



Pay Fair for *My Care* End of Campaign Messaging

Campaign Summary:

In preparation for Florida's 2022 Legislative Session, the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) created and launched a statewide advocacy campaign to shed light on the importance of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. With the DSP annual turnover rate at a crisis level and over 50% of the workforce diminished, individuals, families, likeminded organizations and caregivers rallied together with one message to urge lawmakers to Pay Fair for *My Care*!

Through dozens of submitted photos and stories as well as campaign materials and videos, we were able to garner support, attention and respect from lawmakers while creating tangible change to stabilize the direct support workforce.

The work of the Pay Fair for *My Care* campaign alongside the voices of thousands of individuals and families, influenced lawmakers to raise the level of pay to \$15 per hour for direct support workers. This is the largest increase Florida has committed to in over 10 years.

FDDC extends a warm "thank you" to all of those who told their stories and shared the critical role of DSPs in their lives and the lives of loved ones. It is because of our united voices that DSPs were recognized as a vital workforce for Floridians and beyond.

Key Facts:

- DSPs are a lifeline for people living with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- DSPs are some of the most underpaid, undervalued professionals in our state. On average, DSPs make a little more than \$11 an hour nationwide—wages bound by state and federal funding.
- The outcome from the Council's Pay Fair for *My Care* Campaign was positive. The legislature agreed on \$15.00 per hour for direct support workers, including those who provide services for the iBudget waiver through the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD).
- This is the first substantial increase in over 10 years. Only a few other states saw this type of support.
- Other budget items in the APD Budget include \$59,615,290 to transition about 1,100 individuals off the waitlist.
- \$8,500,000 will be available to qualified dental service providers who apply for grants to serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.