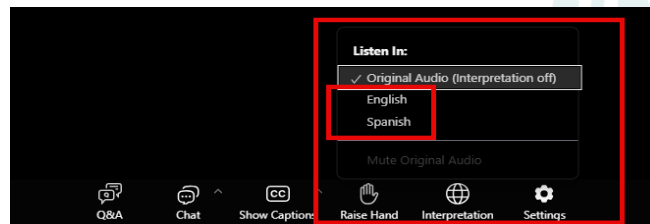
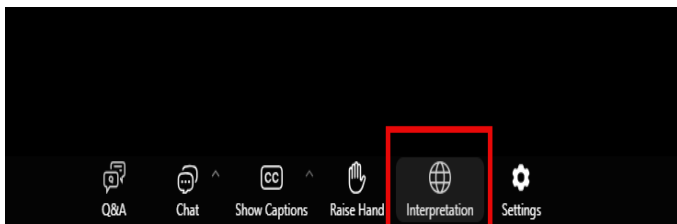


A Few Housekeeping Items

- Today we have simultaneous interpretation in both American Sign Language and Spanish. After we read all these notes, we will turn on interpretation services in Zoom and you will see an Interpretation button appear at the bottom of your Zoom window.
- All forum participants must:
 - Click the “Interpretation” button at the bottom of the screen.
 - Choose your preferred language, English or Spanish.
 - Hit “Mute Original Audio” from the menu if Spanish was selected
- We are now going to give everyone a minute to select their preferred language. Please see below for the visual steps:



Welcome to the AHCCCS HNT and ECR Policy Update Meeting

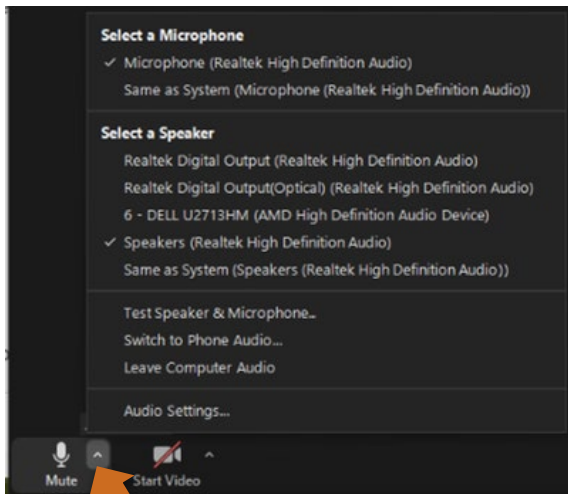
- You were automatically muted upon entry.
- Please only join by phone or computer.
- Please use the chat feature for questions and/or comments.

Thank you!

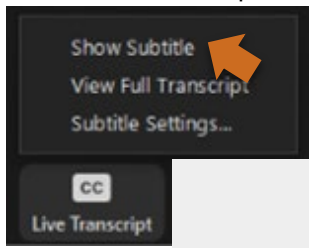
Zoom Webinar Controls

Navigating your bar on the bottom...

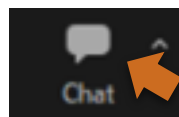
Audio Settings



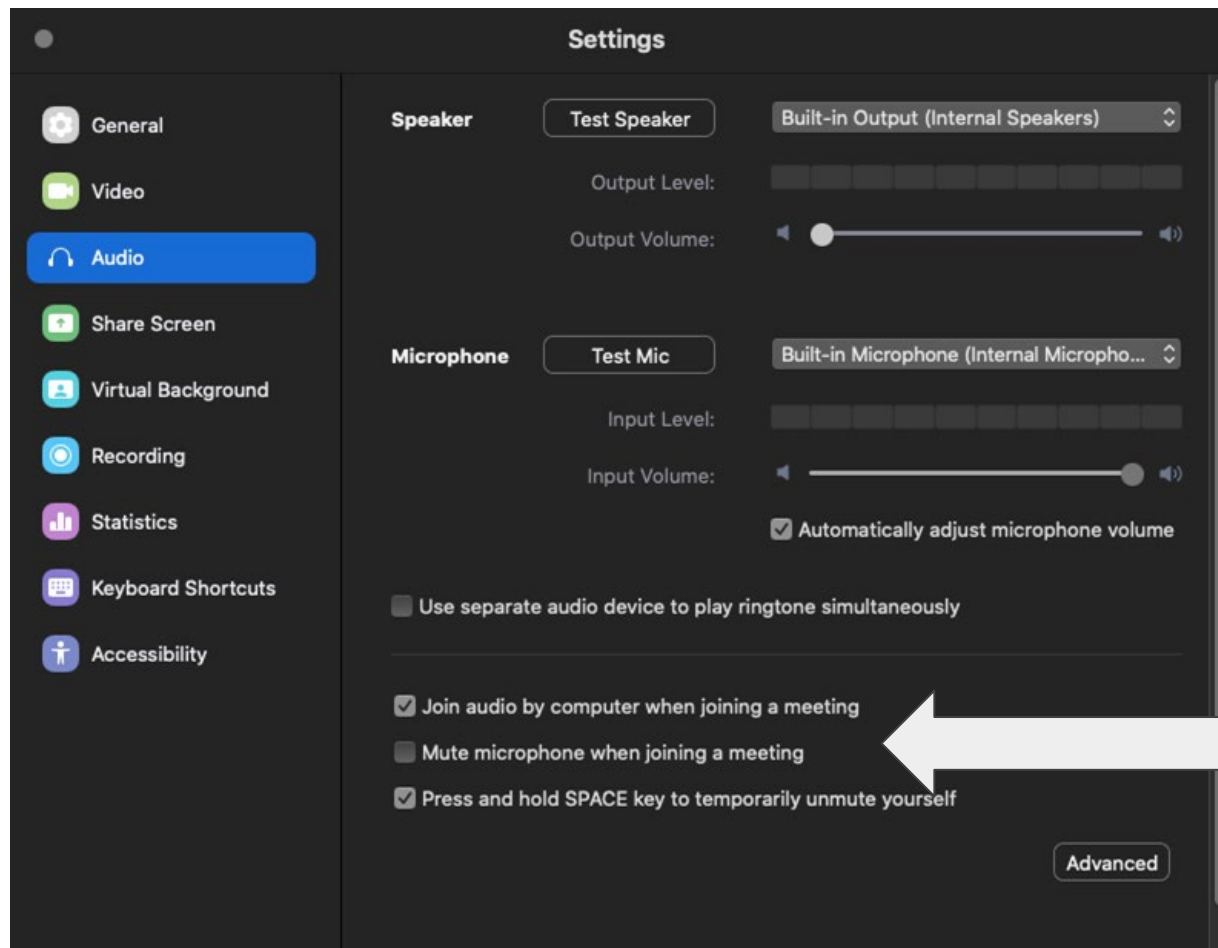
Turn on Closed Captioning



Chat



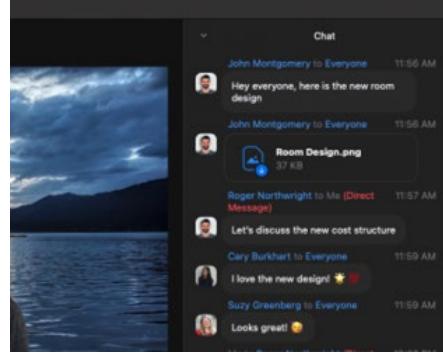
Audio Settings



Webinar Tips



Limit background noise and distractions if feasible.



Use chat feature to ask questions or share resources.



This Meeting Is Being Recorded

The recording shall be the sole property of AHCCCS; participation in this meeting indicates your waiver of any and all rights of publicity and privacy.

This recording will be posted to the AHCCCS website after conclusion of this meeting.

Please disconnect from this meeting if you do not agree to these terms.



ARIZONA

HEALTH CARE COST CONTAINMENT SYSTEM

ALTCS HNT and ECR Policy Updates

July 24, 2026

Welcome and Overview

Jakenna Lebsock,
Deputy Assistant Director,
Division of Managed Care -
ALTCS



AGENDA

- Overview
- Policy Review
- Next Steps
- Timeline
- How to Engage



Things to Note Before We Start

- Today's forum is to update you on current activities related to policies and how to engage with AHCCCS.
- AHCCCS will host more in-depth forums about the policies and their detailed content on August 12 and August 13 (details later in the presentation).
- Please ask any questions you have in the Chat.
 - Questions about policy specifics likely will not be answered today.
 - AHCCCS will use these questions to help shape the August forums and to update the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).



Overview

What Are We Talking About?

- The HCBS Needs Tool (HNT)
 - The assessment tool used by case managers/support coordinators to determine if a member may benefit from receiving Home and Community Based Services, including Direct Care (attendant care) and Habilitation services.
- The Extraordinary Care Review (ECR) process
 - A clinician-based review process for ALTCS children under 18 when parents have concerns about their child's care needs and the hours assessed on the HNT due to age limitations (direct care and habilitation) and/or service hour caps (habilitation).

Why Are We Here Today?

- AHCCCS has released draft policies for review:
 - 1620-17A: HCBS Needs Tool
 - Child's Tab
 - Adult Tab
 - 1620-17B: HNT Guidance for Child Tool
 - 1620-17C: HNT Guidance for Adult Tool
 - ACOM 450: ALTCS Extraordinary Care Review Process for Minor Members
 - Attachment A
- All these policies can be commented on.

Background (How we got here)

- AHCCCS rolled out a new Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Needs Tool (HNT), effective October 1, 2025.
 - Use of this tool was paused in mid-October 2025.
 - MCOs (including DDD) went back to using old assessment tools while AHCCCS worked on policy revisions and rulemaking.
- AHCCCS has engaged in emergency and regular rulemaking efforts since October 2025.
- AHCCCS released updated draft policies for public comment in November 2025.
- AHCCCS has recently been given exempt rulemaking authority by the Legislature to support simplified efforts and allow for a firm implementation timeline.

Why the Process Changed: Exempt Rulemaking

- The Legislature passed a law giving AHCCCS authority to complete these policies through exempt rulemaking (Laws 2026, Chapter 132, Section 19 – originally HB 4160).
- **What this means for families:**
 - A simpler process. Exempt rulemaking has fewer procedural steps than standard rulemaking, so these policies can be finished without another long delay.
 - More opportunities for public comment and engagement. AHCCCS is offering two comment periods; only one is required.
 - A firm date instead of a moving one. Policies go live December 1, 2026; a date families can plan around.

Why Is This Happening?

- AHCCCS heard you!
 - You need to see the draft policies and understand how processes will work – details matter – before you can provide meaningful feedback on the Rules.
- Draft policies have posted for a 30-day public comment period
 - This gives everyone extra time to review and provide feedback to AHCCCS.
 - Public comments received will be used to help AHCCCS draft rulemaking language so that both policy and rule documents are clear.
- This is not optional for AHCCCS. State law and our federal waiver (contract with CMS) require us to do this.
 - What we are designing, with your input, will be how we meet these requirements.

Why Does This Matter?

- Your feedback matters! AHCCCS wants to get this right and make sure policies and rules are as clear as possible.
- AHCCCS must meet requirements outlined in our Waiver with CMS as well as state law.
 - AHCCCS must ensure that all care and services provided are medically necessary, and for minor children, also extraordinary in nature.

Member Experience Right Now

- Status quo until Rule and policies are finalized and implemented
 - Ongoing quarterly meetings between members/families and case managers or support coordinators
 - No change to assessment tool or service planning process currently; this will change once the policies are finished/implemented
- Families should be thinking about next steps, in the event their child's service hours are changed through the new assessment process
 - The Extraordinary Care Review (ECR) will apply in many of these circumstances and exists for exactly this situation. More information on ECR will be provided on slide 29.

Policy Review/Rule Public Comment Process

Comment Period 1: Draft Policies

- Draft policies posted to the AHCCCS website on Thursday, July 23, 2026. You can find them and provide Public Comment at:
<https://ahcccs.commentinput.com/comment>
 - Policies will be available for review for 30 days; until 5:00 PM on Friday, August 21, 2026.

Comment Period 2: Rule Language

- Mid-September through mid-October 2026 (30 days)
- These will be posted to the AHCCCS website when the time comes; details will follow at a later date

Only Comment Period 2 is required by law. However, AHCCCS values stakeholder feedback and is being responsive to requests for additional insight and opportunity to comment.



Policy Review

Things to Note

- AHCCCS has posted both redline and clean versions of each policy document for ease of review.
- Please take time to read the policy drafts and make sure they make sense
 - Has enough detail been provided to understand what happens with the HNT and ECR processes? Are there gaps? Are there concerns?
- You may see text in different colors throughout the draft policies – the individual colors do not have a meaning.
 - The colors indicate where changes were made since the November 2025 public comment period
 - Some colors (usually blue) may indicate a hyperlink.
- Underlined text generally shows new language; struck through language shows language intended to be removed.

Revision Examples

Task	Description	Time Guidelines
Eating & Feeding Do not assess for ages under 5 9)	Not assessed due to member age.	
	Independent: No assistance needed.	0 min/day
Member needs support to eat examples include meal set- putting food , meal cueing, chewing/choking supervision , hand over hand feeding and/or full assistance to transfer food from (plate to mouth) not to exceed 1.5 hours/day	Deleted Text Breakfast Support	Minimum = 1-15 min Moderate = 1-20 min Maximum = 1-30 min
	Lunch Support	Minimum = 1-15 min Moderate = 1-20 min Maximum = 1-30 min
	Dinner Support	Minimum = 1-15 min Moderate = 1-20 min Maximum = 1-30 min
	Snacks or smaller meals during day	1-15 10 min per snack/small meal
Specialty Eating & Feeding Note: For G-Tube feeding and hydration support, a physician will likely prescribe the frequency of occurrence throughout the day; tasks per day should reflect prescription orders.	N/A - member does not have a specialty eating/feeding need	
	G-Tube Feeding/Cleaning as prescribed	1-30 min per feeding
	G-Tube Hydration Support as prescribed; may also include electrolytes	1-30 min per event
	Neuro-Muscular or Other Conditions requiring chewing/choking supervision (e.g. dysphagia, cerebral palsy; complex dental issues)	1-30 min per meal

Deleted Text

with modifications such as blended, pureed, mechanical soft, etc. ~~In general, meal preparation and cleanup should not exceed 75 minutes per day.~~ If meals are prepared for the child while at another setting (e.g. school) by staff onsite, that time should not be considered in this needs assessment. There is not an age limit for this task.

- Independent:
0 min/day.
- Breakfast Preparation and/or Modification:
1-30 ~~15~~ min.
- ~~Breakfast Modification~~:
1-5 min/day.
- Lunch Preparation and/or Modification:
1-30 ~~20~~ min.
- ~~Lunch Modification~~:
1-5 min/day.
- Dinner Preparation and/or Modification:
1-30 ~~40~~ min.
- ~~Dinner Modification~~:
1-5 min/day.
- Alternative Meal Schedule/Snacks:
1-15 ~~10~~ min per meal/snack.

EATING & FEEDING

For specialty feeding needs such as G-Tube or significant choking risk associated with neuro-muscular or other conditions (e.g. dysphagia, cerebral palsy, complex dental, etc.), do not assess in this section. This should be assessed in the Specialty Eating & Feeding section.

Eating and Feeding is the process of getting oral nourishment from a ~~utensil~~ (dish, plate, cup, glass,

New Text

New Text

1620-17A: HCBS Needs Tool (Child Tab)

This exhibit includes the HCBS Needs Tool (HNT) that is used to assess each member's direct care and habilitation service needs for members under the age of 18.

Remember: services must be extraordinary in nature and medically necessary

- The HNT assesses for care needs that go beyond what a parent provides to their child.
- This also means that hours cannot be assessed/paid if the task is something that a child would need help with at their age, regardless of their abilities.

1620-17A: HCBS Needs Tool (Child Tab)

AMPM Exhibit 1620-17A, Child HCBS Needs Tool (for ages 0-17) DRAFT

This tool is to be used when assessing ALTCs members, aged 0 through 17 years. This tool is to be used as a guide by ALTCs Case Managers and is not intended to replace professional experience. Members have a right to a comprehensive assessment, based on their unique needs and circumstances, and regardless of the presence or lack thereof of informal supports. If there are questions or comments about a specific task, **please- case managers shall review with your their Supervisor.**

This tool is to be used anytime the person-centered planning process determines that a member might benefit from Attendant Care, Personal Care, Homemaker, **and/or** Habilitation services or when a member/Health Care Decision Maker (HCDM) requests this assessment for these services. Time entered should be reflective of the number of minutes each day that support is needed for the task.

☐ Lives with Family ☐ Lives with Non-Family

Use the guidance in the section below ("do not assess for") to ensure age appropriate milestones are not authorized for paid services.

If a member/HCDM makes a comment/request about a task that is not age-appropriate, please document those comments **as this may support the extraordinary care review (exception) process post completion of the HNT assessment process.**

Member Age on Date of Assessment: _____ **DRAFT** **Assessment Date:** _____

Task	Description	Time Guidelines	Tasks per day	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	TOTAL ASSESSED MINUTES/ WEEK	Comments (Care needed and rationale; member age; member/ family comments)	Voluntary Informal Support (IFS) (Y/N)	Voluntary Minutes/Week IFS Will Assist
Housekeeping & Cleaning (Do not assess for ages under 18; allowable as an age-appropriate Habilitation goal for members aged 16+)	Not assessed due to member age.													
Laundry (Do not assess for ages under 18; allowable as an age-appropriate Habilitation goal for members 16+)	Not assessed due to member age.													
Incontinence-Based Laundry (Do not assess for ages under 4)	Not assessed due to member age.													
	Indicate if assistance needed.	0 min/day												

Child HNT (for ages 0-17) | Adult HNT (18+) | +

1620-17B: HCBS Needs Tool (Adult Tab)

This exhibit includes the HCBS Needs Tool (HNT) that is used to assess each member's direct care and habilitation service needs for members aged 18 and older.

Note: very few changes were made to the adult tab; most changes are to support consistency and language alignment where appropriate



1620-17A: HCBS Needs Tool (Adult Tab)

AMPM Exhibit 1620-17A, Adult HCBS Needs Tool (for ages 18+) **DRAFT**

This tool is to be used when assessing ALTCS members, aged 18 and older. This tool is to be used as a guide by ALTCS Case Managers and is not intended to replace professional experience.

Members have a right to a comprehensive assessment, based on their unique needs and circumstances, and regardless of the presence or lack thereof of informal supports.

If there are questions or comments about a specific task, **please case managers shall review with their** Supervisor.

This tool is to be used anytime the person-centered planning process determines that a member might benefit from Attendant Care, Personal Care, Homemaker, or Habilitation services or when a member/Health Care Decision Maker (HCDM) requests this assessment for these services. Time entered should be reflective of the number of minutes each day that support is needed for the task.

Living Situation: **DRAFT**

☒ Lives Alone

☐ Lives with Family

☐ Lives with Non-family

Member Age on Date of

Assessment Date:

Task	Description	Time Guidelines	Tasks per day	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	TOTAL ASSESSED MINUTES/ WEEK	Comments (Care needed and rationale; member age; member/ family comments)	Voluntary Informal Support (IFS) (Y/N)	Voluntary Minutes/Week IFS Will Ass
Housekeeping & Cleaning	Independent: No assistance needed.	0 min/day												
	Lives with others: Cleaning member's area only.	1-60 min/week									0			
	Without Support: Member lives alone. Consider the size of the home.	1-120 min/week									0			
Laundry	Independent: No assistance needed.	0 min/week												
	Washer & dryer are on site, inside the member's home, garage, or yard.	1-30 min/week									0			
	Washer is on site but clothes are line dried.	1-60 min/week									0			
	Laundry is done in Apartment Laundry Facility	1-90 min/week									0			
	Laundry facility is off site, such as community laundromat facility.	1-120 min/week									0			
	Incontinence Episodes - Soiled Clothes and Linens	1-30 min/day									0			
Shopping	Independent: No assistance needed	0 min/week												
	Pick-up with Family Shopping	1-5 min/ week									0			



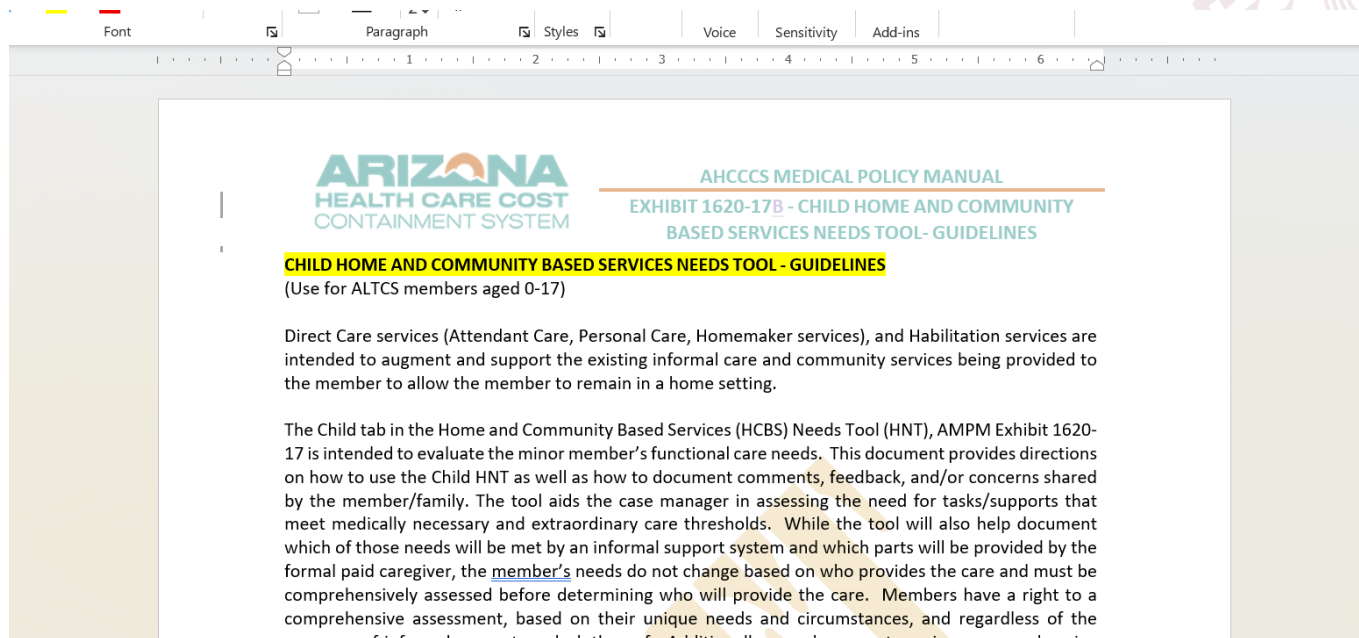
Child HNT (for ages 0-17)

Adult HNT (18+)

+

1620-17B: Child HNT Guidelines

The Child Guidelines document outlines how case managers/support coordinators should utilize the HNT and conduct conversations with families, specific to members under the age of 18.



ARIZONA
HEALTH CARE COST
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AHCCCS MEDICAL POLICY MANUAL
EXHIBIT 1620-17B - CHILD HOME AND COMMUNITY
BASED SERVICES NEEDS TOOL- GUIDELINES

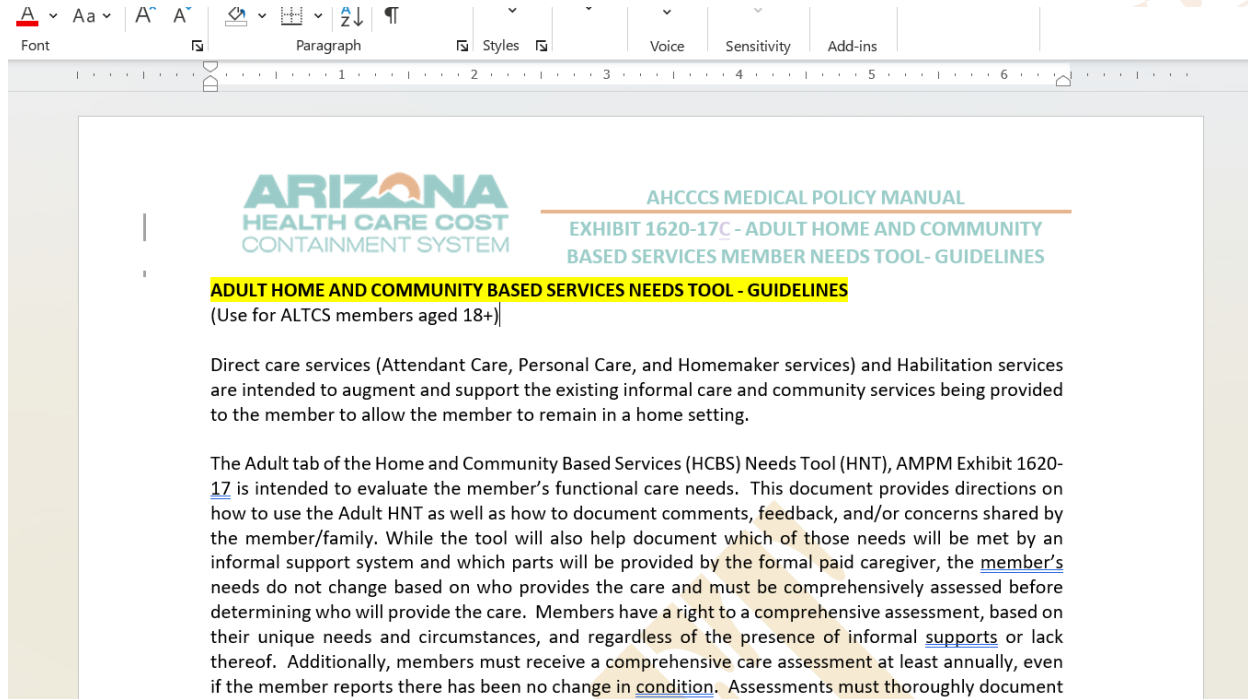
CHILD HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES NEEDS TOOL - GUIDELINES
(Use for ALTCS members aged 0-17)

Direct Care services (Attendant Care, Personal Care, Homemaker services), and Habilitation services are intended to augment and support the existing informal care and community services being provided to the member to allow the member to remain in a home setting.

The Child tab in the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Needs Tool (HNT), AMPM Exhibit 1620-17 is intended to evaluate the minor member's functional care needs. This document provides directions on how to use the Child HNT as well as how to document comments, feedback, and/or concerns shared by the member/family. The tool aids the case manager in assessing the need for tasks/supports that meet medically necessary and extraordinary care thresholds. While the tool will also help document which of those needs will be met by an informal support system and which parts will be provided by the formal paid caregiver, the member's needs do not change based on who provides the care and must be comprehensively assessed before determining who will provide the care. Members have a right to a comprehensive assessment, based on their unique needs and circumstances, and regardless of the presence of informal supports or lack thereof. Additionally, members must receive a comprehensive

1620-17C: Adult HNT Guidelines

The guidance document outlines how case managers/support coordinators should utilize the HNT, specific to members aged 18 and older.



ACOM 450: ALTCS Extraordinary Care Review

The policy establishes a clinician-based review process for ALTCS children under 18 when parents have concerns about their child's care needs and the hours assessed on the HNT due to age limitations (direct care and habilitation) and/or service hour caps (habilitation).

If you believe your child's needs are above and beyond what the HNT shows because of an age limit or hourly service limit, the ECR is the path to provide additional insight and information for consideration.

Services will not be impacted while an ECR is underway.



AHCCCS CONTRACTOR OPERATIONS MANUAL CHAPTER 400 – OPERATIONS

450 – ALTCS EXTRAORDINARY CARE REVIEW PROCESS FOR MINOR MEMBERS

EFFECTIVE DATE: [Upon Publishing¹](#)

APPROVAL DATE: [11/10/25²](#)

I. PURPOSE

This Policy applies to ALTCS E/PD and DES DDD (DDD) Contractors. This Policy establishes requirements for an extraordinary care review process for Direct Care (as specified in AMPM 1240-A) and Habilitation (as specified in AMPM 1240-E) service assessments for ALTCS-enrolled children under the age of 18. This policy is established to comply with requirements outlined in AAC R9-28-1206.

II. DEFINITIONS

Refer to the [AHCCCS Contract and Policy Dictionary](#) for common terms found in this Policy.

For purposes of this Policy the following terms are defined as:

ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

Activities a member shall perform daily for the member's regular day-to-day necessities, including but not limited to mobility, transferring, bathing, dressing, grooming, eating,

ACOM 450 Timelines:

- This process has been largely prescribed by CMS, especially the timelines for the ECR.
 - The timelines must align with federal prior authorization timelines (7 days for review; with an option for a 14-day extension if it is in the best interest of the member).
- AHCCCS requested an exemption for the timelines; CMS denied the request. The only way to offer more time is through a waiver.
 - AHCCCS is pursuing a waiver for this – our waiver renewal package includes a waiver request for the ECR process.

- There are two tabs: Data and Narrative/Analysis

		AHCCCS CONTRACTOR OPERATIONS MANUAL AHCCCS CONTRACTOR EXTRAORDINARY CARE REVIEW (ECR) REPORT NARRATIVE	
Reporting Period:			
Identified Trends: (if any identified)			
Identified Concerns: (if any identified)			
Planned Process Improvements: (if any identified)			

>
1. ECR Report Template
2. ECR Trends Analysis
+
:
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Next Steps



What Happens After This?

- The slide deck and a forum recording will be posted to the AHCCCS website, <https://www.azahcccs.gov/Members/GetCovered/Categories/ALTCS.html> (under Assessing Care Needs for ALTCS Members / Resources)
- The policies will be posted until 5:00 PM on Friday, August 21, 2026
 - Policies and the form to submit Public Comment can be found at: <https://ahcccs.commentinput.com/comment>
- AHCCCS will host two additional policy forums to provide more detail on policy content and answer questions from the public:
 - **August 12, 2026: 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**
https://ahcccs.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_0u4Z1G_uTnCaftQ_hAmMrg
 - **August 13, 2026: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**
https://ahcccs.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KDwNknnQQz2xaSujKZ4eYg

What Happens After This?

- AHCCCS will engage in Exempt Rulemaking, beginning in mid-September 2026
 - Public Comments on the policies will inform the new Rule language.
- Once the Rule is drafted, it will be posted for review, and another 30-day Public Comment period will be offered to get additional feedback.
- The Exempt Rule and policies will be finalized in late October or early November 2026
- The policies will "go live" (be effective) on December 1, 2026. This is a firm date and is not anticipated to change.
 - This means that any planning meeting that occurs on or after December 1, 2026, will use the new HNT discussed earlier and that the ECR will also be available.



Timeline

Timeline

Milestone	Date/Timeline
Policy Public Comment Forums	August 12–13, 2026
Public Comment Period 1 Closes	August 21, 2026, at 5:00 PM
Draft Exempt Rulemaking Posted for Public Comment (Comment Period 2)	Mid-September 2026
Public Comment Period 2 Closes	Mid-October 2026 (30 days after posting)
AHCCCS Finalizes Rule and Policies	Late October or Early November 2026
Policies Implemented ("Go Live") for Use in Planning Meetings	December 1, 2026



Click the Interpretation button at the bottom of your Zoom screen and then select either English or Spanish to hear the meeting.
Presione el botón de interpretación en la parte inferior de su pantalla Zoom y después seleccione inglés o español para escuchar la reunión.

What You Can Do Now

- Review the draft policies. Redline and clean versions are posted on the AHCCCS ALTCS page.
- Submit a public comment by August 21, 2026, at: <https://ahcccs.commentinput.com/comment>
- Attend an August forum for more details:
 - August 12 (9:30 – 11:30 a.m.) or August 13 (6:00 – 8:00 p.m.)
- Talk with your case manager or support coordinator at your quarterly meeting about what the new assessment could mean for your child.
 - Please remember, they are still learning about this process too.
- Learn how the ECR process works before you need it, so you know your options if you disagree with assessed hours.
 - Start thinking about additional documentation you may want to submit on behalf of your child and begin collecting that information now so it's ready to go if needed.

How To Engage



How to Engage

- Public Forums
- Visit our website and explore our pages dedicated to the HNT/ECR policies:
 - Information can be found at:
<https://www.azahcccs.gov/Members/GetCovered/Categories/ALTCS.html>
- Email Us: ALTCS@azahcccs.gov
- Review the Policies and Rule (when the time comes) and provide Public Comment

ALTCS Policy FAQs

- AHCCCS has posted FAQs about the pause and policy updates.
 - These will be updated regularly.
- You can find the FAQs at:
 - <https://www.azahcccs.gov/Members/GetCovered/Categories/ALTCS.html>

ALTCS: Coverage for Individuals with Long-Term Care Needs

The Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS, pronounced ALL-Tecs) is health insurance for individuals who have an age related, and/or physical, and/or intellectual/developmental disability, and who require nursing facility level of care. Services may be provided in an institution or in a home or community-based setting.

Eligibility & How to Apply

Assessing Care Needs for ALTCS Members





Thank You