



Inclusion Inc.

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Oregon



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Services



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## **IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT PROVIDER RATES – PLEASE REVIEW**

Dear Provider Organizations and Independent Contractors,

We are pleased to announce that the Oregon Department of Human Services has notified Support Services Brokerages statewide of an upcoming increase in benefit levels for most Brokerage customers. In addition, the State will be increasing the “top level” of the Rate Ranges, allowing providers to consider a change in rates up to 10%.

Please note that this increase is *in addition to* the 2.1% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) that went into effect July 1<sup>st</sup> 2008. The 2.1% COLA was intended as a “pass-through” to providers; the 10% increase is not.

Our hope is that the increase will help create some level of parity between Brokerage and Comprehensive rates. Having strong, sustainable providers is paramount to the success of our shared customers.

Should you intend to raise your rates:

1. **You must submit a copy of your new published rates and their effective date to every brokerage with which you work.** This should include your staffing ratio for all rates in addition to the service category provided (Example: Community Living Supports 1:1 at \$22 per hour). All Brokerages must have your most recent published rates on file per Oregon Administrative Rule. We need those parameters for our data systems and Personal Agents will not be permitted to facilitate rate changes until we have received this information from you.
2. **It is your responsibility to notify customers with whom you contract that you intend to increase rates.** You should share with your customer the reason you are raising your rates, by how much and when. Please remember that amendments to contracts require signature from *all* parties.
3. **The new Rate Ranges will go into effect on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008. We request that all providers let us, the metro area brokerages, know of rate increases by August 22<sup>nd</sup> or earlier.** This allows us to plan ahead for a significant increase in workload (amendments to both plans and contracts are necessary). Depending on the number of providers who choose to change their rates, this can literally mean *thousands* of amended contracts and plans in the Portland metro area. The sooner you inform us, the better. (This also allows us to begin writing increases directly into contracts renewing now).

An unfortunate and unintended consequence of this increase is that individuals who are at the top of the benefit level (“Full Base Plus” is often the terminology you will hear), will **not** receive an increase. Depending on a provider’s rate increase and an individual’s particular plan, this could possibly mean a *reduction* in services for those customers.

**Example:** Provider X contracts with Customer Z for \$22,000 per year [the maximum amount Customer Z is eligible for]. If Provider X raises their rates by 10%, then Customer Z will lose 10% of her services since her buying power isn't increased.

We have been told by the State of Oregon Department of Human Services that it will require a Legislative action to increase the cap for these individuals and this is highly unlikely to occur before October of this year. Brokerages statewide continue to advocate for a fair change in this area. This information is particularly important if your customer base is generally Brokerage customers with exceptional needs.

### **Important Dates to Remember:**

- **July 1st** – 2.1% COLAs go into effect (as long as it's included in your contract language)
- **On or before August 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Providers submit an updated version of rate ranges to all of the metro area brokerages (see final page for address and contact staff). Brokerages will assume any given provider has chosen not to increase rates unless a rate schedule is received.
- **August 1<sup>st</sup> – September 15<sup>th</sup>** – Providers speak with customers about any increases. Contracts and Plans are amended. Providers work to notify customers and Personal Agents as soon as possible to facilitate paperwork changes.
- **October 1<sup>st</sup>** – Most customers receive a 10% increase to their benefit amounts; Provider Rate Ranges formally increased by 10%; Amended contracts and plans go into effect.

If you have any questions, please contact the appropriate person at each Support Services Brokerage.

- **Independence Northwest (503.546.2950)**  
Contact: Larry Deal or Maggie Kral
- **Inclusion Inc. (503.232.2289)**  
Contact: Sarah Knight or Howard Miller
- **Mentor Oregon (503.258.2440)**  
Contact: Katie Rose or Star Kearns
- **Self Determination Resources Inc. (503.292.7412)**  
Contact: Dan Peccia
- **The Arc Brokerage Services (503.935.5243)**  
Contact: Jennifer Bickett or Stacy McFayden