied at no more than plus or minus 0.05% of the weighted average authorized rate for each provider in the county of residence effective 12/01/2013.

For all unit based services, banding is applied at no more than plus or minus 0.05% of the weighted average authorized rate for each provider in the county of residence effective 12/01/2013.

Q: How do we use the Rate Management System to determine new residential or day service rates when the consumer's needs change?

A: If you have a service agreement initiated for an individual who was receiving a residential service in December 2013 but the individual changes their provider for the same residential service, the RMS system will not automatically band the service. In these situations, lead agency staff will need to complete the appropriate framework and then complete the Non Framework Rate Information section. Choose the "Residential Change in Service Plan" for type and fill in a unit rate for the service as determined by the lead agency. This rate should be set within county aggregate budgets using the old methodology, in effect Dec. 1, 2013, for determining provider rates for a similarly situated recipient served by the new provider.

Q: What needs to happen when a consumer changes providers for a service that is ongoing, for example, a change of ILS service providers?

A: The rate for ILS (and other day and unit-based services) will be the weighted average for that service with the new provider in the specific county on December 1, 2013, plus or minus up to 0.5% of the framework rate.