

What is a Provider Rate Study?

In Fall 2021, the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) started a study to learn about the rates we pay to providers of home and community-based services (HCBS). The rate study was approved using Montana House Bill 632, Section 20, Subsection 2b and House Bill 155, Section 1. The bill asked DPHHS to do a cost and wage survey to learn if rates need to change, if necessary, to keep the services paid for at the level needed.

What is a rate study? Do we have to do one?

A rate study is done to look at costs to provide HCBS. The study will help us to learn the costs needed to pay staff, buy supplies, travel, keep up buildings, etc. Based on what we learn, The State will suggest changes to rates. These changes must follow federal rules that States must follow. We are studying Medicaid-funded behavioral health, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and senior long-term services and support programs. Many Medicaid programs that offer HCBS expect the State to study rates in this way at least once every five (5) years.

What will happen during the rate study?

The rate study will help us to get information and update payment rates. The study will consider how much it costs providers to deliver services.

The study will look at how much staff are paid if they get benefits or extra pay for working overtime. It will also look at other costs, like supplies needed, etc. Studying this information will help the State consider any need for changes to the rates in the future. More information can be found on this website: [Rate Study Webpage.](#)

The State is also working with four Rate Study work groups. Each group includes providers, state agency leaders, advocates, and some state legislators along with the Lieutenant Governor. These people will give input during the study. Meetings happen about once a month. They are public meetings that you can watch live. You can also watch past meetings on the [Rate Study Webpage.](#)

What does the rate study mean for waiver participants and their circle of support?

- One goal of the rate study is to make sure that rates pay for services at a level that follows the law. Such laws are meant to help all people access the right care in a time and place of their choice.
- A strong provider network will help you receive high-quality services that can meet your needs.
- The State is not making any changes to the types or amount of waiver services you receive – your services will continue without change.

What does the rate study mean for [HCBS service providers](#)?

- The State knows that the costs of delivering services have changed over the last two years. The rate Medicaid pays may not be enough to cover costs. A rate study will help us to learn more about changes to set rates to help meet these needs.



Understanding The Montana Provider Rate Study

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Service Rate Study

What does the rate study mean for Self-Directed Services?

- Self-Directed services are included in the rate study.
- Some HCBS Self-Directed Services allow you to set the hourly pay for your worker up to a certain amount. If the rate study results in a rate increase for any services you can self-direct, you will then be able to pay your worker(s) up to the new rate. This change will not take place until later in the year, and we will share that news when the change happens.
- Right now, there are no changes in how you work with your Community First Choice self-directed provider agency, support broker or fiscal manager agency (FMA) to pay your worker(s).

How can I be involved in the rate study?

- On April 20, 2022, from 6 pm to 8 pm, there will be an **on-line presentation** explaining the rate study and providing more information to people served by the programs that are being studied. We will have **listening sessions** in April and May to hear your thoughts and ideas about services. You can join this meeting at this following Zoom Link:

<https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/88148308301?pwd=blhZZ1IMVHNxSmc2WjE2Z0F6SWhqdz09>

Meeting ID: 881 4830 8301

Password: 480312

- You will also have a chance to share ideas during a **public comment meeting** on June 15, 2022, from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm by joining the following Zoom Link:

<https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/86033290295?pwd=QIBCbDNNQmorR2kxeVc0R1Y3Nk1xUT09>

Meeting ID: 860 3329 0295

Password: 020298

Stay up to date on the Rate Study activities by reviewing the web page on the DPHHS website at [Rate Study Webpage](#). We welcome your questions and input! You can email us with any questions or comments at mt-dphhs-rates@guidehouse.com or you can email Jackie Jandt at jjandt@mt.gov