

New Process for Residential Habilitation Vacancies ODP Announcement 19-003

AUDIENCE:

Consolidated Waiver funded Residential Habilitation service providers, Administrative Entities, Counties, and Supports Coordination Organizations

PURPOSE:

This Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) Communication is to inform all interested parties of revisions in the Residential Habilitation vacancy management process that pertains to Harry M. class members.

DISCUSSION:

The Harry M. settlement agreement was approved by a federal court judge on August 20, 2013. This settlement agreement was created to ensure Pennsylvanians are provided with necessary communication assistance services based on their assessed needs. The settlement agreement also establishes that participants who are deaf have the opportunity to live with other deaf participants, if they so choose.

It is not uncommon for people who are deaf to regularly interact and reside with other deaf individuals. The ODP promotes individual choice, and no individual will be required to move involuntarily.

ODP has revised the Residential Habilitation vacancy management process, as noted in [ODP Communication Packet 098-12](#), in order to streamline the referral process for any vacancies that become available in a home where a Harry M. class member resides. Effective with this communication, the residential habilitation provider should notify the ODP deaf services mailbox (RA-ODPDeafServices@pa.gov) for all vacancies that occur in a home, where a Harry M. class member resides in lieu of the usual process. This will allow ODP to review the opening and possibly identify a Harry M. class member that communicates similarly and is interested in residing in the home. Once an individual is

identified, the Special Populations Unit will contact the assigned Supports Coordinator to reach out to the individual. The Supports Coordinator will discuss the options available with the individual and offer them the opportunity to live with another deaf individual. This process and all discussions will be noted in service notes. This is on top of the usual Residential Habilitation process.

If within five (5) business days, a Harry M. class member has not been identified, the Administrative Entity (AE) in which the individual was registered then has the opportunity to identify an individual who might utilize the vacancy. The AE will then follow the usual process as detailed in the [ODP Communication Packet 098-12](#).

For further information regarding this communication, please contact the ODP deaf services mailbox (RA-ODPDeafServices@pa.gov).