

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM



2022

One way our organization works on behalf of people with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD) is to ask for changes to be made to Florida laws.

We will continue to work on improving laws in 2022 and beyond. The most important issue we plan to focus on in the next year is to ask Florida lawmakers to:

PAY FAIR FOR MY CARE



Many people with I/DD receive benefits from the iBudget waiver. These benefits help people with I/DD have meaningful lives within their communities, not institutions.

Many of the iBudget waiver services used by people with I/DD are provided by Direct Support Professionals (DSPs).





However, DSPs are not receiving the pay they need, and they are leaving their jobs to find better-paying jobs. The recent pandemic has made this problem even worse.



In Florida, DSP wages have not been increased for years. Raising their pay may help DSPs decide to stay in the job.

People with I/DD and their families are asking lawmakers to Pay Fair for My Care!

ISSUE

DSPs are very important to people with I/DD. Sometimes they provide care around the clock.

It is becoming much harder to find people to work as DSPs. People leave these jobs more than many others, which makes it very difficult to offer programs that support people with I/DD.

- ***DSPs make a little more than \$11 per hour nationwide.***
- ***Florida ranks 47th in average pay per hour in all jobs by state.***
- ***74% of DSPs are the working person in their home who supports themselves and/or their family.***

To make matters worse, in 2020 Florida's Governor vetoed a number of budget items due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including a proposed increase in DSP pay rates.

Ways to help DSPs remain happy in their jobs include:

- ***Value the work they do and make them feel that they are part of a team.***
- ***Pay them fairly according to their responsibilities, skills, and experience.***
- ***Make sure their concerns are heard and they are treated with respect.***



RECOMMENDATIONS



Wages for DSPs should be increased to help them pay for costs of living.

Florida should continue to invest in smaller community settings to provide services and supports. DSPs stay in their jobs longer in smaller settings than in larger settings.

Florida should also continue to invest in ways to keep DSPs on the job.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CONTACT:

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