



COMMISSIONER
Jon Weizenbaum

Date: August 29, 2016

To: Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS) Program Providers
Deaf Blind Multiple Disabilities (DBMD) Program Providers
Home and Community-based Services (HCS) Program Providers
Texas Home Living (TxHmL) Program Providers

Subject: Information Letter No. 16-33
Participant Surveys Concerning Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Settings

The purpose of this provider information letter (IL) is to remind CLASS, DBMD, HCS, and TxHmL program providers the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) has contracted with the [Public Policy Research Institute \(PPRI\) at Texas A&M University](#) to conduct HCBS participant face-to-face surveys with randomly selected 1915(c) waiver program participants. The purpose of the surveys is to evaluate the experiences of program participants to assist DADS in identifying ways to improve quality in our waiver programs.

The participant survey is designed to help DADS evaluate the extent to which agency regulations, standards, policies, licensing requirements, and other provider requirements comply with a federal regulation issued by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The CMS regulation, known as the "HCBS Final Rule," requires all HCBS settings to meet certain qualifications, including a requirement which the setting is integrated in and supports full access to the greater community; is selected by the individual from among setting options that include non-disability specific settings; ensures individual rights of privacy, dignity and respect, and freedom from coercion and restraint; optimizes autonomy and independence in making life choices; and facilitates choice regarding services and service providers.

As contracted agents of DADS, PPRI and their interviewer staff have DADS authorization to perform interviews and obtain confidential participant information for the purposes of the interview. This process meets all the privacy requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The interviewers are neither DADS surveyors nor survey and certification or licensing staff.

PPRI staff will need your cooperation and assistance in obtaining pre-survey and contact information for participants to be interviewed from your program. Please share this information with your employees and sub-contractors, including day habilitation and sheltered workshop providers.

To learn more about the HCBS Final Rule, please [visit the website](#).

Information Letter No. 16-33
August 29, 2016
Page 2

If you have questions regarding the content of this letter, please send them to:
HcbsSurvey@dads.state.tx.us.

Sincerely,

[signature on file]

S. Michelle Martin
Director
Center for Policy and Innovation