

iBudget Statute

393.0662 Individual budgets for delivery of home and community-based services; iBudget system established.—The Legislature finds that improved financial management of the existing home and community-based Medicaid waiver program is necessary to avoid deficits that impede the provision of services to individuals who are on the waiting list for enrollment in the program. The Legislature further finds that clients and their families should have greater flexibility to choose the services that best allow them to live in their community within the limits of an established budget. Therefore, the Legislature intends that the agency, in consultation with the Agency for Health Care Administration, develop and implement a comprehensive redesign of the service delivery system using individual budgets as the basis for allocating the funds appropriated for the home and community-based services Medicaid waiver program among eligible enrolled clients. The service delivery system that uses individual budgets shall be called the iBudget system.

(1) The agency shall establish an individual budget, referred to as an iBudget, for each individual served by the home and community-based services Medicaid waiver program. The funds appropriated to the agency shall be allocated through the iBudget system to eligible, Medicaid-enrolled clients. For the iBudget system, eligible clients shall include individuals with a diagnosis of Down syndrome or a developmental disability as defined in s. [393.063](#). The iBudget system shall be designed to provide for: enhanced client choice within a specified service package; appropriate assessment strategies; an efficient consumer budgeting and billing process that includes reconciliation and monitoring components; a redefined role for support coordinators that avoids potential conflicts of interest; a flexible and streamlined service review process; and a methodology and process that ensures the equitable allocation of available funds to each client based on the client's level of need, as determined by the variables in the allocation algorithm.

(a) In developing each client's iBudget, the agency shall use an allocation algorithm and methodology. The algorithm shall use variables that have been determined by the agency to have a statistically validated relationship to the client's level of need for services provided through the home and community-based services Medicaid waiver program. The algorithm and methodology may consider individual characteristics, including, but not limited to, a client's age and living situation, information from a formal assessment instrument that the agency determines is valid and reliable, and information from other assessment processes.

(b) The allocation methodology shall provide the algorithm that determines the amount of funds allocated to a client's iBudget. The agency may approve an increase in the amount of funds allocated, as determined by the algorithm, based on the client having one or more of the following needs that cannot be accommodated within the funding as determined by the algorithm and having no other resources, supports, or services available to meet the need:

1. An extraordinary need that would place the health and safety of the client, the client's caregiver, or the public in immediate, serious jeopardy unless the increase is approved. An extraordinary need may include, but is not limited to:

- a. A documented history of significant, potentially life-threatening behaviors, such as recent attempts at suicide, arson, nonconsensual sexual behavior, or self-injurious behavior requiring medical attention;

- b. A complex medical condition that requires active intervention by a licensed nurse on an ongoing basis that cannot be taught or delegated to a nonlicensed person;
- c. A chronic comorbid condition. As used in this subparagraph, the term "comorbid condition" means a medical condition existing simultaneously but independently with another medical condition in a patient; or
- d. A need for total physical assistance with activities such as eating, bathing, toileting, grooming, and personal hygiene.

However, the presence of an extraordinary need alone does not warrant an increase in the amount of funds allocated to a client's iBudget as determined by the algorithm.

2. A significant need for one-time or temporary support or services that, if not provided, would place the health and safety of the client, the client's caregiver, or the public in serious jeopardy, unless the increase is approved. A significant need may include, but is not limited to, the provision of environmental modifications, durable medical equipment, services to address the temporary loss of support from a caregiver, or special services or treatment for a serious temporary condition when the service or treatment is expected to ameliorate the underlying condition. As used in this subparagraph, the term "temporary" means a period of fewer than 12 continuous months. However, the presence of such significant need for one-time or temporary supports or services alone does not warrant an increase in the amount of funds allocated to a client's iBudget as determined by the algorithm.

3. A significant increase in the need for services after the beginning of the service plan year that would place the health and safety of the client, the client's caregiver, or the public in serious jeopardy because of substantial changes in the client's circumstances, including, but not limited to, permanent or long-term loss or incapacity of a caregiver, loss of services authorized under the state Medicaid plan due to a change in age, or a significant change in medical or functional status which requires the provision of additional services on a permanent or long-term basis that cannot be accommodated within the client's current iBudget. As used in this subparagraph, the term "long-term" means a period of 12 or more continuous months. However, such significant increase in need for services of a permanent or long-term nature alone does not warrant an increase in the amount of funds allocated to a client's iBudget as determined by the algorithm.

The agency shall reserve portions of the appropriation for the home and community-based services Medicaid waiver program for adjustments required pursuant to this paragraph and may use the services of an independent actuary in determining the amount of the portions to be reserved.

(c) A client's iBudget shall be the total of the amount determined by the algorithm and any additional funding provided pursuant to paragraph (b). A client's annual expenditures for home and community-based services Medicaid waiver services may not exceed the limits of his or her iBudget. The total of all clients' projected annual iBudget expenditures may not exceed the agency's appropriation for waiver services.

(2) The Agency for Health Care Administration, in consultation with the agency, shall seek federal approval to amend current waivers, request a new waiver, and

amend contracts as necessary to implement the iBudget system to serve eligible, enrolled clients through the home and community-based services Medicaid waiver program and the Consumer-Directed Care Plus Program.

(3) The agency shall transition all eligible, enrolled clients to the iBudget system. The agency may gradually phase in the iBudget system.

(a) While the agency phases in the iBudget system, the agency may continue to serve eligible, enrolled clients under the four-tiered waiver system established under s. [393.065](#) while those clients await transitioning to the iBudget system.

(b) The agency shall design the phase-in process to ensure that a client does not experience more than one-half of any expected overall increase or decrease to his or her existing annualized cost plan during the first year that the client is provided an iBudget due solely to the transition to the iBudget system.

(4) A client must use all available services authorized under the state Medicaid plan, school-based services, private insurance and other benefits, and any other resources that may be available to the client before using funds from his or her iBudget to pay for support and services.

(5) The service limitations in s. [393.0661](#)(3)(f)1., 2., and 3. do not apply to the iBudget system.

(6) Rates for any or all services established under rules of the Agency for Health Care Administration shall be designated as the maximum rather than a fixed amount for individuals who receive an iBudget, except for services specifically identified in those rules that the agency determines are not appropriate for negotiation, which may include, but are not limited to, residential habilitation services.

(7) The agency shall ensure that clients and caregivers have access to training and education to inform them about the iBudget system and enhance their ability for self-direction. Such training shall be offered in a variety of formats and at a minimum shall address the policies and processes of the iBudget system; the roles and responsibilities of consumers, caregivers, waiver support coordinators, providers, and the agency; information available to help the client make decisions regarding the iBudget system; and examples of support and resources available in the community.

(8) The agency shall collect data to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of the iBudget system.

(9) The agency and the Agency for Health Care Administration may adopt rules specifying the allocation algorithm and methodology; criteria and processes for clients to access reserved funds for extraordinary needs, temporarily or permanently changed needs, and one-time needs; and processes and requirements for selection and review of services, development of support and cost plans, and management of the iBudget system as needed to administer this section.

History.—s. 2, ch. 2010-157; s. 31, ch. 2011-135.