

Home and Community Based Settings Rule Heightened Scrutiny Evidentiary Package

On March 17, 2014, new federal Medicaid rules for Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) went into effect. The rules impact many parts of HCBS. One of the most important topics is the places where HCBS can be provided.

Because HCBS programs are offered as alternatives to nursing and intermediate care facility services, the new rules make sure that HCBS are provided in settings that are not institutional in nature. To follow this rule, states must make sure that HCBS settings are part of a larger community, people are able to have choices about their service settings, and that people are assured their rights to privacy, dignity and respect.

States must evaluate their HCBS programs to determine the level of compliance with the new rules. The setting indicated on this form has been identified as requiring to go through the heightened scrutiny process as part of the compliance process.

Additional information on Heightened Scrutiny can be found here: [HCBS Settings Rule: Heightened Scrutiny](#)

Setting Information

Site Name:	Rise, Inc	Site ID:	1169
Site Address:	2751 W 9000 S, West Jordan 84088		
Website:	https://riseservicesinc.org/		
# of Individuals Served at this location regardless of funding:	47	# of Medicaid Individuals Served at this location:	47
Waiver(s) Served:		HCBS Provider Type:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acquired Brain injury <input type="checkbox"/> Aging Waiver <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Supports <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Transition <input type="checkbox"/> New Choices <i>Description of Waivers can be found here:</i> https://medicaid.utah.gov/ltc/		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Day Support Services <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Day Care <input type="checkbox"/> Residential Facility <input type="checkbox"/> Supported Living <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Preparation Services	
Heightened Scrutiny Prong:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Prong 1: Setting is in a publicly or privately operated facility that provides inpatient institutional treatment <input type="checkbox"/> Prong 2: Setting is in a building on the grounds of, or immediately adjacent to, a public institution <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prong 3: From the initial assessment, the setting was found to have the effect of isolating individuals from the broader community. The following is the area that was identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. Individuals have limited, if any, opportunities for interaction in and with the broader community and /or the setting is physically located separate and apart from the broader community and does not facilitate individual opportunity to access the broader community and participate in community services consistent with their person centered service plan 			

Home and Community Based Settings Rule Heightened Scrutiny Evidentiary Package

	<input type="checkbox"/> B. The setting restricts individuals choice to receive services or to engage in activities outside of the setting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. The setting has qualities that are institutional in nature. These can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The setting has policies and practices which control the behaviors of individuals; are rigid in their schedules; have multiple restrictive practices in place • The setting does not ensure an individual’s rights of privacy, dignity, and respect
Onsite Visit(s) Conducted:	10/30/19 (on site); 11/30/22 (virtual visit)
Description of Setting:	
Rise is a Day Supports Program located in a busy suburban area in West Jordan near restaurants, community recreation centers, shopping, libraries, parks, with access to public transportation. Several places are within walking distance such as a Maverik, fast food, Starbucks, and a grocery store.	
Current Standing of Setting:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Currently Compliant: the setting has overcome the qualities identified above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved Remediation Plan: the setting has an approved remediation plan demonstrating how it will come into compliance. The approved timeline for compliance is: The State will work with the provider to address remaining remediation activities and schedule an additional visit to validate the completion of these items.	

Evidence the Setting is Fully Compliant or Will Be Fully Compliant

Prong 1: The setting is in a publicly or privately operated facility that provides inpatient institutional treatment; the setting overcomes this presumption of an institutional setting.	
Compliance:	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Remediation Plan demonstrating will be compliant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

Prong 2: The setting is in a building on the grounds of, or immediately adjacent to, a public institution; the setting overcomes this presumption of an institutional setting.	
Compliance:	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Remediation Plan demonstrating will be compliant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

Prong 3 A: The setting is integrated in and supports full access of individuals receiving Medicaid HCBS to the greater community, including opportunities to seek employment and work in competitive integrated settings, engage in community life, control personal resources, and receive services in the community, to the same degree of access as individuals not receiving Medicaid HCBS.	
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Compliance:	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remediation Plan demonstrating will be compliant
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Summary:	<p>Onsite Visit Summary 10/30/19:</p> <p>The setting does not facilitate the opportunity to be integrated into the greater community to the same degree as individuals not receiving HCBS services. Setting needs better planning in regards to activities to make them more meaningful to individuals to ensure integration into the greater community. Community based outings occur only once weekly for individuals; there are 5 groups and each group goes to the same community outing that week. There are limited active measures taking place to facilitate activities outside of the setting</p>
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Home and Community Based Settings Rule Heightened Scrutiny Evidentiary Package

	<p>Remediation Plan Summary:</p> <p>The setting put a plan in place to provide and support participants in their personal choice, preferences, and interests. They will provide community integrated employment, add more independence with choosing daily routines, implement teaching skills to seek integrated employment in the community and will support people in their current day programs by helping to build more independence into their daily routine.</p> <p>Individuals have a suggestion board that they write down the activities that they would like to do. On Friday the coordinator sits down with everyone and goes through the activities they have chosen. At that time if there are not enough ideas, the coordinator and staff put out ideas that the individuals select. The coordinator uses their activities and creates a schedule for the following week with activities.</p> <p>Each day when the individual comes in they put their name by the activities that they would like to participate in for the day. Staffing is then determined by the group size of the activities the individuals selected.</p> <p>Onsite Visit Summary 11/29/22:</p> <p>The setting has a job coach that has an office. If an individual wants to have a job they talk to them. When they are out in the community they talk about potential jobs and what skills individuals can develop for a job. They will talk with people about budgeting when out in the community.</p> <p>There doesn't appear to be a formal process for collecting feedback on community integration. Staff will develop an activity calendar and individuals can choose to participate in the activity.</p> <p>Remediation Plan Summary:</p> <p>The provider will train staff on the importance of having employment conversations with individuals when out in the community. The provider will develop a process and provide documentation that shows individuals can give feedback and that their desire to participate in the community activities they want.</p> <p>Policy/Document Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff training ● HCBS Lifestyle Policy ● Grievance Form ● Weekly/monthly schedule for individuals ● Planning activity board
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Prong 3 B: The setting is selected by the individual from among setting options, including non-disability specific settings.	
Compliance:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Remediation Plan demonstrating will be compliant
Summary:	<p>Onsite Visit Summary 10/30/19:</p> <p>Individuals choose this facility. The setting does not restrict access to any non-disability settings and facilitates access when requested.</p> <p>The setting does not restrict access to non-disability settings. The setting has an admission process that assesses individuals' needs and preferences and regularly reassesses to ensure services are provided in a person-centered manner.</p>

Home and Community Based Settings Rule Heightened Scrutiny Evidentiary Package

<p>Prong 3 C: The setting optimizes, but does not regiment individual initiative, autonomy, and independence in making life choices. The setting ensures an individual’s rights of privacy, dignity, respect, and freedom from coercion and restraint. The setting ensures the individual has the freedom and support to control his/her own schedule and activities.</p>	
<p>Compliance:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remediation Plan demonstrating will be compliant</p>
<p>Summary:</p>	<p>Onsite Visit Summary 10/30/19: The setting does not ensure an individual’s rights of privacy, dignity, and respect. During the visit, an individual was observed drinking out of a baby bottle; this can be segregating for the individual served. The day program and an after school program share the same building. Some spaces are shared by both programs.</p> <p>Remediation Plan Summary: The setting put a plan in place to provide and support participants in their personal choices, preferences, and interests. They will provide community integrated employment, add more independence with choosing daily routines, implement teaching skills to seek integrated employment in the community, and will support people in their current day programs by helping to build more independence into their daily routine.</p> <p>The individual in the West Jordan Day Program comes each day with their bottle and chocolate milk. Staff does not assist them with getting drinks at all. The individual brings the bottle and fills the bottle each day as this is their preferred way to drink. Staff have offered them the use of cups many times and the individual just throws them and uses the bottle. It is 100% the individual's choice to use the bottle.</p> <p>Onsite Visit Summary 11/29/22: There doesn’t appear to be a formal process for collecting feedback on community integration. Staff will develop an activity calendar and individuals can choose to participate in the activity. It doesn’t appear that individuals can control their schedule or give input on the daily schedule. The activity calendar had toileting as an activity. Some staff seemed unclear about who had rights restrictions.</p> <p>Remediation Plan Summary: The provider will develop a process and provide documentation that shows individuals can give feedback and that their desire to participate in the community activities they want. The provider will update their daily calendar to remove activities that are personal in nature and move them to individualized care plans if needed. The provider will complete an assistive technology assessment and get informed consent of the individual's choice in their use of drinking bottle (for individual previously observed drinking out of a bottle at program). The provider will submit documentation that staff have been trained on rights restrictions.</p> <p>Policy/Document Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff training ● Weekly/monthly schedule for individuals ● Planning activity board

Home and Community Based Settings Rule Heightened Scrutiny Evidentiary Package

Overall, the setting enforces the Home and Community-Based Settings Regulation requirements.	
Compliance:	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remediation Plan demonstrating will be compliant
Summary:	Remediation Plan Summary: The setting has identified remediation activities in prong 3A and 3C and will work with the State to complete these remaining issues.

Input from Individuals Served and Staff

Individuals Served Summary:	<p>Summary of interviews (2019):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individuals enjoy participating in activities and using transportation in the community. ● Individuals indicated an interest in doing more in the community. ● Individual said they get to choose what they do in the community and can spend their own money on things they want. ● Individual said they understood a restriction was for their safety. <p>Summary of interviews (2022):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual states do not make their own schedule. Staff lets them know what the activities are for the day. ● Individuals have a choice of activities and getting out into the community to the dollar store and the library. ● An individual said they have a choice in activities and likes to go to Wheeler Farm. ● An individual said they can't sing religious songs or swear. ● An individual said when they go shopping they talk about jobs.
Staff Summary:	<p>Summary of interviews (2019):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff reported receiving annual and as needed training. ● Staff felt they can improve on involving individuals in their weekly planning for activities. ● Staff repeated that it is the individual's choice whether or not to participate in activities. ● Staff indicated that participants have input on the activity schedule. <p>Summary of interviews (2022):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff try to teach budgeting while out in the community. ● Staff trained once a year. ● Staff said people enjoy going for walks and they go out in small groups. ● Staff said they make an activity calendar and then ask who would like to go to which activities. ● Staff said the day program is still doing all the precautions for COVID. Staff are checking temp, social distancing and hygiene practices.

Ongoing Remediation Activities	
Current Standing:	<input type="checkbox"/> Currently Compliant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved Remediation Plan

Home and Community Based Settings Rule Heightened Scrutiny Evidentiary Package

Continued Remediation Activities	The setting is finalizing its remediation activities in prong 3A and 3C. The State will validate the remaining remediation items to ensure compliance.
Ongoing Monitoring Activities	<p>The State will use the following tools to ensure settings continue compliance with the Settings Rule criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conducting individual served experience surveys ● Addressing settings compliance during the annual person centered service planning process ● Ongoing provider training and certification ● Monitoring through critical incident reporting ● Case Management/Support Coordinator visit monitoring ● HCBS Waiver Reviews/Audits

Summary of Stakeholder Workgroup Comments Received and State Response:

Stakeholder Workgroup Review: January 3, 2023 - January 18, 2023
<i>General Comments Received</i>
<p>Comment: The materials provided by the State in the newly-released evidentiary packets (“batch 5”) raise concerns about whether the identified settings currently demonstrate the qualities of HCBS. In most instances, the state has only completed a virtual review instead of an in-person visit. In our experience as the P&A, it is difficult to accurately assess characteristics of an institution as well as to communicate effectively with waiver participants without an in-person visit.</p> <p>Response: The State has a comprehensive virtual validation visit process in place to determine HCBS Settings Rule compliance. If at any time the State determines that the virtual process is not sufficient for a specific setting, then the State will make the determination that an in-person visit is required at that time. Once a setting has completed its remediation and the State has validated its compliance with the HCBS settings rule, it moves to the ongoing monitoring process.</p> <p>Comment: In many instances, the packages state that the setting is compliant based on a remediation plan and indicate that a validation visit will be completed in the future. Many of the reviews state that individuals are not getting into the community to the degree they would wish and that there are still institution-like restrictions on individuals in the settings. It is difficult for stakeholders to provide feedback on whether a setting has the characteristics of an HCBS setting if it is still in the process of remediating. The remediation plans seem to lack the detail necessary to assist a setting with becoming compliant and the short time frame until the final compliance deadline leads us to believe that these sites will not remediate in time.</p> <p>Response: Settings must demonstrate compliance or demonstrate a plan along with the State’s oversight to ensure completion of actions to certify they will become compliant prior to March 17, 2023 before the State submits them through the heightened scrutiny process.</p>

Home and Community Based Settings Rule Heightened Scrutiny Evidentiary Package

Comment:

The reviews in many instances lack the detail necessary to determine whether a setting is institutional/segregating. For example, there are reviews of 14c certificate holders that do not indicate whether the setting will pay subminimum wage moving forward. Reviews indicate that individuals access the community, but in many instances don't specify how large the groups are, what types of activities they engage in and the frequency with which activities occur. Some reviews mention work groups/work enclaves, but do not specify what type of work individuals engage in, where people work and how large the work groups are. The reviews frequently say that the setting does not restrict access to the community, that community amenities are within "miles" and that there is access to public transportation, but often do not specify how the facility supports individuals to access these amenities/public transportation.

Response:

While the State agrees that certain criteria can create concerns with compliance, several elements described do not determine on their own whether a setting meets or fails requirements. Individual settings are reviewed and assessed on their merit. For example, payment of sub-minimum wage work or group sizes in and of themselves are not including or excluding criteria. The state determines compliance based on factors such as person centered planning, individual choice and autonomy, individualized schedules, and individuals self-reporting they are accessing the community at the level that they desire.

Comment:

We are very concerned about how the state has handled non-residential settings, particularly large day programs and sheltered workshops. These reviews do not demonstrate that the state has ensured that these particularly problematic settings have remediated sufficient to comply with the settings rule as well as title II of the ADA and Olmstead. Again, many final reviews have not been completed in person, and most frequently the state is submitting sites that have submitted a remediation plan but have not been validated as remediated.

Response:

Settings must demonstrate compliance or demonstrate a plan along with the State's oversight to ensure completion of actions to certify they will become compliant prior to March 17, 2023 before the State submits them through the heightened scrutiny process. The State has a comprehensive virtual validation visit process in place to determine HCBS Settings Rule compliance. If at any time the State determines that the virtual process is not sufficient for a specific setting, then the State will make the determination that an in-person visit is required at that time. Once a setting has completed its remediation and the State has validated its compliance with the HCBS settings rule, it moves to the ongoing monitoring process. While the State does acknowledge that activities for remediation extended into March 2023, it does not believe strategies deviated from its Statewide Transition Plan, or that inappropriate methods were used in validating compliance. The State also acknowledges that Settings compliance is not a one time activity and the usage of ongoing monitoring will aid to reinforce core tenants of the Rule as well as the development and dissemination of best practices. The State encourages the submission of providers who are believed to be non-compliant with requirements of the Settings Rule, including the elements/criteria which are not sufficiently meeting expectations.

Comment:

Reviews indicate that individuals are still being segregated by "level of functioning" and even by whether an individual resides in an ICF or an HCBS setting.

Response:

Home and Community Based Settings Rule Heightened Scrutiny Evidentiary Package

The State agrees that settings identified as having this concern are institution and segregating in nature. The purpose of the heightened scrutiny process was to identify settings that were institutional and segregating in nature and go through the process of showing how they overcame those qualities. Settings submitting for heightened scrutiny were required to remediate through training of staff, provide evidence of compliance, and demonstrate compliance through validation that they were compliant in these areas of concern.

Comment:

Reviews do not indicate that the EPR codes which contemplate meaningful, individualized, time-limited pre-vocational programs are being implemented in Workshops. Reviews do not indicate that individuals are spending at least 20% of their time in the community engaging in activities chosen by the individual. Reviews do not (for the most part) indicate whether or not the provider is continuing to pay subminimum wage. Reviews do not consider what type of work individuals engage in the setting and whether or not that work is chosen by the individual. Frequently, specificity as to how many individuals are working in a group is not given. Frequently, information about how settings are supporting individuals to gain competitive, integrated employment as guaranteed by the settings rule is not given.

Response:

As with all settings, the State's review was for the purpose of determining whether the tenants of the Settings Rule had been met, regardless of which specific services were delivered at the location. The State has separate compliance monitoring for the appropriate authorization of Employment Preparation Services and the delivery of those services by providers.

Comment:

Frequently, reviews indicate that there are still restrictive practices in the settings indicating an institution-like environment.

Response:

The State agrees that many reviews indicated settings still had restrictive practices in place indicating an institution-like environment as they had not yet gone through their final validation process at the time they went out for heightened scrutiny. The State has spent considerable time with settings and providers providing technical assistance beyond what was documented in their remediation plans to remediate their institutional and segregating characteristics to come into compliance with the rule.

Summary of Public Comments Received and State Response:

Public Comment Period: January 2, 2023 to February 3, 2023

Setting Specific Comments:

Comment:

One commenter stated Rise site 1169, is a day support services program located at 2751 W 9000 S, West Jordan, Utah. It provides services to 47 waiver participants. The materials provided by the State in the evidentiary packet do not demonstrate that the identified setting currently demonstrates the qualities of HCBS. For stakeholders to provide effective feedback, the state needs to present stakeholders with final validations of compliance with the rule rather than un-validated remediation plans. Not doing so does not provide appropriate notice to community partners of the steps the state has taken to ensure that settings are fully in compliance with the settings rule.

Home and Community Based Settings Rule Heightened Scrutiny Evidentiary Package

Response:

Settings must demonstrate compliance or demonstrate a plan along with the State's oversight to ensure completion of actions to certify they will become compliant prior to March 17, 2023 before the State submits them through the heightened scrutiny process. Rise is a Day Supports Program located in a busy suburban area in West Jordan near restaurants, community recreation centers, shopping, libraries, parks, with access to public transportation. Several places are within walking distance such as a Maverik, fast food, Starbucks, and a grocery store. A validation visit occurred on 11/29/22 with required remediation for Prong 3 A & C. During the validation visit, staff and individuals in service were interviewed. The provider submitted an approved remediation plan and was deemed compliant. The provider developed a process and provided documentation that showed individuals can give feedback and that their desire to participate in the community activities they want.

Comment:

The same commenter had additional feedback stating we have concerns that the planned assessment of the setting after the public comment deadline will not be completed in person. In our experience as the P&A, it is difficult to accurately assess characteristics of an institution as well as to communicate effectively with waiver participants without an in-person visit.

Response:

The State has a comprehensive virtual validation visit process in place to determine HCBS Settings Rule compliance. If at any time the State determines that the virtual process is not sufficient for a specific setting, then the State will make the determination that an in-person visit is required at that time. Once a setting has completed its remediation and the State has validated its compliance with the HCBS settings rule, it moves to the ongoing monitoring process.

Comment:

The same commenter had additional feedback stating The evidentiary package lacks specificity regarding compliance with the rule. While the state did assess community integration and found that individuals were not doing activities in the community of their choice and with the frequency they desire the state doesn't evaluate what activities individuals are participating in the setting and whether that is the choice of the individuals. The remediation plan presented lacks specificity regarding both community integration and does not consider how people spend their days in the setting itself. Parts missing from the remediation plan seem to be as follows: how frequently will individuals be going into the community and for what activities, how large will the groups be (small enough to facilitate community integration), what types of activities are happening in the day program itself and what changes need to be made to facilitate consumer choice? The remediation plan states that they will provide more opportunities for community integrated options in the community without any detail about how they plan to do so.

Response:

The provider trained staff on the importance of having employment conversations with individuals when out in the community. The provider developed a process and provided documentation that shows individuals can give feedback and that their desire to participate in the community activities they want. During individual interviews, individuals said they get to choose what they do in the community and can spend their own money on things they want. The setting goes out into the community in small groups (4-5 individuals) to ensure integration.

General Comments Received:

Home and Community Based Settings Rule Heightened Scrutiny Evidentiary Package

Comment:

As the Protection and Advocacy agency for people with disabilities for the State of Utah, the Disability Law Center (“DLC”) is uniquely suited to provide assistance and input during this process. Based on our own observations as the P&A as well as our evaluation of the state’s assessments of settings, the state did not engage in a sufficient assessment process or provide adequate support to bring settings into compliance with the rule prior to the March 17, 2023 deadline. We are concerned that HCBS waiver dollars will continue to be spent on segregated, institutional settings despite the state’s obligations under the HCBS settings rule, Title II of the ADA and Olmstead. This heightened scrutiny evidentiary package demonstrates these ongoing concerns as detailed below.

Response:

While the State does acknowledge that activities for remediation extended into March 2023, it does not believe strategies deviated from its Statewide Transition Plan, or that inappropriate methods were used in validating compliance. The State also acknowledges that Settings compliance is not a one time activity and the usage of ongoing monitoring will aid to reinforce core tenants of the Rule as well as the development and dissemination of best practices. The State encourages the submission of providers who are believed to be non-compliant with requirements of the Settings Rule, including the elements/criteria which are not sufficiently meeting expectations.

Summary of Stakeholder Workgroup Recommendation:

Stakeholder Workgroup Review: January 3, 2023 - January 18, 2023

We only got a response from one workgroup member. Their comments are noted above.

Utah’s Recommendation

Recommendation: Compliant

At the time the heightened scrutiny packet was submitted for public comment, the State had not completed the final validation visit. The State has since completed the final validation visit and determined the setting has overcome the effect of isolating individuals from the broader community and is in compliance with the HCBS Settings Rule.