

HELPFUL HINTS ON PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

Let's Look At Alternatives To Prior Authorization:

- Sharing Waiver services
- Increase natural Supports
- Unsupervised Time
- Third Shift (HPC or OSOC)
- "On Behalf Of" Services reviewed
- Increase In Other waiver services
- Discussion of roommates
- Transportation
- Agency vs. Non-Agency Staff
- Day Habilitation/ Employment
- Technology Equipment
- Volunteering In The Community
- Reserved Units Can't Be Used

Prior Authorization (or PA) can be considered when an individual's *funding level* exceeds the upper level of the ODDP assigned *funding range*. If an individual wants to request a Prior Authorization, ODMRDD fully encourages the county board to assist the individual with submitting their initial PA request. Often the requests submitted directly by the individual or their authorized representative are technically flawed and will need further input from the county board anyway, so it is best that the county board is involved from the onset.

Some suggestions to assist the county board during the PA process:

- Educate the individual and their family about the PA process during the ISP planning process. Often families file a PA request because they don't understand available alternatives, or because they receive conflicting advice from other sources. There are forms available on ODMRDD's website to assist the county board with discussing the facts of the PA process.
- The PA process was not designed to restore services to previous levels, it was designed to ensure services are provided in the most efficient and effective manner available. The county board should always assess the provision of all services from an objective standpoint, and continually attempt to assure the individual's health and safety is provided through the most efficient and effective treatment objectives.
- Once it is determined that a PA request has or will be submitted to the Department, the county board should:
 - Ensure the individual's ODDP is updated to reflect the current service needs
 - Ensure the individual's 20/20 or other fiscal planning tool is updated to reflect the current service plan
 - Ensure that the online County Transition Plan is updated to reflect the current funding projections, any updates in the ODDP funding range, and the current transition period.
- Several county boards have developed PA review committees. These internal committees have enabled county boards to consistently review all PA requests from an objective

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perspective, review all efforts made to provide services within the designated funding range, and provide suggestions to service coordinators regarding alternatives that may be provided within the individual's funding range.

- Try to explore creative alternatives to providing appropriate levels of service to individuals and their families. Determine if there are other agencies, providers, or funding sources available in the community to provide equivalent services. Determine if assistive devices or adaptive equipment can provide appropriate levels of service at a one-time cost.
- Determine if alone time, On-Site/On-call, or natural supports can be utilized to provide services within the funding range.

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- Other suggestions to explore that may bring the individual within their funding range may include:
 - Shared staffing
 - Decreased one-on-one time
 - Explore schedule changes that may change staffing ratios
 - Determine if a Personal Response System or other device could be used as an alternative to direct supervision
 - Reduce and/or prioritize other waiver services (i.e., mileage, social services, respite care, etc.)
 - Determine if Core or State Plan nursing services could be used for certain medical needs
 - Explore the option of a roommate or a change in living situation
 - Explore the cost savings associated with utilizing an agency versus independent provider.
- Other considerations regarding Prior Authorization:
 - If an individual's transition date or new waiver year occurs while the request is being decided, then the county board may have to submit a new annual funding amount (PAWS) to the Department. This new funding amount could be any of the following:
 - The existing annual funding level at the time of the transition
 - The new annual funding amount as determined by the assigned funding range and new plan
 - Some other funding amount as determined by the planning team.

If a Prior Authorization request is submitted to the Department, it is helpful to the reviewer when all efforts made by the county board to bring the individual within the assigned funding range have been documented and supplied with the Prior Authorization materials submitted to the Department. Often the reviewer will be searching for efforts made by the county board to reduce costs, and it will hasten the review process if these efforts are provided as part of the review packet.

Additionally, if the county board does not support the request submitted by the individual, the county board should submit any alternative plans that may have been developed in the PA review packet. The reviewer must respond to the request that was submitted, but it is helpful to the reviewer to view a feasible alternative plan that would place the individual within or closer to their funding range.