

PASCO News

September 2020

Special Education During COVID-19



With the school year underway, a lot of parents are feeling unsupported as school has moved from in-person learning to remote learning. Without a cohesive strategy to support learning for children with special needs, it is left up to the parents to facilitate and advocate for their children.

It's important to understand that even during this unique period of time, the law that supports Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) does not change, although the process has altered. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the law that makes available a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to eligible children with disabilities throughout the United States, ensuring special education and related services to those children.

According to Secretary DeVos's April 27th, 2020 report to Congress, the recommendations for honoring IDEA were:

- *Schools can, and must, provide education to all students, including children with disabilities.*
- *The health and safety of children, students, educators, and service providers must be the first consideration.*
- *The needs and best interests of the individual student, not any system, should guide decisions and expenditures.*
- *Parents or recipients of services must be informed of, and involved in, decisions relating to the provision of services.*
- *Services typically provided in person may now need to be provided through alternative methods, requiring creative and innovative approaches.*

If, as a parent, you do not agree with the approach your school district is taking to accommodate your child's learning needs, then the same safeguards are available through IDEA's dispute resolution processes.

While the federal recommendation and generalized guidance is appreciated, there is still so much we don't know; this requires parents to be the ones establishing creative and innovative approaches to special education. Remote learning, juggling the needs of the child and the home, and creating some semblance of time for yourself is nothing new to our community. We are used to being creative, innovative, and providing the voice for our children. As with all of the difficulties of this new world, we are built to adapt and built to overcome.



Virtual IEP Round Table Discussion

Knowing the frustrations our families are facing, PASCO is bringing together various advocacy community partners to answer your questions. To submit your IEP related questions to be included in the Virtual IEP Round Table Discussion please visit: bot.pascohh.com/iep-questions

Have you Submitted your Live-In Caregiver Status yet?

If you have not already submitted your live-in status please go to: go.pascohh.com/livein and complete the steps.

Please note:

- *It asks for 5 digits of your SSN and not 4*
- *Proof of residency needs to be different for caregiver and client*
- *The date on the proof you provide MUST be visible AND meet the above criteria or the state will not accept it (which means we will ask you to provide something else)*
- *After clicking "Submit Form" please wait for the confirmation page to verify it submitted successfully.*

TO LEARN MORE & TO SUBMIT YOUR FORM PLEASE VISIT: go.pascohh.com/livein

Meet your PASCO Client Services Manager

Hello PASCO family, my name is Erika Swanson and I am your Client Services Manager. I am a long time employee of PASCO serving in various capacities. My journey started 14 years ago when I became a CNA to care for my son Jackson. Jackson was born in 2003 and diagnosed with schizencephaly and cerebral palsy at 4 months old. In 2006 I moved across the country from Maryland to Colorado when I heard about the parent CNA program that PASCO pioneered. I spent the next eight and half years caring for Jackson as a CNA for PASCO until he suddenly and unexpectedly passed away in May of 2015, he was 11 yrs old. My world forever changed in the blink of an eye. I learned a lot being the parent of a special needs child and most of all, that I love being a part of this amazing community that serves these individuals. I have continued working for PASCO in an administrative role starting as a Human Resources Generalist, onto an Intake Partner, and now as Client Services Manager. It is my pleasure to assist families with my wealth of knowledge from both personal and professional experience around accessing long term services and supports through a very complex Medicaid system.



Erika Swanson
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Please call, email, or text me if you need assistance with any of the following:

- Education about key transitional ages (age 18 particularly).
- Advocacy with waiver supports and services.
- Resources for Guardianship/Special Needs Trusts.
- Understanding caregiving options by waiver.
- Resources for services PASCO doesn't offer.

Community Events connection for the community



ACCESSIBLE HIKE

with Topher Downham

TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER 15TH 2020
9am - 11am
Flagstaff Mountain
Sensory Trail



Accessible Hike (Social-Distance)

This accessible hike is led by Topher Downham, who works for the city of Boulder and also uses a wheelchair. He is an expert on accessible trails in the Boulder area, and will be taking us on an early-morning accessible hike through a beautiful forest trail with an amazing view of the peaks at the top.

 Sep 15 2020  Sensory Trail
Flagstaff Summit Rd,
Boulder, CO 80302

Virtual Guardianship Class

Join us for a Virtual Guardianship Class, where Chris Brock, Managing Attorney of CCDC Probate Power, will present on the different options for: the guardianship process, the basic requirements of filing for guardianship, and the responsibilities of a guardian once appointed.

 Sep 24 2020  Online
 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm



Virtual Guardianship Class

For Guardians/Parents
of Children 14-21 years old

THURSDAY
SEPTEMBER 24th
3:00pm - 4:00pm



Featuring
Chris Brock
(CCDC Managing Attorney)



Let's Connect! RSVP for your preferred events at: pascohh.com/community-events/

Advocacy Corner by David Bolin



Person Centered Budget Algorithm: The first meeting of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for developing the Person Centered Budget Algorithm related to the new Assessment and Support Planning tool took place on August 25, 2020. There are 21 appointed members to the TAG and there were many questions for the contractor who is charged with developing the algorithm. There was representation from HCBS clients, families, case managers and one service provider (from PASCO). Currently, only 4 meetings are scheduled for the TAG and also 4 statewide forums for other stakeholders to provide comments. I encourage our HCBS clients and their families to attend the statewide forums so you can hear the contractor's proposals, how they will conduct stakeholder input and to determine how this algorithm may affect HCBS clients across the State of Colorado. The algorithm and the new tool will be used for all HCBS clients starting in July 2021.

The tool and training manual is available at:

colorado.gov/hcpf/colorados-its-assessment-and-support-plan.

I encourage everyone to read these documents so that they are prepared for this new tool. The Supports Intensive Scale (SIS) will be replaced by this new tool, as will the 100.2 assessment. The work on the algorithm can be found at: colorado.gov/hcpf/person-centered-budget-algorithm-pcba.

The first statewide forums will be held on September 10, 2020 at noon and 5 pm. At this time, we don't have the link to join the virtual forums but the link can be found at the algorithm webpage above. Please attend, ask questions, make comments and most importantly learn what you can expect in the future. Colorado Budget

Colorado Budget: The advocacy team continues to monitor Colorado's budget issues so we are aware of any possible cuts that may happen in state services. As long as CMS continues to extend the national health emergency, the state will continue to receive additional federal matching funds for Medicaid. These funds have helped stave off larger cuts to long term services and supports.

EQ Health: News for our pediatric home health families! Starting in October, the state will resume having EQ Health review PARs as follows:

HCPF identified 3 groups who will need to submit PARs

- Group 1: Those members whose PARs were continued to 6/30/2020. There are 300 LTHH and 22 PDN cases to their knowledge.
- Group 2: Those members whose PARs end 7/1/2020 to 12/31/2020. There are ~5700. 5528 LTHH and 171 PDN PARs.
- Group 3: Members who started services from 7/1/2020 on and had no previous PAR. This is an unknown number right now and they will pull this information from the MMIS system based on billing.

EQ Health will coordinate with PASCO's PAR team and nursing staff to coordinate who is affected and when we will develop a PAR for clients.

Medicaid News: Colorado Health First (HCPF) announced last week that they have made some changes to how home health appeals will be handled. If a member appeals a decision by Medicaid, a "Navigator" will contact the member to see if they need any help appealing the decision. The Navigator is a Medicaid employee so everyone needs to be aware of the potential conflict of interest the Navigator has. They will only give you information on how to appeal the decision and may provide some information on advocacy groups who may help you with the appeal.

HPV Medicaid Coverage: The covered age range for the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) has been updated to reflect the most current recommendation for the Medicaid Advisory Committee of Immunization Practices. Accordingly, the HPV vaccine is now a covered benefit through age 45, with shared decision making between the member and the provider.



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Let's stay connected



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