

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM



**2023
PLAIN TEXT**

One way the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) works on behalf of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) is to educate legislators about issues that are important to people with I/DD and their families. One of the most important issues to people with I/DD and their families is for lawmakers to:

Invest in home- and community-based services to include individuals with I/DD in their communities.





The FDDC supports a Medicaid Home- and Community-Based Services waiver for people with I/DD.

The waiver must include services that help people with I/DD stay in the community.



These services should help people:

- Remain in their homes and communities.
- Stay out of expensive institutions that keep them away from the community.

ISSUE

Florida's Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Medicaid waiver for people with I/DD is usually called the iBudget waiver.

People who receive the iBudget waiver are supported in their homes and communities.

These people receive services designed to meet their individual needs.



There are ongoing and additional needs for workers to provide services and supports to people with I/DD.

In 2022, the pay rate for Personal Support Providers (PSP) was raised to \$15 per hour.

Advocates are watching to see whether the \$15 per hour rate increases the number of PSPs available.

Additionally, in some areas of Florida, there are shortages of other service providers:

- ***Support Coordinators—these are people who create service plans and find services for people with I/DD***
- ***Behavior Therapists – these are people who help people with I/DD with their behavior***

Many people with I/DD who need help with their behavior are not receiving the services they need.

Often people with I/DD who need help with their behavior are placed in hospitals and crisis stabilization settings that don't meet their needs. When they are released, there are no appropriate services and supports available.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assess the significant additional needs of people already receiving the iBudget waiver as well as the needs of new people receiving the waiver. This will help the Legislature set aside enough money to fund the iBudget waiver.
 - Reduce the waitlist for iBudget services. Each year, more people should be moved off the waitlist.
 - Attract more people into jobs that provide services through the iBudget waiver. Higher salaries, more training, and better workplace practices should be considered.
 - Attract more people into jobs as behavior therapists and make sure they are paid well.
 - Provide more money for Intensive Behavioral (IB) and Behavior-Focused (BF) group homes to reduce the number of people who are hospitalized because of their behavior.
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