



Iowa Department of Human Services

Kim Reynolds
Governor

Adam Gregg
Lt. Governor

Jerry R. Foxhoven
Director

MEMO

FROM: Merea D. Bentrott, Policy Advisor
TO: General Assembly
DATE: November 26, 2017
RE: DHS Cleanup

This attached proposal is to delete Iowa Code 232.80 in order to remove an obsolete code reference to “homemaker services” as it is no longer a distinct category of service within the child welfare service array. By doing so, the Department removes the risk as well as the administrative burden associated with the additional hearing.

With the implementation of the Better Results for Kids Initiative in 2006, homemaker-home health aide services were replaced by the current child welfare service array (including Safety Plan Services to allow children to remain in their home). The remaining reference to “homemaker services” allows respondents to request a reasonable efforts hearing and make a legal argument that the Department has not made all reasonable efforts to maintain the child’s original living arrangement. The additional hearing slows the process and risks halting the Department’s efforts to find permanency for the child(ren) involved. It also provides fodder for appeals on the issue of failure to reasonable services, where the service in question is obsolete.

Iowa Code 230.20.5 outlines the billing procedures for patients at the Mental Health Institutes (MHIs). The code says that statements shall be mailed to the auditor of the patient’s county of residence. Iowa Code 230.1 says that the costs attributed to mental illness shall be paid by the regional administrator on behalf of the person’s county of residence.

Sending the MHI bills directly to the region rather than the county auditor for processing will streamline the billing and payment procedures, which would then allow the entity paying for the services to directly receive the bill and reduce the number of individuals seeing protected health information. Thirteen of the 14 regions have requested that the MHI bills be sent directly to the region. This will eliminate inconsistency as to whether the county or the region should be billed.

cc: Wendy Rickman
Rick Shults
Sheri Sidari