

HVSA FY22 Contract Adjustment

FAQs – updated 12/22/2021

Gold = new questions and new answers as of 12/22/21.

American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Awards MIECHV Program FAQs

Funds/Invoicing/Budgeting

Q: If my budget is going from two fund streams to five streams, will we need to budget and track separately?

A: In regards to the Contract Maintenance Adjustment, this will depend upon whether funding streams (e.g., MIECHV, TANF, i502, GSF) are being added to your contract. If you are receiving additional funds in existing funding streams, you will track those new dollars within your current methods of backup documentation. If you are adding a new GSF funding stream (e.g., never received GSF funds before in any enhancement or expansion), you will see additional payment points on your A-19 invoice and this will require distinct fiscal tracking; please work with your DCYF program specialist for clarifications. Rescue Funds are new fund streams and must be tracked separately from other funding streams.

Q: Are we invoicing rescue funds separately from existing funding, or is this allocation being added to existing funding/budget lines?

A: Yes, you will see additional payment points on your A-19 invoice labeled “State Rescue Funds” and/or “MIECHV Rescue Funds” that will require distinct fiscal tracking and reporting updates in the PSRS starting with your Q2 Progress Report.

Q: With the GSF state increases would we continue to get these dollars in future years or should we work under the assumption this is just for this year and we wait to see for future what we get?

A: Yes. Programs should assume these funds will be added to your ongoing annual contract allocation going forward in future years. In regards to the Rescue Funds, these are one-time adjustments that will not be added to your ongoing contract base allocation. It is possible that rescue dollars will be added in FY23 as well; however, these are not ongoing funds.

Q: Would we be able to use GFS maintenance funds for management support that is not covered through TANF?

A: Yes, the contract Maintenance Adjustment may be used to support your current contract (FY22) statement of work; additions to MIECHV dollars must support your MIECHV caseload; additions to the GSF dollars may support your entire caseload (including MIECHV, TANF, i502 and SGF).

Q: Regarding invoicing, will the BARS and/or CFDA follow the same title?

A: For the Contract Maintenance Adjustment, there is no change in CFDA. For the MIECHV Rescue Funds, the dollars are originating from the same federal agency (CFD 93.870). The BARS is relevant to local government funding and does not apply to state funding. For clarification, the State Rescue Funds are general state fund dollars allocated to DCYF in the enacted legislative budget to purchase and deliver concrete goods to low-income families.



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Q: Do rescue funds follow the same indirect rate as other funds?

A: Yes, your allowable indirect rate applies to the rescue funds (MIECHV and state).

Q: We are waiting for approval on our indirect rate. May we use the proposed rate in the budget?

A: No, you may only use the indirect rate for which you have approved documentation to support. Once your new indirect rate is established, we will work with you to amend your contract (and budget) to account for the new indirect rate.

Q: What is the timeline to spend the Rescue Funds money? Does it have to all be spent this year?

A: The rescue funds in your current SFY22 contract adjustment must be spent by June 30 2022; however there is a possibility of additional money in SFY23 for the same purpose.

Eligibility

Q: Can we support TANF families with State Rescue Funds?

A: Yes, all families on your caseload who are funded with DCYF Home Visiting state dollars may be supported with the State Rescue funds; this includes GFS, i502, and TANF families.

Q: Can we use these funds to support caseload of non-state funded families?

A: No, only DCYF/HVSA Home Visiting funded families may be supported with Rescue Funds. All families on your DCYF Home Visiting caseload who are funded with state dollars may be supported with the State Rescue funds; this includes GSF, i502, and TANF families. All DCYF Home Visiting families on your MIECHV caseload may be supported with MIECHV Rescue Funds.

Q: Previously, we were told there is a limit of incentives that go to families, so if we add this to the other necessities, does this go into the ratio of the incentive allowed per participant?

A: DCYF has established no dollar limit on incentives for families within the HVSA contract; it is important to remember all expenditure billed to DCYF (whether state or federally sourced) must be reasonable, allowable, and allocable. Any incentives must be clearly defined and accounted for in your program and fiscal policies and procedures, with proper controls put into place to ensure this. The intent of these funds are to support your program's and family's emergent needs as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q: I heard that all families in programs qualify, but if we have some that are not low income (qualify in other ways) can we use program discretion to decide who gets support based on need or should we plan to do the same support for all program participants?

A: Your program will need to establish a rationale and process (which may be a policy and associated procedure) for using these funds for technology, emergency supplies, and grocery cards and how your program will distribute them to families.

Q: Is there going to be parity in providing these same supports to non-HVSA-funded HV participants?

A: Not using these dollars. We are investigating other resources to support other participants who are not funded with HVSA dollars and will report back at future office hours or in the newsletter.

Technology

Q: Can we use these funds to support home visitors with technology needed for virtual visits?

A: Yes, technology supports may be used for home visitors and/or families to support provision of virtual visits.

Q: Can rescue funds be used to buy an annual Zoom license subscription for the supervisor and/or HVs so they can do virtual team meetings and virtual group connections?

A: Yes, this qualifies as technology to support virtual visits, which may be used for home visitors and families.

Q: Is technology given to families expected to be returned, or can they keep it?

A: It depends on the need and capacity of each program for managing the technology distribution and the family access to technology.

Emergency Supplies

Q: Can funds be used for activity kits to drop off and allow families to keep so we don't have to pick up and extensively clean in between families?

A: No. Activity kits for families are allowable as part of your typical budgeted funds home visiting supplies. Rescue funds for emergency supplies should be used to meet the needs of families that have uniquely emerged due COVID-19 pandemic.

Q: Can we use these funds for storage of emergency supplies?

A: Rescue funds may not be used to purchase a storage unit or dwelling, but funds may be used for rental of an off-site storage space with a reasonable cost. Please note, use of funds for this purpose must be appropriately allocated, e.g used specifically for this program, this purpose, and proportionately charged to it. DCYF has received guidance from HRSA that for MIECHV funds, the emergency supplies are not intended to be stockpiled, but instead purchased and distributed regularly to families as needs present.

Q: Can we use these funds for PPE?

A: Yes, PPE would qualify as emergency supplies and may be for the home visitor and enrolled families.

Q: Can programs use rescue dollars to purchase in-home COVID-19 testing kits (for families or home visitors)?

A: Rescue funds may be used to purchase at-home test kits for families as an “emergency supply”. Recipients are encouraged to follow or establish policies to ensure that at-home test kits provided to families are provided for the families’ independent use. Home visitors may not administer nor oversee the results of the test, unless required to maintain fidelity to a model, as this would generally be considered a direct medical service (not allowable under MIECHV). Recipients should consult with model and state policy regarding using the results of an at-home test kit provided to a family with MIECHV funds to determine the method of delivering home visits to the family.

Rescue funds may also be used to purchase at-home test kits for home visitors. Recipients are encouraged to follow or establish policies to ensure at-home test kits are provided and used by home visitors in accordance with model and recipient policy.

Q: Can one-time rescue dollars be used for items such as car seats, pack-n-plays, heaters, coats, or diaper bags?

A: Yes, these may be provided to the extent these items are needed as a response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. When these items are needs not associated with the COVID-19 public health emergency, home visiting programs are encouraged to partner with organizations in their communities that also typically distribute these safety supplies to families.

Q: Can we use these funds for thermometers for families?

A: Yes, if the need arises due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q: Can one-time rescue dollars be used to cover client rent or utility bills?

A: No, other state and federal relief funds are available to support families with these expenses.

Q: Can one-time rescue dollars be used to buy gas cards, Uber/Lyft rides or other forms of public transportation for participants struggling in that area (in order to access services, etc.)?

A: Yes, if families are not be able to access groceries without gas, then programs may offer gas cards to be used to support families in using their grocery gift cards (or accessing other emergency supports).

Q: What is considered an urgent need? If a nurse notices something needed by the family during a visit, can she buy it and get reimbursed?

A: Home visitors should follow your organizations protocol for staff purchasing supplies, which may include prior approval. If the urgent need must arise from the COVID-19 pandemic; any purchases made by home visitors must align with agency policies and procedures; however, medical supplies are not an allowable MIECHV expense.

Q: Is it allowable to offer VISA cards to clients (instead of prepaid grocery cards or gas cards)?

A: VISA gift cards **may** be used as part of the emergency supplies – grocery gift cards if it helps families in accessing supports such as food via local and cultural grocers, etc. LIAs should utilize the same approach to consider reasonableness (amounts) of these gift cards and the same guidance around intended use and limitation of the gift cards apply for VISA cards. It is not allowable to offer cash to clients in lieu of prepaid grocery or gas cards.

Q: Can rescue funds be used to cover staff cell phone monthly expense from November 2021 through June 2022?

A: Ongoing cell phone charges are considered part of the program operations, and rescue dollars may not be used to pay for cell phone charges; however, if cell phone charges are specifically increasing in order to offer visits virtually (e.g. through the addition of minutes, data or hotspots to cell phone accounts), these additional expenses incurred as a result of the pandemic are allowable through the technology Rescue Funds.

Grocery Gift Cards

Q: Can we tie supplies like grocery cards to client engagement? For example, can we give a \$50 grocery card if client participates in X number of visits in a time period?

A: No. Grocery cards should be provided to enrolled families based as a respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Additionally, prepaid grocery cards should be purchased and utilized based on the needs of families enrolled in the program (e.g. – not purchased to have as reserves). Organizations should follow their processes and/or procedures for purchase and distribution of gift cards.

Other

Q: Can we use these funds to train staff?

A: No, staff training is not an allowable expense with these funds.

Q: Can we use these funds to support staff working remotely (e.g., supplies)?

A: No, these funds may be used for emergency supplies to support families and technology to support delivering virtual visits. However, office supplies for staff working remotely may come from your maintenance budget and not rescue funds.

Q: Can rescue funds be used for CPR classes for parents and pay for the trainer and cards?

A: This is not allowable as it falls does not fall into the allowable categories of technology, emergency supplies or prepaid grocery cards.

Distribution

Q: For groceries, do we have to give aid in the form of gift cards or can we purchase groceries ourselves as needed?

A: Programs must use prepaid grocery cards.

Q: If we have grocers that do not sell those products is that sufficient? Do we still need them to sign an attestation?

A: For our documentation, please have all families who receive the pre-paid grocery cards sign the attestation. A best practice for compliance with the use of prepaid grocery cards is to obtain a signed statement by the enrolled family acknowledging and agreeing to the purpose(s) of and restrictions on prepaid grocery card use. DCYF (nor HRSA) does not require, nor does it encourage, recipients to collect further usage information (such as receipts) from enrolled families. **Please connect with your DCYF program specialist for additional information or examples.**

Q: Do agencies have to front the purchases and then get reimbursed?

A: Yes, these funds work similarly to other contract expenses, with reimbursement for actual, documented expenses.

Q: For rescue funds, do supplies need to be purchased or distributed by the end of the term?

A: For the FY22 Rescue Funds, all supplies must be purchased prior to June 30 with intent to use during the current fiscal year.

Reporting

Q: Will you want dollar amounts spent each quarter in the PSRS or just the information on how many families received what?

A: You will track dollar amounts for invoices but not for the quarterly reporting in the PSRS.

Q: Do I report when they are handed out or purchased?

A: For the Rescue Funds, you will report the dollars spent each month in your monthly A-19 invoice with documentation; you will report details on how many families received these supplies (emergency supplies and prepaid grocery cards) and your process for determining the need for these as well as the process for distribution through your quarterly progress reports, beginning with your Q2 PSRS Progress Report.

Diaper Banks

Q: For programs required to use a diaper bank, if the local diaper bank doesn't serve the entire county, will diapering supplies be available from them for families who live outside their current service area?

A: Yes, DCYF will be specifying in the contract with local diaper banks to serve the entire service area of reached by the LIA with the DCYF contract to ensure full service area aligned with programs assigned to them. Please contact your program specialist if any issues arise.