

**RCW 74.39A.326 In-home personal care or respite services to family members—Department not authorized to pay—Exceptions—**

**Enforcement—Rules.** (1) (a) Except as provided under (b) of this subsection, the department shall not pay a home care agency licensed under chapter 70.127 RCW for in-home personal care or respite services provided under this chapter, Title 71A RCW, or chapter 74.39 RCW if the care is provided to a client by a family member of the client. To the extent permitted under federal law, the provisions of this subsection shall not apply if the family member providing care is older than the client.

(b) The department may, on a case-by-case basis based on the client's health and safety, make exceptions to (a) of this subsection to authorize payment or to provide for payment during a transition period of up to three months. Within available funds, the restrictions under (a) of this subsection do not apply when the care is provided to: (i) A client who is an enrolled member of a federally recognized Indian tribe; or (ii) a client who resides in the household of an enrolled member of a federally recognized Indian tribe.

(2) The department shall take appropriate enforcement action against a home care agency found to have charged the state for hours of service for which the department is not authorized to pay under this section, including requiring recoupment of any payment made for those hours and, under criteria adopted by the department by rule, terminating the contract of an agency that violates a recoupment requirement.

(3) For purposes of this section:

(a) "Client" means a person who has been deemed eligible by the department to receive in-home personal care or respite services.

(b) "Family member" shall be liberally construed to include, but not be limited to, a parent, child, sibling, aunt, uncle, cousin, grandparent, grandchild, grandniece, or grandnephew, or such relatives when related by marriage.

(4) The department shall adopt rules to implement this section. The rules shall not result in affecting the amount, duration, or scope of the personal care or respite services benefit to which a client may be entitled pursuant to RCW 74.09.520 or Title XIX of the federal social security act. [2017 3rd sp.s. c 34 s 3; 2009 c 571 s 1.]

**Findings—Intent—2017 3rd sp.s. c 34:** "The legislature finds that the most common form of long-term care provided to persons who are elderly, disabled, or have a developmental disability is provided by a family member in a personal residence. The legislature also finds that care provided by a family member who is chosen by the recipient is often the most appropriate form of care, allowing vulnerable individuals to remain independent while maintaining a sense of dignity and choice. The current system of medicaid services has complexities that may create obstacles for consumers who wish to be cared for by a family member and for family members who enter the system solely to provide care for their loved ones.

Therefore, the legislature intends to direct a study of the current options allowing for the delivery of medicaid personal care services by caregivers who are family members of the state's citizens who are aging, disabled, or who have a developmental disability. The legislature intends to promote more flexibility for clients to access their benefits and to reduce obstacles for clients who wish to hire family members to provide their care." [2017 3rd sp.s. c 34 s 1.]

**Conflict with federal requirements—2009 c 571:** "If any part of this act is found to be in conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to the allocation of federal funds to the state, the conflicting part of this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict and with respect to the agencies directly affected, and this finding does not affect the operation of the remainder of this act in its application to the agencies concerned. Rules adopted under this act must meet federal requirements that are a necessary condition to the receipt of federal funds by the state." [2009 c 571 s 3.]

**Effective date—2009 c 571:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 19, 2009]." [2009 c 571 s 4.]