

**LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF DD/DEEPWOOD**

**BOARD POLICY**

Reviewed and Adopted by the Board:  
Date: November 16, 2020

Signature on File

Elfriede Roman, Superintendent

**I. SUBJECT: COST OF LIVING SUBSIDIES**

**II. PURPOSE:**

To establish methods to standardize monthly cost of living amounts and one time initial enrollment start-up costs and the process whereby the Lake County Board of DD/Deepwood may subsidize to assist someone to live in the community through the Supported Living or HCBS Waiver program.

**III. REFERENCES:**

Board Policy G-2 “Community Residential Programs”  
Board Policy C-1 “Administrative Resolution of Complaints”  
Board Policy E-1 “Agency Inventory, Asset Tagging and Property Disposal”

**IV. POLICY:**

Through Policy G-2, the Board has established its commitment to the philosophies, principles, and concepts of Community Residential Programs that provide for the necessary supports to enable individuals to live in settings of his/her choice based on available resources. A Cost of Living Subsidy should be requested only after all other resources, including the feasibility of increased work options, have been realistically explored and exhausted.

For the purpose of this policy, “Cost of Living Subsidy” may include but is not limited to rent, utilities, telephone, food, clothing, household supplies, personal care items, and personal spending money. Expenses such as cable TV and telephone are limited to basic services, personal spending money to no more than \$30/month, and food costs should average \$50/week. Shared expenses by individuals must be equitable in a household in order to qualify for a subsidy. The appropriateness of the subsidy amount is reviewed and approved by the Service and Support Administration Director.

This policy applies to all “Community Residential” homes, regardless of landlord (e.g.; parent/individual-owned, North Coast Community Homes, general landlord, etc.), with the exception of Licensed Facilities.

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- A. Individuals living with his/her own family through the Supported Living and/or HCBS Waiver Programs, receive NO Cost of Living Subsidy.
- B. In full support of self-determination and the individual's right to make choices with corresponding, natural consequences, any individual who refuses to accept the first available resource (including an available roommate option for a vacancy, or including enrollment onto a Home and Community Based Waiver when found eligible for such a funding source, even if acceptance of the Waiver will designate a "patient liability" to the Department of Job and Family Services,) or an available paid work options/opportunities may not receive a Cost of Living Subsidy.
- C. Individuals living in a Community Residential setting must use all of his/her income including, but not limited to, SSI, SSA, Wages, and Food Stamps to pay for his/her cost of living expenses. Inasmuch, the individual and/or his/her family/guardian must provide full disclosure of the individual's financial information in order to receive a Cost of Living Subsidy. If his/her cost of living expenses exceed his/her total income and the individual can show evidence that he/she has applied for low-income housing and all other public assistance programs, and the individual is attending a day program or otherwise employed or on a day program wait list, then the County Board shall subsidize the individual at a cap of \$150.00 per month.  
  
If an individual's cost of living expenses exceed his/her income even with the \$150.00 monthly subsidy, then the Service and Support Administration Director may authorize permission to exceed the subsidy cap on a time-limited basis while appropriate proactive measures are taken by the individual, the Provider, and the Service and Support Administrator to reduce costs and/or increase income. The Service and Support Administrator shall put the time lines and the expectations in writing to the individual/guardian and the Provider.
- D. If an individual lives in a home where there is a vacant bedroom, a Cost-of-Living Subsidy shall be given if needed for 90 days or until an available roommate option is rejected by the individual/guardian, whichever comes sooner. During these 90 days, the individual can either accept another roommate, decrease expenses, increase income, or move to more affordable housing. The Service and Support Administrator shall put the time lines and the expectations in writing to the individual/guardian and the Provider.
- E. If an individual chooses to move to a community setting, either initially or choosing an alternative community setting, he/she cannot choose to move to a setting that exceeds his/her income and that would create the need for a Cost of Living Subsidy over the cap of \$150.00/month, unless otherwise approved by the Service and Support Administration Director.

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- F. For individuals who are moving into a residential option where items covered by startup funds are not already available, a thorough assessment of the individual's essential needs to live in the new environment will take place including his/her ability to pay for or at least contribute to the purchase of the items. Any start-up funding (one-time only to purchase essential items needed for an individual to move into a new environment) that is deemed necessary and appropriate as a result of this assessment will not exceed \$1,200.00 per person. Individuals able to receive Community Transition Funds through the HCBS Waiver Program will not be eligible to receive startup funds through the County Board.
- G. Any consumable items that have no residual value (i.e. linens, utensils, place settings, etc.) purchased with start-up money funded by the County Board are considered the property of the individual. Any items purchased with County Board funds that maintain a residual value will be designated as County Board property but will remain with the individual and/or setting as appropriate.
- H. The individual has a right to due process and any concern regarding this policy may be appealed pursuant to Board Policy C-1, "Administrative Resolution of Complaints."

**VI. DISTRIBUTION:**

Board Members  
All Management  
All Staff (via Department Managers)  
LEADD President  
Active HCBS Waiver and SL Providers  
North Coast Community Homes, Inc.  
SL/HCBS Waiver Individuals/Guardians

**V. REVIEWED:**

11/20, 11/18, 11/17, 11/16, 11/15, 11/14, 11/13, 11/12, 11/10, 11/08, 11/07, 9/05, 8/03, 6/01, 5/99