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January 20, 2026

Re: MaineCare Final Rate Determination Schedule

Dear MaineCare Interested Parties,

Today, the Office of MaineCare Services (OMS) released the final MaineCare Rate Determination Schedule for Calendar Year 2026 (CY26) which lists the rate determinations that will continue or be initiated during CY26. The schedule was developed in alignment with Rate Reform law (MRS Title 22, §3173-J) and in collaboration with the Rate Setting Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) and other interested parties. The Department offered the opportunity for public comment on the draft schedule prior to the Department releasing this final version.

Informing the final schedule for CY 26 is the requirement within MaineCare Rate Reform law that MaineCare conduct a rate determination process for each MaineCare covered service no less frequently than once every five years. The Department has made significant progress in moving through this five-year cycle for rate determinations and keeps a detailed record of these activities on the MaineCare rate reform [website](#). Heading into CY 26, the Department is balancing the need to:

- finish rate determination for existing MaineCare services to inform implementation planning for recommended rates;
- begin rate determinations for remaining services yet to undergo a rate determination in this five-year cycle;
- prioritize rate reviews for services that have documented access concerns and for which a more timely rate determination is determined to be necessary and feasible; and
- compliance with recently passed laws and budgets directing Department resources to specific rate adjustments and/or federal grant requirements.

This letter provides a summary of the comments and MaineCare's rationale for certain decisions around the final version of the schedule. A full summary of comments is available on the MaineCare rate reform [website](#).

Three commenters requested that the Department consider including Section 97, Appendix D, Children's Residential Care Facilities in the CY 26 Rate Determination Schedule. The Department recognizes that the number of facilities offering this service has declined in recent years and that providers feel inadequate reimbursement rates are a contributing factor for that decline. The Department notes that it significantly increased the rates for Appendix D Temporary High Intensity Services (THIS) within the last year, resulting in a 28% increase to the rate effective April 1, 2025. Following that increase, the service received a 1% Cost of Living Adjustment on July 1, 2025. The Department appreciates the commenters' commitment to addressing children's behavioral health needs, made evident by the concerns they shared. Recognizing the impact the decline in service providers has had on the full continuum of care for



children with behavioral health needs and in alignment with the Departments commitment to this population, the Department will be adding this service to the CY 2026 schedule.

The majority of other comments received were related to the overall rate determination process, resulting rates, and implementation timelines. Issues included a concern that rate determination conducted before detailed service model regulations are published and/or full implementation costs are not understood by providers, have resulted in rate recommendations that are inadequate to implement new services. Another concern conveyed that the staggered nature of rate determinations through the five-year cycle creates challenges and inequities across similar services that impact staff turnover and service disruptions. An additional concern was raised related to the timeliness of completing schedule rate determinations so that recommended rates may be considered for implementation. Lastly, two comments related to requests for additional transparency and understanding of Department prioritization and transparency of rate determination progress. These were helpful comments that the Department will take into account for future work.

Aligned with these comments, the Department has recently increased the level of detail in our bimonthly reporting to the MaineCare Advisory Committee Rate System Subcommittee which is posted on the MaineCare Rate Reform [website](#). The Department is providing this additional detail around rate determination scope and anticipated timing to support transparency and partnership, and also acknowledges and advises interested parties that there are often disruptions or changes to timelines and plans due to shifting priorities, changes in the state or federal environment, and other factors that are often outside of Departmental control. The Department will update timelines as these shifts are identified. As noted previously here, we share the concern about the need to finish existing rate determinations and have made that a focus for CY26.

We remain committed to our goal of ensuring all MaineCare services undergo fair, transparent, and timely rate reform processes. We appreciate your contributions to this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Probert".

Michelle Probert
Director, Office of MaineCare Services