

# Guide for Self-directed Supports

Thank you for choosing Person Centered Care Services, Inc. (PCCS) as your Fiscal Intermediary Services provider (FI). Self-directed (SD) supports are Medicaid and New York State funded services which support people with a disability to control their budget and hire people to support them to live a high quality of life.

There are several responsibilities for you and your planning team who will be self-directing your supports. These responsibilities include but are not limited to: recruiting and hiring your SD self-hired staff, training and supervising the daily activities of your SD self-hired staff, and completing monthly documentation as required by Federal and New York State regulations.

This guide is intended to help you understand your SD supports. The following are the categories identified in all SD Plans/Budgets and explanations of what is required in order to receive services and or Medicaid/New York State funding reimbursement through PCCS. This guide reflects the current Federal (Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services) and New York State regulations which are subject to change. We will do our best to share information as it is received.

\*All of your documentation, including but not limited to, the monthly summary and monthly summary community habilitation progress notes, reimbursement requests with receipts, your self-hired staff activity fees and mileage reports, and vendor invoices must be submitted to our offices on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> of every month following the month of service.

\*Broker Invoices must be submitted to our offices on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following the month of service.

\*SD Staffing Support/Program Consultant invoices must be submitted to our offices on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following the month of service.

Please mail or deliver to:

Person Centered Care Services, Inc.  
150 Granite Avenue  
Staten Island, New York 10303  
Attn: FI

\*\*\*Invoices/reimbursement requests submitted beyond 60 days of the date of the invoice/reimbursement request may not be paid.

## REIMBURSEMENTS

### Submitting Reimbursement:

Due to the rigorous Medicaid billing requirements by the New York State Department of Health (DOH), we have a very limited timeframe to review documentation and reimbursement requests, along with processing and submitting billing, which includes invoices, expense reports, and timesheets and/or billing sheets to the DOH. If we are not able to bill, we are **NOT** able to be reimbursed for any expenses or payroll we have paid out. Due to the limited timeframes, all reimbursements including staff activity fees, mileage, community classes, family reimbursed respite etc. **must** be received in our office by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following the service month or if you would like to deliver your documents you must make an appointment with your FIC to drop off your documents on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. For example: If a service(s) is/are rendered in February, your reimbursement requests staff activity fees, mileage, community classes, family reimbursed respite etc. must be received at our office by March 10th.

Staff paper time sheets are submitted on a weekly basis on Monday before 10am. Hours are also to be entered unto Paycom daily when “clocking in” and “clocking out” matching the paper time sheets. Payday is every other Friday.

### Reimbursement Checks:

Upon completion of reviewing, processing and approving reimbursement requests, please expect a reimbursement payment within 30 days. Reimbursements sent back for corrections will be reviewed a second time and processed for payment upon required documented being submitted. The 30 days begin once reimbursements have been approved and submitted for processing. For example, requests for reimbursement received on March 10<sup>th</sup> (for February services) and approved, reimbursement checks will be issued to you on or before April 10th. If requests for reimbursement received on March 10<sup>th</sup> (for February services) was sent back as required documents were missing (not approved) and received again on March 20<sup>th</sup>, a check will be issued on or before April 20<sup>th</sup> (not the original date reimbursements were requested). If you have any questions about your reimbursement, please contact your FIC.

## INDIVIDUAL DIRECTED GOODS AND SERVICES (IDGS)

Individual Directed Goods and Services (IDGS) is an HCBS Waiver Service. IDGS are services, equipment or supplies not otherwise provided through OPWDD’s HCBS Waiver or through the Medicaid State Plan that address an identified need in a service plan.

### The services, equipment or supplies must:

- Relate to a need or goal identified in your Individualized Service Plan (ISP).
- Be for the purpose of increasing independence or substituting for human assistance, to the extent the expenditures would otherwise be made for that human assistance.
- Promote opportunities for community living and inclusion.
- Be able to be accommodated without compromising your health or safety.
- Be provided to or directed exclusively for you, the SD Participant.

### Camp:

- Funding may be requested for the cost of summer camp in New York State.
- Summer camp is reimbursed for the timeframe beginning on Memorial Day and ending on Labor Day each year.
- Camps can be focused on supporting people with a disability or open to the general public.
- Camp must be directly related to a valued outcome in your ISP.
- A camp must have a permit To Operate a Summer Camp in New York City or New York State issued by the NYC Department of Health or NYS Department of Health and submit a copy of the permit to our office in order for us to pay for the Camp session(s). This is required annually for each Camp session(s). We will not pay for Camp session(s) without this documentation.

**Submitting for Reimbursement for Camp:**

- In order to get reimbursed for camp, please lay out the money first and submit for reimbursement using a completed expense report. Attach the following to the expense report: A flyer or brochure explaining the camp (what it is, when, and how much it costs) an invoice from the camp showing when you will be going or have already attended. Proof of payment (canceled check, credit card statement, etc.) An ISP with a valued outcome directly related to camp.
- If the camp vendor agrees to bill PCCS directly, we can pay the camp directly but only after the service has been rendered (i.e. if you attended camp in July we will pay the camp in August). The camp must send an invoice to our office to the attention of the FI Department.

**Community Classes & Publically Available Training or Coaching:**

- Classes must be available to the general public, integrated, in any subject area that relates to your valued outcomes. (Art, Dance, Exercise, Cooking, Computer Training, Etc.)
- Sessions with a private trainer (physical education/exercise) may be covered as long as the service relates to a valued outcome.
- Classes must be related to a habilitation need identified in your person-centered plan and not just for recreational purposes.
- Classes must be non-credit bearing; IDGS funding is for non-matriculated students. The class cannot be working towards a degree.

**When signing up for classes, please try to sign up for only a month of classes at a time. We are required to bill Medicaid monthly and we cannot lay out monies for services that have not yet been used. Please sign up for a month of classes or sessions at a time.**

Community classes can be reimbursed under IDGS as long as the classes result in active engagement and participation in **integrated** community settings. In order for Medicaid to reimburse us for classes, they have to meet very specific criteria. To find out if a class is reimbursable, please submit a flyer about the class to your FIC for Medicaid compliance review. Please do not lay out for a class and expect to be reimbursed before getting the class **pre-approved** by your FIC who consults with OPWDD SD Liaisons to make the final determination.

**Criteria for Community Classes:** A Community Class is considered “**integrated**” if all these four criteria are met:

- The setting and class is open to the broader community.
- The setting is not certified by OPWDD.
- The setting results in interactions with other people who **do not** have an intellectual or developmental disability (your SD self-hired staff or staff operating the class are not included in this criteria).
- The class is not being run by OPWDD or provider agency staff who are acting in their official capacities.

**In determining if a class meets the standard of being “open to the general public,” the following five questions should be asked:**

- Is it taught by staff or run by an agency that provides OPWDD services to people with an intellectual/developmental disability? (No)
- Is it located on a campus where OPWDD services are provided? (No)
- Is the class open to the general public? (Yes)
- Does the class/vendor have published fees in a brochure or on their website? (Yes)
- Are people, who are not OPWDD eligible, going to the class (staff and parents do not count) (Yes)

**Submitting for Reimbursement for Classes:**

In order to seek reimbursement for community classes, please lay out the money first and submit for reimbursement using a completed expense report. Attach the following to the expense report:

- A flyer or brochure explaining the class (brief description of the class, who provides the class, contact information, intended audience, and cost of class)
- A paid invoice or bill from the class.
- Proof of payment (canceled check, debit card/credit card statement, etc.)
- If the vendor will bill us directly on a monthly basis, we can pay the vendor for the cost of the class after the class has been conducted/completed. The vendor must send an invoice to our office. Please consult with your FIC for details.

**Coaching or Education for Parents or Spouses:**

IDGS funding is for your parent/spouse/advocate to attend/participate in educational opportunities (not covered by other public programs) which assist you and those close to you achieve goals established in your SD plan. The criteria is as follows:

- You, the SD participant, must be over age 18.
- Reimbursements may include registration and conference fees but does not cover travel or lodging.
- The annual cap in this category is \$500.

**Submitting for Reimbursement for Coaching or Education Parents or Spouses:**

In order to get reimbursed for coaching or education for parents/spouses/advocates, please lay out the money first and submit for reimbursement by submitting a completed expense report. Attach the following to the expense report:

- A flyer or brochure explaining the training.
- A paid invoice or bill from the training.
- Proof of payment (canceled check, debit card/credit card statement, etc.)

**Clinical Non-Direct Service Provision: (Staff Trainers)**

Clinical Non Direct Consultants/Independent Contractors are clinical specialists who are hired for the following purposes:

- To evaluate your community and/or supported employment habilitation plan.
- To train your SD self-hired staff on how to carry out your SD plan.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of your SD self-hired staff in carrying out the services in your SD plan and make recommendations
- Clinical Non Direct Consultants/Independent Contractors are **not** permitted to provide direct therapy to you, the SD Participant.
- Clinical Non Direct Consultant/Independent Contractor services **cannot** replicate any service available through a third-party insurer, the Medicaid State Plan or the HCBS Waiver Service.

**Prior to any service delivery:**

- Clinicians must provide, PCCS, with a written outline of services to be delivered prior to approval as well as an annual update of progress.
- Clinicians must have a clinical license from the Office of Professions in New York State and provide that information to the PCCS FI Department.
- Clinicians must complete paperwork to contract with PCCS to register as an Independent contractor. Please consult with your FIC.

**Clinical Direct Service Provision (Direct Therapies):** There are only a handful of specialized direct therapies that can be built into a Self-direction Budget. The approved therapies are:

1. Hippo Therapy
2. Therapeutic Riding

3. Aquatic Therapy
4. Art Therapy
5. Massage Therapy
6. Music Therapy
7. Play Therapy

**Speech, Physical Therapy, and Occupational Therapy ARE NOT therapies which can be built into a Self-direction Plan. These types of therapies can be accessed through use of your Medicaid State Plan Benefits card or other primary insurance carriers.**

**Clinical Direct Service Provision (Direct Therapies) continued:**

Besides finding a licensed therapist, there are several requirements needed before the service can be approved and used. See below:

- There must be a prescription written and signed by a **Medical** doctor with the goal of treating a specific medical diagnosis and support a specific valued outcome.
- The licensed and approved therapist needs to:
  - Conduct an initial assessment.
  - Write a summarization of the findings from the assessment.
  - Write up a treatment plan (the plan must be signed by the medical doctor who wrote and signed the prescription).
  - The treatment plan shall acknowledge your personal goals and therapeutic activities including frequency and duration.
  - The treatment plan must also support a specific valued outcome.
  - Ongoing services must be supported by the treatment plan.
  - Write up progress reports reviewed by the medical doctor for approval of continued service.
  - The clinician must complete an invoice at the end of the month and have your or your designee review and sign off on it.
  - All of the above documentation and invoices must be submitted to our office on or before the 10th of the month following the month of service.

**Maximum Pay Rates for Clinicians**

Payment for the service cannot exceed the rates published under the bureau of labor statistics.

Table 3: Clinician & Therapy Payment Capitation Levels	
Area: New York	
Period: May 2013 –Based on 90th Percentile Wages from BLS July 31, 2014	
Occupation (SOC code)	Hourly 90th percentile wage
Social Workers, All Other(211029)	\$38.21
Dietitians and Nutritionists(291031)	\$40.14
Occupational Therapists(291122)	\$51.60
Physical Therapists(291123)**includes Equine, Aquatic Therapy	\$53.42
Recreational Therapists(291125)	\$34.60
Speech-Language Pathologists(291127)	\$61.16
Therapists All Other(291129)	\$43.00
Registered Nurses(291141)	\$50.98
Nurse Practitioners(291171)	\$65.22
Hearing Aid Specialists(292092)	\$30.33
Occupational Therapy Assistants(312011)	\$34.09
Occupational Therapy Aides(312012)	\$25.08
Physical Therapist Assistants(312021)	\$33.96
Physical Therapist Aides(312022)	\$18.25
Psychologists, All Other(193039)	\$57.66
Footnotes: (1) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by 2080 hours; where an hourly mean wage is not published the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data. SOC code: Standard Occupational Classification code -- see <a href="http://www.bls.gov/soc/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/soc/home.htm</a> Data extracted on July 31 2014	

**Health Clubs/Organizational Membership’s Community Participation:**

- Funding for a gym, health club or other community organization membership(s) may be included in the SD plan for reasons of health, fitness or community integration in accordance with your valued outcomes.
- The membership is for you, the SD Participant, only and must be in your name; **no family memberships!**
- The club/organization must offer open enrollment to the public and cannot be a private club with a closed membership where membership is available by invitation only.
- Before signing up for a membership we suggest you obtain, in writing, the establishment’s policy on bringing a guest or the ability for you to bring your SD self-hired staff, if you so choose.

**Submitting for Reimbursement for Organizational Membership:**

- We cannot pay membership dues up front. You or your designee must pay for the membership and submit for reimbursement on a monthly basis.
- We must bill monthly. When signing up, please remember that we can only reimburse you on a monthly basis.
- Complete an expense report and attach proof of the initial membership contract and how you paid for the month’s membership.
- After the first month, you will submit an expense report monthly with proof of how you paid for the membership. If you sign up for an annual membership and pay upfront, we can only reimburse you monthly.
- There is an annual cap of \$1,500.00 in this line.

**Household Related Items and Services:**

This is an area under IDGS where certain services or appliances can be reimbursed if you, the **SD Participant, live on your own.**

- The service or appliance must help you live more independently and/or help ensure their safety. (i.e. a microwave oven for someone who cannot safely use a stove or oven)
- The service or appliance must benefit you and be related to a valued outcome (related to health and safety).
- Household supports include cleaning, minor maintenance, snow removal, lawn mowing etc...
- Contact your FIC to learn more.

**Paid Neighbor:**

**A paid neighbor is a person hired by, you, the SD Participant who is living on their own.**

- This person can be available to you, the SD Participant, in an emergency situation and provide the appropriate “on call” supports.
- This person will complete an application and will be screened through a criminal background check conducted by the PCCS Human Resources Department. Once cleared, this person is paid automatically with a monthly stipend (maximum \$800/month).
- This person must live within 30 minutes of you, the SD Participant.
- Prior to starting, there must also be a Paid Neighbor Agreement in place signed by you and your paid neighbor. This agreement details the responsibilities of your paid neighbor.
- If the person is called upon to provide direct services with you for an extended period of time, they would be considered an SD self-hired staff and will be required to fill out the appropriate timesheet/Medicaid billing sheet and get paid an hourly wage. Please speak with your FIC to learn more.
- A paid neighbor cannot be related to you, the SD participant, by blood or marriage.

**Self-directed Staffing Support (Program Consultant):** Assists you with hiring and scheduling your SD self-hired staff and assists you with related paperwork (i.e. timesheets, staff evaluations, monthly summary notes, expense reports, etc.).

- This person must be screened through a criminal background check conducted by the PCCS Human Resources Department.
- Payment cannot exceed \$20 per hour.
- This person is paid monthly by filling out an invoice. The invoice must be completed to include all required information and submitted on or before the 10th of the month following the month of service.
- This person **cannot** work for not-for-profit organization, cannot be someone actively assisting you, the SD Participant, in making decisions and **cannot** be a family member.
- This person cannot work as an employee such as your SD self-hired staff (Community Habilitation, Job Coach, Job Developer or Respite).

**Transportation:** Service-related IDGS transportation reimbursement takes several different forms:

- An SD self-hired staff who drove their personal vehicle to a service-related activity or accompanied you, the SD Participant, to a service-related activity using public transportation.
- When you, the SD Participant, who drove or was driven in your personal vehicle to a service-related activity.
- Your friend or family member who drove their personal vehicle to an activity directly relating to the IDGS budget line (i.e. class, camp, membership)

**SD self-hired staff who drove their personal vehicle to a service-related activity or accompanied you, the SD Participant, to a service-related activity using public transportation:**

Reimbursable:

- When you, the SD Participant, are in the car with your SD self-hired staff OR utilize public transportation with your SD self-hired staff to an activity/support/service directly related to a valued outcome/safeguard.

Not Reimbursable:

- Using transportation like a “taxi service” (i.e. using SD self-hired staff to pick you up and/or drop you off without providing a service). For example: SD self-hired staff drove you to your paid employment position but did not provide on-site job coaching supports to participant.
- Transportation to and from OPWDD funded services which include the cost of transportation within billing. (i.e. day habilitation programs)
- Transportation to and from medical appointments is NOT reimbursable because this duplicates a State Plan of service.

**When you, the SD Participant, drove or was driven in your personal vehicle to a service-related activity**

Reimbursable:

- When you, the SD Participant, is using mileage OR public transportation for a service related activity/support/service directly related to approved IDGS budget line (i.e. community classes, health club membership) and directly related to a valued outcome/safeguard.

NOT Reimbursable:

- Transportation to and from medical appointments.
- Transportation to and from OPWDD Programs where transportation costs are included in billing standard.
- Transportation to paid employment if self-directed employment services (i.e. job coaching, job development) are not received on that date.
- \*Please Note: OTPS: Personal Use Transportation may be utilized for mileage that does not meet the IDGS Transportation guidelines.

**Your friend or family member who drove their personal vehicle to an activity directly relating to an IDGS budget line (i.e.**



**class, camp, membership).**

Reimbursable:

- When your friend or family member drives you, the SD participant, to a service related activity/support/service directly related to an approved IDGS budget line (i.e. community classes etc.) directly related to a valued outcome/safeguard.

NOT Reimbursable:

- Transportation to family vacations or family gatherings.
- Transportation to and from medical appointments.
- Transportation to OPWDD Programs where transportation costs are included in billing standard.
- Any public transportation for your family member or friend accompanying you, the SD Participant.

**Filling out a mileage form:**

- Submit Mileage Reimbursement by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following the month transportation was provided (i.e. submit September's mileage expenses by October 10th).
- When filling out a mileage reimbursement form, complete it in its entirety and use a separate mileage form(s) for each month (i.e. do not send in multiple months on the same form).
- When completing "start address" and "end address"- please enter the address you are leaving from and the address you are going to. You must list each start and end address on each day/date of travel even if it is to and from the same location on multiple days/dates.
- Under purpose of travel write specific places you went and activities performed. i.e. "The Staten Island Mall - shopping"
- Under "Goal #", write the # of the related Valued Outcome for the travel.
- Use Google Maps for accurate mileage accounting and submit a print-out of the Google Maps detail. You **must** print-out a copy of the google map detail for each trip (start address/end address) for reimbursement to be issued.

**Items that CANNOT be funded through IDGS**

- *Academic Tutoring* - Academic tutoring is **not** funded through the IDGS. This service should be pursued through the school district or college setting. Academic tutoring/homework assistance is not an appropriate task for self-hired staff.
- *Automatic pill dispenser/ medication system* - Available through Assistive Technology
- *Cell Phones/Telephones* - Funding for cell phones is not an allowable IDGS expense. The Safe-Link Wireless program is available to eligible individuals in New York State who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). The Safe-Link service in New York State allows for a cell phone and limited free minutes for a person who has a disability and receives social security benefits under SSI.
- *Computer Hardware* - Not allowable in IDGS.
- *Computer Programs/Software* - Computer Software may be available through Assistive Technology.
- *Leased Vehicles* - Leased Vehicles **are not an allowable expense under IDGS.**
- *Health-Related Services, Equipment and Supplies* - Health related supplies such as food and beverage thickeners, trachea collars, disposable bed pads, wipes, incontinence products, and supplemental medications are funded through the State Plan only; not through IDGS funding.
- *Parents' Activity Fees, Expenses, and Meals* - Activity fees, expenses, and meals incurred by your parents **are not** reimbursed with IDGS funds and must be paid by your parents when they accompany you to an activity including when you are being supported by your SD self-hired staff or engaging in an activity supported in your SD Plan/Budget.
- *SD Participants' Activity Fees, Expenses, and Meals* - Activity fees, expenses, and meals incurred by you **are not** reimbursed with IDGS funds and must be paid by you or your family.
- *Personal Monitoring Systems* - Available through State Plan.
- *Staff Activity Fees, Expenses, and Meals* - Activity fees, expenses, and meals incurred by your SD self-hired staff **are not**

reimbursed with IDGS funds, but may be funded through OTPS.

- *Direct Clinician service delivery and Therapies: Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Psychology (Medicaid state funded)* - On-going therapies that are provided directly to you are funded through your State Plan Medicaid Card or, if you are school-aged, through the local school district, and are **not** funded under IDGS.
- *Experimental Therapies* - Experimental therapies **are not** reimbursable in any clinical category within IDGS and are not a permitted expense in the OTPS payment category.

**LIVE IN CAREGIVER (LIC):**

- Live-In Caregiver (LIC) is an HCBS Waiver Service that allows you, the SD Participant, to utilize a person that is not related to you to reside in the same household and provide support to address physical, social or emotional needs so you can live safely and successfully in your own home.
- In exchange for supporting you, the LIC’s portion of the rent, food, and utilities will be reimbursed. You, the SD Participant, must submit for reimbursement by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following the service month. To submit for reimbursement, please attach itemized receipts and bills to an expense report. We will reimburse you, the SD participant, for money you laid-out for the LIC’s food and utilities. The LIC’s rent is typically paid directly to the landlord.
- We are not permitted to reimburse the LIC directly.
- If the LIC provides an habilitation service (not outlined in the LIC Agreement), the LIC must fill out a timesheet/Medicaid billing sheet to be paid for their hourly work.
- The LIC cannot be related to you, the SD Participant, by blood or marriage to any degree.
- PCCS must have an agreement stating specific services and responsibilities of the LIC. It must be signed by you, the SD participant, the LIC and PCCS as the Fiscal Intermediary provider prior to implementation (taking effect).
- The LIC must complete an application and processed through a criminal background check as required by OPWDD regulations. Please contact your FIC for more information.

**OTHER THAN PERSONAL SERVICES (OTPS):**

- Other Than Personal Services (OTPS) are services utilizing 100% state funds to help pay for items that are not funded through Medicaid.
- The maximum in this category is \$3,000.
- Goods and services purchased with OTPS funds must relate to a valued outcome in your ISP and increase independence or the ability to live safely in your home.

**The OTPS section of the budget is limited to the following categories of supports:**

- Phone service – cell and/or land line.
- Internet (in instances where you have a cable package, OTPS can be used for phone and internet only, but not the cable portion)
- Software related to your disability.
- Staff Activity fees to cover meals, ticket admissions, transportation or other costs incurred by your SD self-hired staff when providing support to you related to a valued outcome.
- Staff advertising/recruitment costs, the PCCS Human Resources Department can provide you with sample advertisements, please inquire with your FIC.
- Staff Training.
- Personal Use Transportation.
- Board Stipend (must first request and be denied for food stamps)
- Utilities

- Other goods and services that increase independence.
- Other goods and services related to health and safety.

### **Items Excluded From OTPS**

OTPS cannot be used to pay for certain items, below is a list of excluded items:

- Medical visit co-pays
- Any expenses related to hospitalization or nursing home stays (including staff or respite supports or family expenses)
- Expenses related to or that support the purchase of Medicaid services, such as therapies or other waiver services
- Any illegal item or activity
- Cable television
- Common household supplies (e.g., paper towels, wipes, soap)
- Therapies that are experimental in nature
- Repairs, like a broken step or railing, as they should be covered under the lease or are the responsibility of the home owner
- An SD Participant's (your) activity fees or related supplies for an activity or community class, even if funded through Individual Directed Goods and Services
- Rental cars
- OTPS cannot be used to apply against housing costs in excess of housing subsidies. If your rent is in excess of the allowable housing subsidy, this will have to be paid with your own resources or your family's resources.

### **Staff Activity Fees (for your SD Self-Hired Staff)**

The main purpose of staff activity fees is to reimburse SD self-hired staff for admission fees to recreational places in the community you choose to attend and relates to a valued outcome (admission to a sporting event, concert, movies, bowling, museum, etc.).

- State funds should not be used for meal reimbursement **unless** there is a valued outcome in the habilitation plan and ISP pertaining to skills needed when dining out.
- As for meal reimbursement, we recommend not to exceed the allowed meal reimbursement levels as per the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) which is \$7 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch and \$22 for dinner. Food drastically depletes the staff activity fee line and we recommend SD self-hired staff bring their own meals while supporting you.

### **Submitting for reimbursement for Staff Activity Fees:**

- Complete an expense report and attach itemized receipts. **Submit by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following the service month.**
- We are unable to pay for tax and tip.
- Under activity on the expense report, a goal related activity should be referenced-i.e. "supported at Met's baseball game."

### **FAMILY REIMBURSED RESPITE (FRR)**

- Family Reimbursed Respite is a way for your family to pay a person whom they trust to supervise you, pay them directly, and get reimbursed through your SD Budget.
- FRR is paid for with 100% State funds and is capped at \$3,000 annually.
- You designate the rate of pay per hour.
- A parent cannot nor can anyone living in the same home as you be paid to provide FRR through your SD Plan.
- Your SD self-hired staff who work with you can provide FRR.

### **Submitting for reimbursement for Family Reimbursed Respite (FRR):**

- Complete an FRR expense report in its entirety.
- Identify the name of the person providing the FRR.
- Have the person providing the FRR sign and date the expense report.
- You, the SD Participant, or your designee sign and date the expense report.

- Submit the FRR expense report to PCCS by the 10th of the month following the month of service.

## HOUSING SUBSIDY

If you, the SD Participant, choose to live independently or share a living environment and have tenancy rights you may be able to include a housing subsidy in your budget funded with 100% state funds. The amount you receive for a housing subsidy is calculated based on your income and depends on the Housing and Community Renewal (HCR) payment standards.

Criteria, for a person who has an SD Plan/Budget and chooses, to apply for and access a housing subsidy is as follows:

- Must be at least 18 years of age.
- Must have their name on the lease and send to PCCS.
- Must contribute 30% of their own income towards their rent.
- Must rent a **legal** apartment. (2 forms of egress out of the home (separate entrance) , operating kitchen, operating bathroom, must be above ground, must meet all New York City codes)- We need proof (Certificate of Occupancy/Rental Permit from Department of Buildings)
- Must submit, to PCCS, a W9 from the landlord they are renting from. If you, the SD Participant, wishes to live in an apartment that costs more than the awarded housing subsidy, you, the SD Participant, is responsible to pay the difference. If you, the SD Participant, is receiving Section 8/HUD funding, the maximum housing subsidy is \$50 per month. A housing subsidy paid through Self-direction cannot be used toward living expenses when living in a certified adult home.

### Important Reminders about utilizing a Housing Subsidy:

- Please give us at least a 30 day notice, as much notice as possible, if you require us to make any payments.
- If you receive a housing subsidy you **CANNOT** receive Family Reimbursed Respite (FRR).
- When you are in the process of locating an apartment, PCCS can only lay out one month's rent and one month's security.
- In order for PCCS to lay out money for an apartment, we need to have an official lease on file.
- PCCS cannot pay for application fees or additional security deposits.
- When locating an apartment, it is important that you, the SD Participant, designee, family and your Broker are in contact with the FIC to make them aware of the move.
- Please let us know how the rent should be paid, whether it is to you, the SD Participant/designee, or to the landlord directly.
- If the rent is being sent directly to you or your designee to then pay the landlord, we will need proof of the canceled check that was written and cashed to pay the rent.

**Paying rent to a family member** Your family member may own the property you choose to rent. However, you or your designee must make OPWDD aware of this while your Self-direction Plan is in the process of being written, by your Broker or amended by your Broker, to add a housing subsidy. The family member that owns the property **will not** receive the full amount of the housing subsidy in your self-direction budget because the maximum amount to be paid to the landlord would have to be the lower of:

1. The payment standard.
2. Asking rent.
3. Your family member's actualized costs (taxes + utility bills/number of bedrooms)
4. Mortgage payments **do not** count towards actualized costs. OPWDD will need proof of actualized costs when the plan is initially sent to OPWDD for approval.
5. If the home is in trust for your or in a third party trust, the subsidy can default to the standards. Proof of the trust will need to be provided.

**Transition Stipend:** You, the SD Participant, may request a one-time transition stipend of up to \$3,000 in your SD Budget when **moving out** of your family's home or a certified residential setting to an independent housing situation (living on your own).

Transition stipend funds are used to pay for:

- Furniture.
- Moving expenses.
- Household articles.
- Transition Stipend funds cannot be used for personal or expendable items. (i.e. toilet paper, hair brushes, toothbrushes, paper towels, etc.).

**Reimbursement for Transition Stipend Items:** In order to get reimbursed for items purchased through the transition stipend, please collect your itemized receipts and complete an expense report.

- The budget category on the expense report is “transition stipend”.
- Please list items purchased in the activity columns.
- Attach proof of how you paid for the items (receipts).
- You have one year from the initial lease date to spend the transition stipend funds.

We hope you find this guide helpful and informative. Please reach out to a Fiscal Intermediary Coordinator (FIC) if you have any additional questions. The FIC will work in close collaboration with you and your planning team/circle of support. They will provide oversight and guidance on the Self-direction budget. The FIC will review and process documentation you submit to ensure that it is completed correctly and in compliance with Medicaid and New York State rules and regulations. They will participate in planning team/circle of support meetings over the phone or in-person. Lastly, the FIC will act as a point person to assist with questions concerning fiscal intermediary services (i.e. Human Resources, Payroll, Accounts Payable, Compliance and Regulatory Standards etc.).

We hope you enjoy leading a self-directed life,

