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## Appendix B

### SAMPLE: Part B. Portrait of State Services from 2022-2026 State Plan

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#### COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

#### **PART B. Portrait of the State Services**

##### I. Health/Healthcare:

Florida operates and provides health coverage to approximately 3.78 million Floridians through its Medicaid Managed Care (SMMC) program comprised of three separate entities: Managed Medical Assistance (MMA), Long-Term Care\* (LTC), and Dental. The transition to managed-care enrollment of Medicaid beneficiaries captured approximately 78% of enrollees (approximately 2.99 million). In comparison, nearly 22% (approximately 844,000) of Medicaid beneficiaries receive care through fee-for-service Medicaid. \*LTC is included in Total Medicaid Enrollment.

As of December 2019, there were 3,779,655 Floridians enrolled in Medicaid. Approximately 19% of Floridians are enrolled in Medicaid, whereas the national average is 21% (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2019). According to a June 2019 issue brief from the Kaiser Family Foundation, 51% of “children with special health care needs” are covered by Medicaid in Florida, compared to the national average of 47% (Musumeci, 2019).

Children’s Medical Services (CMS), operated by WellCare, is the managed-care delivery system of Medicaid to children with special health care needs (SCHN) in Florida. As of December 2019, 59,874 children were enrolled in the CMS plan, which includes, but is not limited to, children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

Healthy Start, operating statewide under the Florida Department of Health, offers home visitations, prenatal and parenting education, and interconception education. Families and caregivers of persons with I/DD may also access resources and services through Healthy Families Florida, a nationally accredited home visiting program for expectant parents and families with newborns experiencing stressful life situations.

The Children’s Special Health Care section of the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) reports that more than 93% of families were satisfied with the care provided under the program in 2018-19. AHCA is responsible for Florida’s Medicaid program that serves nearly 5 million people and licenses almost 50,000 health care facilities. Under Title XXI of the Social Security Act, State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), AHCA reports that 216,350 children were enrolled in the KidCare program in 2018-2019, with 28,089 also enrolled in the MediKids program, and 11,732 in the Children’s Medical Service (CMS) Network. CMS is a division of the Florida Department of Health, offering six (6) programs for children with SHCN. Through its Medicaid Services for individuals in 2018-19, AHCA reports that more than 2 million children received the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services and that 73% of eligible children completed the EPSDT screenings (AHCA, 2019).

Children’s Mental Health services are provided by the Florida DCF. The Children’s Mental Health Program provides for in-home and community-based outpatient services, crisis services, and residential treatment, including psychiatric residential treatment facilities, Therapeutic Foster

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Care, and Therapeutic Group Homes through joint Medicaid and Mental Health Program contracts with behavioral health managed entities and providers.

Public mental health and substance use services in Florida are administered and provided by the Florida DCF, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Program (SAMH). According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and based on the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, only 38.9% of adults with mental illness in Florida were reported as receiving mental health services between 2017 and 2019. (SAMHSA, *Behavioral Health Barometer: Florida, Volume 6, 2012-2019, 2020, December 28*). The Florida DCF Mental Health Program Office is responsible for planning, managing, and evaluating a state-wide program of mental health services. The public mental health system is funded by federal block grant dollars and the Florida Legislature. Public funds are contracted through local Mental Health Program Offices, mostly with non-profit local Community Mental Health Centers. People who need services get them by going to those providers directly. (DCF, Adult Mental Health (AMH), State of Florida (n.d.)). <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/samh/adult-mental-health/>

According to the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), rates of Baker Acts for persons with I/DD is highest among persons who receive Behavior Scores 5 and 6 on the Questionnaire for Situational Information (QSI). In calendar years 2015-20, there were 66,781 APD consumers. Of those consumers, 22,227 had Behavior Scores 5 or 6 and 44,554 had Scores of 4 and below. In total, 2,870 APD consumers were Baker Acted. Even though persons with I/DD with Behavior Scores of 5 and 6 only represent 33% of APD consumers, they represent 80.55% of Baker Acts (Agency for Persons with Disabilities (n.d.), APD Report, 2015-20). In other words, persons with I/DD who receive high Behavior Scores on the QSI may be in need of additional services related to maladaptive behaviors. It is estimated that there are approximately 336,529 people living with I/DD in Florida, indicating the number of persons with I/DD who were Baker Acted from 2015-20 could be much higher (APD (n.d.), APD Report, 2015-20).

With the implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), Florida chose not to expand Medicaid, which would have made more individuals in the state eligible based on their income. Because of this, Florida has a much higher percentage of individuals with no coverage compared to the United States as a whole. Existing data regarding persons with I/DD enrolled in private insurance coverage is lacking. For that reason, the data pertaining to insurance is applicable to any type of disability.

Florida falls behind the national average in both private and publicly funded insurance. Although Florida does have higher coverage for persons with disabilities than those without, those who are insured are still not insured at a rate that is commensurate with the rest of the US, either privately or publicly.

The US' Medicaid Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) is a compilation of programs housed under what is known as Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). These services are comprised of: Section 1915(c) waiver services; Community First Choice; rehabilitative services; and institutional services, such as nursing facilities and intermediate care facilities for persons with intellectual disabilities (ICF/IID) (Eiken, 2018). While each of these services would grant monetary

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provisions from the federal government, states have discretion to determine which services they choose to operate. Florida gives persons with I/DD only two pathways to receive HCBS under Medicaid, either through a Section 1915(c) waiver or within an ICF/IID. As an alternative to institutionalization in an ICF/IID, Medicaid Waivers for persons with I/DD began in the early 1980s (Thach, 2018).

Eiken et al. (2018) detailed each state's profile of services in *Medicaid Expenditures for Long-Term Services and Supports in FY 2016* (CMS, 2016). The data used comes directly from CMS-64 reports that were then examined by the Medicaid Innovation Accelerator Program at IBM Watson Health. This data remains the most recent government-approved report regarding LTSS in the US.

Florida's version of the Section 1915(c) waiver, the iBudget Florida waiver, was signed into law in 2010 under the 2009-2010 General Appropriations Act (APD, 2012). The iBudget Florida is currently operated by APD. As of October 2019, there are 34,919 persons receiving services through the iBudget (Delia & Gerbrant, 2020).

Currently, the system utilizes individual choice, with the support of an individual's family/caretaker and a Waiver Support Coordinator (WSC). The WSC is responsible for overseeing the process of receiving support from the iBudget once the individual has been accepted for services under the APD's eligibility criteria. Greater detail is provided in the *Eligibility Criteria for Services*.

The Consumer Directed Care Plus (CDC+) Waiver exists as an alternative to the iBudget (HCBS) waiver. It is a long-term care program that involves the person throughout the entire process. Participants choose: What is being purchased; who provides the supports and services; when they will be provided, as well as the quantity of supports/ services; where they will be provided; and how they will be provided.

The iBudget waitlist first reached over 20,000 persons in May of 2011. As of January 2021, 22,718 Floridians were reported on the DD Waitlist for services. The waitlist's large and growing numbers are fueled by a limited budget as dictated by the Florida Legislature. More details about the iBudget waiting list can be found in the *Analysis of State Issues and Challenges*.

Data were analyzed from the National Core Indicators' (NCI) state-specific report. There were 967 persons surveyed in Florida and 25,568 surveyed across the nation for the NCI Adult In-Person survey. When comparing Florida to the NCI national average for regular and preventative screenings, Florida surpassed the average in most elements, excluding four: having an eye exam in the past year (48.0 versus 58.0%); a hearing test in the past 5 years (48.0 to 56.0%); a Fecal Occult Blood test in the past year (3.0 to 5.0%); or a flu vaccine in the past year (60.0 to 74.0%). Data regarding medications were also analyzed from the survey. When comparing Florida to the NCI national average, Florida did not meet or surpass the average, excluding two, which were: number of medications taken for at least one of the following: "mood," "anxiety," "psychotic disorder" (1-2 medications) (79.0 and 68.0%); and "number of medications taken for behavioral challenges" (1-2 medications) (86.0 and 78.0%).

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Florida CHARTS data provides rural, urban, state-wide, and regional counts nursing home, hospital, acute care, rehab, intensive residential treatment facility (IRTF), adult psychiatric, child adolescent psychiatric, and adult substance abuse beds. Disparity was found between rural and urban counties in each bed type, excluding total nursing home beds. Florida operates 83,779 nursing home beds (i.e., 77,691 urban and 6,088 rural); 64,585 hospital beds (i.e., 62,900 urban and 1,595 rural); and 52,174 acute care beds (i.e., 50,613 urban and 1,561 rural). Only urban counties provide the following beds: rehab, 140 IRTF, 4,377 adult psychiatric, 644 child adolescent psychiatric, and 376 adult substance abuse.

Florida's waitlist for services continues to be an impediment to receiving adequate services and supports, ranking 43rd in the nation on spending for HCBS and last in LTSS. Disparities exist for individuals with I/DD with behavioral challenges, and the current practice of invoking the Baker Act to receive adequate mental health services must be addressed. Much work remains to be done to assure individuals are provided with proactive

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#### II. Employment:

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Student Education, (FDOE, BESE), maintains career planning resources and courses to prepare youth with I/DD for employment, including a continuum of career courses targeted to students with more significant disabilities. In 2016-2017, of the students with disabilities who exited Florida public schools the previous year, 51.0% were found enrolled in higher education or competitively employed. While employment and postsecondary education are not separated, and the percentage includes all students with disabilities, this represents a gain of 16.0% in one academic year (FDOE, BESE, 2019).

The Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, (VR) leads Florida's federal and state partnership efforts to help persons with disabilities prepare for, secure, and advance in jobs. VR's programs and services include the Transition Youth Program to help students with documented disabilities prepare and plan for post-high school employment; Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf-Blind Services that include training for both the employee and employer; Supported Employment services that aim to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities in securing competitive employment; Independent Living Program services through a state-wide network of locally based Centers for Independent Living (CILs); and the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (FAAST) which provides assistive technology devices and services. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) strengthened transition requirements for VR, allowing for Pre-Employment Transition Services, without requiring that students with disabilities apply or be determined eligible. These services include career exploration counseling, work readiness training, self-advocacy training, postsecondary educational counseling, and community-based work experiences. In 2018-2019, VR served almost 50,000 individuals, including more than 22,000 transition-age youth. VR assisted 5,924 Florida residents in becoming successfully employed (FDOE, VR, 2019).

Florida's Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) offers many programs and services to promote training and employment support for persons with disabilities. The Employment Enhancement Program (EEP), legislatively funded for the past 5 years, aims to assist individuals on the APD Waiting List and young adults leaving school to obtain and maintain competitive employment. In the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year, APD dedicated \$900,000 from the legislative EEP appropriation for employment services, which is comparable to previous years. Adult Day Training (ADT) initiatives provide volunteer opportunities, job skills training and job exploration, and access to community services. Adult Day Training programs are offered locally by APD partners and stakeholders, including local Arcs. Through the iBudget Florida and CDC+, APD offers individual and family training, as well as job supports. In 2017-18, APD reported it had placed 2,957 individuals in competitive employment, representing 5.0% of individuals served by the agency. About 9.2% of individuals receiving ADT services were in competitive employment in 2017-18; this represented a decrease of about 18.5% that may be attributed to a variance in data collection. For that same period, APD reported that 7,682 individuals who wanted employment were not employed. (Agency for Persons with Disabilities, n.d., *APD CARES Report, 2014-2015 - 2017-2018*). In the Agency's 2019 Long Range Program Plan, APD reported 13,792 persons with disabilities served in Adult Day Training Service.

In Fiscal Year 2017-2018, the Florida Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health, (DCF, SAMH), reported that 2,081 individuals received employment services. These employment

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services were primarily focused on supported employment which includes the individual placement and support model, and mental health clubhouse services for persons with severe mental illnesses (Florida Employment First Collaborative Team, Employment First Annual Report, 2018).

Persons with disabilities in Florida may find services that aid with job supports, worksite accommodations and technology, and career planning from a variety of organizations, with VR and the Florida Alliance for Assistive Technology (FAAST) being primary sources for youth and adults. In 2019, FAAST indicated that approximately 5.7% of device loans were made to the employment sector and about 1% of device demonstrations and trainings were provided to that sector. (Center for Assistive Technology Act Data Assistance, 2019, March 9, *Annual Progress Report Florida 2019*).

Persons who are blind may seek vocational services through the Florida Division of Blind Services (DBS). This state agency provides vocational training, job placement, on-the-job training, orientation and mobility training, career counseling and guidance, and job modification services, including assistive technology. The DBS has shown annual growth in their employment outcomes over time, often exceeding their annual targets. (Employment First Annual Report, 2017-18).

CareerSource Florida provides oversight and policy direction to the Florida Department of Economic Development (DEO), who administers Florida's 24 Local Workforce Development Boards, in supporting employers and helping Floridians gain and retain employment and advance in their careers. Workforce Development Boards offer career and job placement support through their disability employment specialists. For the Fiscal Year 2017-2018, DEO reported serving 41,402 persons with disabilities across Florida with 7,832 persons with disabilities placed in employment. (Employment First Annual Report, 2017-18). Florida's WIOA Unified State Plan includes commitment to Employment First Florida and describes initiatives designed to support individuals with I/DD, including the Florida Unique Abilities Partner Program that recognizes businesses committed to providing career and financial opportunities to individuals with unique abilities and the organizations that support them.

The Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (FARF) manages the RESPECT of Florida Program to employ persons with disabilities in the production of products and services sold to state and local government agencies. In 2017-2018 through the Respect of Florida Program, 1,246 individuals were employed with an additional 689 individuals in supported employment and 15 in competitive employment (Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, n.d.). The FARF/RESPECT of Florida has worked to improve access to competitive employment and implemented an annual Micro Enterprise award with funding for individuals with I/DD to start or expand their own business for at least the past 5 years.

The total number of entities holding 14(c) certificates has decreased as follows: 51 in 2018, 32 in 2019, and 29 in 2020. A decrease was seen in the number of community rehabilitation programs holding certificates as follows: 48 in 2018, 29 in 2019, and 27 in 2020. Other certificates were held by "patient" (i.e., hospital/residential care center) workers. Additionally, the total number of people with disabilities working under 14(c) entities decreased as follows: 4,088 in 2018, 2,961 in 2019, and 1,918 in 2020, reflecting a positive decrease in sub-minimum wages. (National Disability Institute, Inc. LEAD Center WIOA Policy Development, Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor, Contract

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No. 1605DC-19-F-00341, Florida State Data, Wage and Hour Division: 14(c) Certificate-Holding Entities Outcomes).

Florida secured an Employment First Executive Order in 2013; an Interagency Cooperative Agreement in 2014 with nine agency and organization partners, which was renewed in 2019 with 11 partners; and legislation, the Employment First Act, which was codified in 2016. Through Florida's Employment First collaborative partnerships with key state agencies and organizations, new resources are now available to individuals with I/DD who are seeking employment and employers seeking to hire them (e.g., Abilities Work, Help Desk, Employment First Communications Plan). Florida's Division of Management Services, through legislation and a subsequent partnership with Employment First, developed training for state agency and human resources personnel in hiring practices specifically pertaining to individuals with I/DD in their effort to improve employment within state government. More information is provided on Employment First in *Interagency Initiatives*.

Additional collaborative transition initiatives designed to culminate in paid employment for youth with I/DD include Project SEARCH and a multitude of postsecondary program options. Project SEARCH is available at 41 sites in Florida and has led to an average 70% employment rate for program completers. Postsecondary models, implemented under the Higher Education Opportunities Act and other Florida-specific postsecondary frameworks and legislatively mandated and funded programs, include opportunities in career and technical education centers and colleges, Florida colleges (i.e., community colleges), and the State University System. Information and training are provided on work incentives, benefits planning, asset development, and Florida ABLE via Florida's Employment First Collaborative Training Initiative; *The Changing Face of Benefits* online web course, workbook, and supplement; and by selected agencies and organizations offering benefits counseling (e.g., VR, CareerSource Florida).

The National Core Indicators show that despite all efforts in Florida, persons with disabilities in general, and persons with I/DD in particular, are not finding employment to the extent they desire. About 19.0% of persons 16 years of age and older with a disability in Florida are employed, while more than 62% of persons without a disability are in the workforce. In 2018 in Florida, about 34% of civilians with disabilities of all types were employed, compared to 75.6% for civilians in Florida without disabilities. Of civilians in Florida with cognitive disabilities, only 24.4% were employed, which was lower than the national rate of 27.8%. In 2017-2018 service data, APD documents that more than 7,600 clients who wanted employment were unemployed (APD CARES Report, 2017-18). National Core Indicators (NCI) data for Florida point to lagging performance in employment for persons with I/DD. Only 10.0% of NCI Florida participants reported having a paid community job compared to 18.0% nationwide. About 6.0% said they have a group job with or without publicly funded support, whereas nationwide that figure was 27.0%. Fewer Floridians reported attending a day program or workshop at 48.0% contrasted with 57.0% nationally. Only 19.0% of Floridians reported having community employment as a goal in their service plan, while 29.0% nationally strive for employment.

While Florida has achieved great strides in employment, work remains to be done in this area and will continue through Florida's Employment First collaborative efforts, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and the host of state and local agencies and organizations dedicated to improving inclusive competitive employment options and outcomes.

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#### III. Informal and formal services and supports:

People with developmental disabilities and their families and caregivers in Florida are served by numerous governmental, private, nonprofit, volunteer, service organizations, agencies, and associations.

Florida's Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) is tasked specifically with serving the needs of Floridians with developmental disabilities. In addition to administering the iBudget Florida program and extensive Medicaid Home-Based and Community Services (HBCS), APD's Home and Community Services Administration provides other supports and resources, including support coordination, adult day training services, adult and child respite services, specialized assessments, and therapies, along with needed equipment and supplies. Funding of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) with an average hourly rate of \$11.09, along with the lack of a formalized and comprehensive system of competency-based training for DSPs, has a direct impact on the ability to adequately deliver these services.

The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) partners with local communities to protect vulnerable populations; promotes strong families; and supports self-sufficiency, recovery, and resiliency for those individuals and families. DCF's Florida Abuse Hotline accepts reports 24 hours a day, 7 days a week of known or suspected child abuse, neglect, or abandonment, or suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult. The hotline accepted 493,319 calls in 2018-2019; this count includes reports impacting persons with I/DD. In the same timeframe, DCF reported that 48,968 investigations were undertaken, which included the investigation of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of persons with disabilities and the frail elderly. Also in that year, 5,654 people, including those with disabilities and the elderly, received protective supervision and protective intervention services from DCF (Florida Department of Children and Families, 2019).

Florida's Medical Foster Care Program (MFC) is a coordinated effort between the Florida Medicaid Program within the Agency for Health Care Administration; the Children's Medical Services, Department of Health; and the Child Welfare and Community Based Care Program within the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The purpose of MFC is to enhance the quality of life for medically complex foster children allowing them to develop to their fullest potential in a home-based program. The program provides family-based care for medically complex children, under the age of 21, in foster care who cannot safely receive care in their own homes. MFC programs are located in all areas of the state and include nursing and social worker staff who provide 24 hour/day oversight and case management services to the children and families. Each program has a medical director who reviews each child's medical needs in the program and provides medical direction to staff and families. In addition, each child has a primary care physician, and in most cases, several medical specialists are assigned to the child.

"MY Future, MY Choice" provides youth with living options, leadership development, and guidance to assist them with the transition to adulthood. Young adults with a diagnosed and documented disability may continue to reside in extended foster care up to their 22nd birthday. The program additionally provides financial and academic support services to former and current foster care young adults who are pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities; and re-entry through their 21st birthday, if they



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meet the program's requirements. "MY Future, MY Choice" works in tandem with the normalcy changes instituted with 2013 legislation, promoting greater access to general community activities.

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) serves more than 5 million residents of Florida who are 60 years of age and older. Most direct services are provided through the Division of State-wide Community-Based Services through 11 Area Agencies on Aging (i.e., Aging and Disability Resource Centers, ADRCs) and local service providers. The DOEA offers a wide range of programs that address general and specific needs of elders, including persons with disabilities. Through the Comprehensive Assessment and Review for Long-Term Care Services (CARES) program, the medical and long-term care needs of seniors are assessed by healthcare professionals to determine the appropriate level of care needed and care options. In 2018, DOEA reported performing 99,247 nursing home applicant assessments. The Program of All-Inclusive Care (PACE) works to provide individuals who would otherwise qualify for Medicaid nursing home placement with home and community-based services. Individuals in PACE may have their needs managed through a single provider. In 2019, there were 2,565 PACE slots statewide (Florida DOEA, 2019). The Office of Public and Professional Guardians (OPPG) is found within DOEA and provides guardianship services to those who cannot afford guardian services or have no able family or friends to serve in that role. In Fiscal Year 2017-2018, there were 550 registered professional guardians and 17 contracted public guardian offices. In the same period, OPPG served 3,846 individuals of all abilities (Florida DOEA, OPPG, 2019). The many programs offered through the DOEA include the Elder Abuse Prevention Program, Home Care for the Elderly Program, and the National Family Caregiver Support Program.

Compared to the United States, Florida has the highest percentage of persons on a waiting list for HCBS Waivers living with aging caregivers. An aging caregiver is defined as an individual over the age of 60 who is caring for their adult child. Because of this, there are impacts to the overall family unit, as caregivers must wait until they reach age 70 for their aging, adult children to receive iBudget services. Additionally, Florida ranks 49th out of 50 states in "fiscal effort" or I/DD funding. As a comparison, New York, which is ranked 1st out of 50 states, spends \$9.06 per \$1,000 of personal income; Florida spends \$1.99 per \$1,000 of personal income (Tanis, State of the States in Intellectual Disabilities, Florida Profile, 2021). Additionally, Florida's overall fiscal effort has decreased by approximately 10% since 2007 (Perkins, 2019). Aging caregivers, an aging population of adults with I/DD, and a significant shortfall of long-term care funding individually and collectively create a significant growing concern of an imminent cliff for individuals with I/DD and their families/caregivers.

The Family Network on Disabilities (FND) is a grassroots organization for individuals with disabilities and their families whose mission is to work toward complete integration and equality of individuals with disabilities in a society without barriers. The FND serves all persons with disabilities state-wide and offers five major programs across Florida. Disability support services can be accessed at all Florida State Colleges and include services such as extended time on exams, alternate formatted texts, sign language interpreters or note takers. University student disability resource centers provide accommodations for students with disabilities at all Florida universities.

Florida's Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) provide information, referral, training, consultation, and resources for families and professional for individuals of any age with a current diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and related disabilities. Seven (7) regional CARD sites are

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funded by the Florida Legislature through the Florida DOE. Sites include Florida Atlantic University, Florida State University, University of Central Florida, the University of Florida at Gainesville and Jacksonville, University of Miami, and the University of South Florida.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) of the Florida Department of Education manages the independent living program for persons with disabilities. The program provides services through a network of private nonprofit, non-residential, locally-based and consumer-controlled Centers for Independent Living (CILs). There are 16 CILs in Florida that offer four categories of core services, which include: information and referral, independent living skills training, individual and systems advocacy, and peer counseling. CILs may offer other services to support independent living, as determined by community needs and resources. In Fiscal Year 2018-2019, CILs served a total of 17,151 individuals with significant disabilities (US Department of Education, WIOA State Plan, Florida PYs 2020-2023, Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Combined or General), p.4, Actual Performance).  
<https://wioaplans.ed.gov/node/46511>

The Florida Association of Centers for Independent Living (FACIL) is the statewide association that advocates for and provides support and resource development for Florida's 16 CILs. Among the services offered through the CILs are information and referral, independent living skills development, peer mentoring and networking, advocacy, and transition services. In Fiscal Year 2017-2018, the CILs served 22,780 individuals with information and referral services. During the same period, independent living skill development services were delivered to 4,930 individuals, and 3,080 individuals were served by peer mentoring and networking supports. Another 3,790 individuals benefited from transition services (Florida Association of Centers for Independent Living, n.d.).

Disability Rights Florida (DRF) is the protection and advocacy organization that serves persons with disabilities in Florida through advocacy, education, investigation, and litigation to protect and advance rights, dignity, equal opportunity, choice, and self-determination. DRF provides free and confidential services and supports to individuals statewide. DRF worked collectively with the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council to provide training on voting for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and is sustaining training efforts related to voting, including self-advocates trained as presenters to deliver the training.

Although volunteer opportunities are available throughout Florida, according to NCI data, at 21.0% fewer Floridians with developmental disabilities volunteer than their national counterparts at 31.0%. (National Core Indicators, n.d., *2017-18 In-Person Survey State Outcomes*, pp. 27-29). Volunteer Florida, operating as the state's official volunteer organization, provides opportunities for Floridians to participate in national service programs such as AmeriCorps, VISTA and Senior Corps, in-state emergency management volunteer efforts, and numerous local projects. The Volunteer Florida Foundation raises funds to support Volunteer Florida and the Governor's special initiatives such as Black History Month and Hispanic Heritage Month events. The Florida Faith-Based and Community-Based Advisory Council functions as a formal advisory body to the Executive Office of the Governor and to the Legislature. This council partners with state agencies to provide volunteer opportunities to communities (Florida Faith-Based and Community-Based Advisory Council, n.d.). Special needs ministry programs through local churches and synagogues are also available.

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Consistent with the 2017-2021 State Plan Comprehensive Review and Analysis findings, there is no clearinghouse to connect individuals to services and programs. With Florida's continued waitlist and lack of DSPs, along with no clearinghouse that assists individuals with I/DD and their families in knowing where and how to access alternative services and programs, informal and formal services and supports continue to present unmet needs.

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#### IV. Interagency Initiatives:

Collaboration and cooperation are important to: leverage resources, close service gaps, avoid duplication, implement best and innovative practices, promote supportive policy, and advocate for positive change for all people and communities. A shared vision and mission to improve the quality of life for persons with I/DD and their families and caregivers are at the core of each of the federally-assisted and other state interagency initiatives described below. Participation by individuals with I/DD and their family members is described where known.

**Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs):** The Florida Department of Elder Affairs' 11 Area Agencies on Aging operate the ADRCs which serve as a single, coordinated system for information and service access for all Floridians seeking long-term care support. Through the ADRCs, Floridians have access to information and assistance with federal and state benefits. Greater collaboration between the ADRCs and the community of agencies and organizations serving individuals with I/DD is emerging as an area of need to improve the coordination of supports and services for Florida's community of aging caregivers and adults with I/DD. A collaborative team with diverse representation was initiated in 2020 to begin addressing this need.

**CareerSource Florida and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO):** Local Workforce Development Boards (24 in Florida) assist employers and job seekers with employment services, labor market information and provide disadvantaged adults, youth, dislocated workers, and individuals transitioning to employment. CareerSource Florida and DEO are partners to Florida's Employment First work and individuals with I/DD serve on Local Workforce Development Boards.

**Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Office of Early Learning (OEL), Florida Department of Education:** ELAC members bring business and community-focused perspectives to early learning. The ELAC makes recommendations to OEL on using local, state, and federal funds; content of professional development training programs; and best practices. Membership requirements are prescribed in Florida Statute and include key stakeholders with early childhood interests.

**Employment First Florida – Employment First Coalition, Employment First Collaborative Team, and Grassroots Group:** A trifecta of collaborative members work together to achieve Florida's Employment First goals consistent with Florida's Employment First Interagency Collaborative Agreement and the Employment First Act. Eleven state agencies and organizations are represented on the Coalition and Collaborative Team, comprised of the Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities; Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Student Education; Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; Florida Department of Education, Division of Blind Services; Florida Department of Economic Opportunity; CareerSource Florida; Florida Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Office; Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc.; Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, Inc. (FARF)/RESPECT of Florida; Florida Commission on Transportation Disadvantaged; and The Arc of Florida. The Grassroots group includes diverse, grassroots membership among all stakeholders, including individuals with I/DD and their families.

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Family Care Council Florida (FCCF): Family Care Councils were established in Florida Statute in 1993 and members are Governor appointed. Each Council consists of individuals with developmental disabilities, as well as parents, siblings, grandparents, and guardians of people with developmental disabilities who qualify for APD services. Each Council is comprised of 10 – 15 members and reflects Florida’s geographic diversity, representative of 15 areas. The Family Care Councils educate and empower individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, partnering with APD, to bring quality services to individuals with dignity and choice.

Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (FAAST): Florida's primary resource for Assistive Technology (AT) provides information and assistance, AT device demonstrations, AT group training, AT device loans, and AT funding assistance. FAAST is administered through the Florida Department of Education Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. In the past year, FAAST loaned 3,825 devices, held 1,543 AT trainings, reported a 447% return on investment, and held 4,385 device demonstrations. (FAAST, n.d.). The current FAAST Executive Director is a person with I/DD, and the FAAST Board of Directors includes representation of individuals with I/DD.

Florida Association of Centers for Independent Living (FACIL): FACIL is a capacity building advocacy organization that provides support and resource development for 16 Centers for Independent Living (CILs) throughout Florida. CILs are community-based, nonprofit agencies that empower persons with disabilities to move from dependence to independence. FACIL provides information and referral, independent living skills, peer mentoring, advocacy, and transition services. Two of the 16 Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are collaboratively engaged in the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council’s Employment First Collaborative Training Initiative and plan to serve as part of a state-wide technical assistance center for future Employment First training.

Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (FARF): FARF promotes the interests of individuals with disabilities by acting as a public policy change agent. FARF promotes and serves the interests of community human service providers. Member agencies provide a full spectrum of services to support the various needs of individuals with disabilities including employment, community-based supports, residential, therapies, and educational services. FARF administers multi-million dollar programs annually that result in employment of thousands of individuals with disabilities and houses a cadre of professionals providing a variety of services to its members and the industry.

Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD): Florida’s CTD is a coordinated state-wide effort for shared ride services. Transportation services are available in all 67 Florida counties. Federal, state, and local agencies work together to provide transportation to medical appointments, employment, education, and other life sustaining services. The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council has worked closely with Florida’s CTD over the past 5 years in implementing the Council’s Transportation Goal, and significant progress has been made legislatively in adding services specifically for individuals with intellectual disability. Additionally, while the CTD has always required representation of persons with disabilities, the Governor appointed a member with I/DD in 2019.

Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT): Florida Department of Health, Children's Medical Services Early Steps Program maintains the FICCIT to advise the program by identifying resources, assuring accountability, and promoting interagency collaboration. Membership

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must include a minimum of 20% representation of parents with children under the age of 12, and at least one parent representative of an infant, toddler, or child under the age of 6.

Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC), Florida Department of Education: The FRC is committed to increasing employment, enhancing independence, and improving the quality of life for Floridians with disabilities. The FRC works with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in planning and developing state-wide rehabilitation programs and services and promotes high standards and expectations for every area of service delivery. Membership includes representatives of disability groups or individuals and a representative of a parent training and information center.

Florida Health and Transition Services (HATS): Florida HATS is a program of the Florida Department of Health, Children's Medical Services operating through four regional coalitions. HATS' mission is to ensure successful transition from pediatric to adult health care for all youth and young adults in Florida, including youth with disabilities, chronic health conditions or other special health care needs. Originally established through a legislatively mandated task force, the work has been sustained and numerous publications and resources on health care transition are available to individuals with I/DD and their families.

Florida Independent Living Council (FILC): FILC is a federal- and state-mandated council that collaborates with the Florida Department of Education and other state agencies on planning and evaluating the independent living programs, preparing annual reports, and conducting public forums. The Council is comprised of 14 voting members appointed by the Governor, with the majority of voting members consisting of individuals with disabilities who are not employed by the organization or a state agency.

Florida Children and Youth Cabinet, Office of the Governor: The Cabinet ensures that the public policy of Florida relating to children and youth promotes interdepartmental collaboration and program implementation in order for services designed for children and youth to be planned, managed, and delivered in a holistic and integrated manner to improve the self-sufficiency, safety, economic stability, health, and quality of life of all children and youth in Florida. Membership includes state executive level staff, five individuals who represent children and youth advocacy organizations, and five ex-officio members named in statute.

State Advisory Committee for Education of Exceptional Students (SAC), Florida Department of Education: The SAC is a committee appointed by the Commissioner of Education, commensurate with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004), to provide policy guidance on the provision of exceptional education and related services for Florida's children with disabilities. The Committee operates under the auspices of the Bureau of Exceptional Student Education (BESE). The Committee representation includes parents of children with disabilities and individuals with disabilities. The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council serves as a member with a Council member, who is also a parent, currently serving in this position.

State Secondary Transition Interagency Committee (SSTIC): The SSTIC is a state-level interagency team created by the Florida Department of Education, BESE to facilitate inter-organizational understanding, identify needs using data, realign capacity-building resources, foster collaboration and shared

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responsibility while avoiding duplication, and improve secondary transition. The Committee includes a diverse group of secondary transition stakeholders, including family members. The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council is represented on the Committee by staff.

Persons with I/DD, their families, and the organizations who serve them have overall good representation on state, regional, and local interagency initiatives in Florida.

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#### V. Quality Assurance:

The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) currently contracts with Qlarant to administer the Statewide Quality Assurance Program to examine the state's developmental disabilities service system. The AHCA works in partnership with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities in this endeavor. Qlarant conducts periodic person-centered reviews (PCR) and provider reviews (PDR) to examine adherence to protocols and aspects of customer service satisfaction. The PCR consists of an interview with the person with a disability, the person's support coordinator, and a review of records maintained by the support coordinator. Qlarant's third-quarter report, published in May 2018, showed that average scores on all review components (i.e., interviews, observations, and record reviews) were at 90% or higher. The review identified issues with providers having policies in place for background screening procedures (about 19.0% of providers reviewed), and 16.0% of providers had elements missing from the required documentation for at least one employee. Qlarant hosts online resource centers for individuals and families and providers, supplies a training center, and convenes an in-person quality council (Qlarant, 2018).

In the spring of 2020, APD announced that it would be launching a new system of Individual Comprehensive Assessment (ICA) tools, processes, and resources that will replace the current Questionnaire for Situational Information (QSI). The ICA will result in quicker access to more actionable information for support coordinators and providers.

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, reports that the rate of violent victimization against persons with disabilities was 2.5 times higher than for persons without disabilities and that 20% of crime victims with disabilities believed they were targeted because of their disability. Further, data from 2011-2015 showed that persons with cognitive disabilities suffered the highest victimization rate among the disability types examined for violent crimes, serious violent crime, and simple assault (US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2017).

The Florida Department of Children and Families' (DCF) Abuse Hotline fielded almost half a million calls in Fiscal Year 2018-2019. During that same timeframe, DCF conducted nearly 50,000 investigations, including those that examined potential cases of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of persons with disabilities and the frail elderly. DCF provided protective supervision and protection intervention services to 5,654 persons, including persons with disabilities and the elderly also during that Fiscal Year. (Florida Department of Children and Families, 2019, September 30, *Long Range Program Plan*).

Since 2006, APD has employed the Zero Tolerance training model to educate direct care providers, support coordinators, and persons providing care or support to an APD client. The curriculum focuses on recognizing and preventing abuse, neglect, and exploitation of persons with I/DD. The Florida Department of Elder Affairs sponsors the Elder Abuse Prevention Program. Disability Rights Florida provides investigative and education services to persons with disabilities, formulates legislative priorities, and engages in advocacy and education of elected leaders. The Florida Department of Health's (DOH) Violence and Injury Prevention Section funds local services for victims of sexual violence that include crisis intervention, referrals, advocacy and accompaniment, counseling, therapy,



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and support groups. DOH's Refugee Health Program conducts health assessments and related services for foreign-born victims of trafficking. The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Student Education (FDOE, BESE) provides information on topics related to protecting the rights and security of students with disabilities. Since at least 2013, the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. (FDDC) has opposed restraint as a planned intervention in education plans for students with disabilities and opposed the use of seclusion, mechanical restraints and prone restraint entirely. The FDDC has maintained various legislative platforms and provided educational awareness and advocacy toward improvement. Florida's Law Enforcement Basic Recruit Training has been strengthened to focus on prevention, detection, and response in protecting persons with disabilities and is available in all 40 officer training schools.

The National Core Indicators (NCI) Results on Safety, Rights, Self-Direction-Related Factors for Florida and NCI as a whole, reflect the following: In the area of "Safety," Florida results were 10% and NCI results were 19% for the factor "has at least one place where the person feels afraid or scared"; Florida results were 97% and NCI results were 94% for the factor "has someone to go to for help if they feel afraid or scared." In "Rights and Respect for Individuals," Florida results were 89% and NCI results were 91% for "Can use phone and Internet when he/she wants"; Florida results were 94% and NCI results were 93% for "Staff treat person with respect"; Florida results were 20% and NCI results were 24% for "Attended self-advocacy troupe, meeting, conference or event"; Florida results were 36% and NCI results were 37% for "Has voted in a local or national election." In the area of "Self-Direction," Florida results were 97% and NCI results were 88% for "Can make changes to individual budget or services if needed"; Florida results were 100% and NCI results were 98% for "Took part in last service planning meeting"; Florida results were 92% and NCI results were 79% for "Was able to choose services they get as part of the service plan." For the area of "Service Coordination," Florida results were 97% and NCI results were 88% for "Case manager asks the person what he/she wants"; Florida results were 89% and NCI results were 84% for "Understood what was discussed at last service planning meeting." Overall, the greatest disparity was found in the factor pertaining to choosing services as part of the service plan where Florida participant results were 13% greater than NCI as a whole (National Core Indicators, n.d., 2017-18 Adult In-Person Survey State Outcomes).

Interagency coordination and systems integration efforts are described within *Informal and Formal Supports and Interagency Initiatives*.

Numerous efforts that incorporate person-centered planning services and training in self-advocacy and self-determination are in place in Florida. The FDOE, BESE, maintains a K-12 self-determination curriculum. Additionally, the state requires instruction or the provision of information beginning no later than age 14 per Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(h)8., F.A.C.; s. 1003.5716, F.S. The FDDC addresses self-determination and self-advocacy leadership through the following: Florida Self-Advocates Network'D (FL SAND), the state-wide self-advocacy organization, which delivers self-advocacy training; Partners in Policymaking, which builds leadership skills, advocacy, and self-determination among family and self-advocate participants; Project SALT, a self-advocacy leadership curriculum developed in conjunction with the Mailman Center at the University of Miami; Route to Self-Determination, a training curriculum available for live or online training, which teaches basic self-determination skills; the DD Network Leadership Cadre, a program designed to build the next generation of leaders among self-

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advocates; and the FYI Transition Website, an online training resource targeted to students that includes lessons on self-determination and self-advocacy.

Though efforts are underway and being expanded, work remains to be done to assure that person-centered and self-directed planning result in the ability of individuals with I/DD to choose their own services.

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#### VI. Education/Early Intervention:

The Florida Department of Health Children's Medical Services (CMS) Early Steps program assists families with accessing needed programs and services for infants and toddlers who are deemed high risk or who meet the eligibility criteria for developmentally delayed or who have an established condition. The program identifies infants early, develops Individualized Family Support Plans (IFSP), and coordinates services and supports. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C program services fall under the Early Steps umbrella. In 2019, 36,199 children were screened and 18,610 were determined eligible. There were 57,009 children active in the Early Steps program in 2019 with 36,050 children served with an IFSP (Florida Department of Health Children's Medical Services. *Early Steps Annual Report*. December 1, 2020). In Fiscal Year 2018-2019, about 95.0% of infants and toddlers had made progress towards their IFSP goals (Florida Department of Health Children's Medical Services, 2019).

The Children's Forum and Florida's Office of Early Learning sponsor the Help Me Grow Florida program in 31 Florida counties to provide free developmental and behavioral screenings for children to 8 years of age and connect families to services. Since 2014, Help Me Grow Florida facilitated 23,434 developmental screenings, made 19,437 referrals, and served 23,147 children (Help Me Grow Florida, 2019). Child Find is a service offered through the FDOE, BESE' Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS). Child Find, working with local school districts, locates children who are potentially eligible for IDEA services and links them to those services. There are 30 Early Learning Coalitions throughout Florida that provide services such as Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK), school readiness, and childcare resource referrals.

IDEA Part B, for school-aged children from 3 to 21 years of age, provides services through BESE. For the school year 2017-18, there were 349,764 students aged 6 through 21 years who received Part B services in Florida schools. According to the 2019 State Education Agency (SEA) Profile, there were 2,846,857 students in Florida's pre-kindergarten through 12th grade population, of which 14.0%, or 401,745, were students with disabilities. Students with intellectual disability represent about 7.1% of all students with disabilities; that is, students with intellectual disability numbered 28,523 in 2019. Race and ethnicity of all students with disabilities and students with intellectual disability are as follows: White (All Students with Disabilities 38%; Students with Intellectual Disability, 32%); Black (All Students with Disabilities 25%; Students with Intellectual Disability, 36%); Asian (All Students with Disabilities 1%; Students with Intellectual Disability, 2%); American Indian/Alaskan Native (All Students with Disabilities < 1%; Students with Intellectual Disability, < 1%); Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (All Students with Disabilities < 1; Students with Intellectual Disability, < 1%); Two or more races (All Students with Disabilities 4%; Students with Intellectual Disability, 3%); Hispanic (All Students with Disabilities 32%; Students with Intellectual Disability, 27%). (Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, *State Education Agency (SEA) Profile*, 2019).

In 2018-19, about 76.0% of students with disabilities were in regular classes (i.e., spent 80.0% or more of the school day with students without disabilities) and 14.0% were in separate classes (i.e., spent between 40.0 and 80.0% of the school day with students without disabilities).

The standard diploma graduation rate in 2017-18 for Florida students with disabilities was 80.0%, a notable increase of 21.2% from approximately 66.0% in 2016-2017. The dropout rate for students with

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disabilities fell to 13.0% in 2017-2018 from 17.0 and 16.0% in 2015-16 and 2016-2017, respectively. Post-school outcome data in 2016-17 show 24.0% of Florida students with disabilities who exited school the previous year were enrolled in higher education, 51.0% were enrolled in higher education or were competitively enrolled, and 59.0% were enrolled in higher education or some other postsecondary education or training program or competitively employed (FDOE BESE, 2019).

According to BESE in 2016-17, when examined by exceptionality, students with emotional/ behavioral disabilities (EBD) were involved in the most incidents of use of restraints at 42.0% and seclusion at 55.0% followed by students with autism spectrum disorder at 24.0% and 18.0%, respectively. In that school year state-wide, there were 8,700 restraint incidents involving 3,239 students and 1,351 seclusion incidents involving 503 students. Restraint use increased by about 14.0% from the previous school year, while seclusion incidents decreased by an almost equal percent at 13.6% (FDOE BESE, 2017).

According to the Florida Department of Education's 2018-19 School Year Private School Annual Report, there were 380,295 students in prekindergarten through 12th grade private school enrollment. This represents about 11.8% of the total Florida school enrollment, with the complementary 88.2% (2,846,857 students) enrolled in public schools. Private schools in Florida have seen an increase in the number of schools (increased by 39 schools) and the number of students (enrollment increase of 10,129 students) when compared to the previous school year (FDOE, n.d.).

During the 2018-19 school year, more than 31,000 Florida students in grades K-12 with special needs benefited from the McKay Scholarship Program for Students with Disabilities. This program was established to provide the option to attend a public school other than the one assigned, or to extend a scholarship to a private school of choice to students with disabilities who have an individual educational plan (IEP) or for whom an accommodation plan has been issued under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Family Empowerment Scholarships for Unique Abilities provide eligible students with the means to purchase services to design a customized educational program. These scholarships can be used for approved services such as speech or occupational therapy, instructional materials, tuition at an eligible private school, and contributions to a prepaid college account. Eligibility criteria include Florida residency, being eligible to enroll in kindergarten through Grade 12 in a public school in Florida, and having a disability (including autism spectrum disorder, Down syndrome, and other disabilities as defined in Florida Statute 1002.385 (FDOE, n.d.).

In 2016-17, 93.4% of Florida teachers employed to work with students receiving special education under IDEA Part B were classified as highly qualified; this is on par with the national figure of 93.2% (US Department of Education, 2018, May 31, *Part B Personnel, 2016-17*).

<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/osepidea/618-data/state-level-data-files/index.html#part-c-menu>

The FDOE, BESE, funds 34 major discretionary projects to provide technical assistance, support, and training for educators and other stakeholders. Additional training and supports are provided by local school districts, universities, and state and national organizations.

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While progress continues to be made in most educational areas, it is important to note that restraint and seclusion continue to be of concern, particularly for students served under the categories of emotional/ behavioral disability (EBD) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

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#### VII. Housing:

The shortage of affordable, safe housing has been a persistent issue in Florida. More than 35 years ago, the state Legislature created the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (i.e., Florida Housing) to provide a range of affordable housing options and opportunities. Multifamily development includes incentives for the development of rental housing, loans and mortgage bond programs, elderly housing community loans, low-income tax credits, and grants to serve persons with I/DD. The State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) makes funds available to local governments to form partnerships that preserve and create affordable homes and multifamily housing. SHIP dollars are distributed to all 67 counties and 52 community development block cities in Florida, where they are invested in housing assistance programs and policy and ordinance development. SHIP funds can be used for emergency repairs, new construction, rehabilitation, fees, financing, matching dollars for federal housing programs, and homeownership counseling.

A confluence of factors drives the housing decisions of persons with I/DD and their families and caregivers. Housing affordability may be among the top factors individuals and families deal with in this area. Almost 1% of Floridians live at or below the Federal Poverty Level and the incomes of persons with disabilities and without disabilities lag behind national figures (United States Census Bureau. *American Community Survey 5-Year Survey*, Table S1811, 2014-2018).

Residents in rural Florida counties have higher rates of poverty than those in the 35 urban counties (United States Census Bureau. *American Community Survey 5-Year Survey*, Table B17001, 2014-2018). In Florida, more than 86% of persons with I/DD who live in individualized settings live in a family home (Larson, et al., 2018, *In-home and residential long-term supports and services for persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities: Status and trends through 2016*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Research and Training Center on Community Living, Institute on Community Integration). In 2017, the average Supplemental Security Income (SSI) monthly payment for Floridians was \$773, which did not cover the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment, starting at \$850 (Schaak, et al., 2017, December, *Priced Out: The Housing Crisis for People with Disabilities*, pp.44-45, Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc.).

A recent national study found that about 75.0% of adults with I/DD live with a parent or caregiver and are not connected to services and supports available through public programs. Five factors ranked as the most important to persons with I/DD when deciding where to live included: safety, security and freedom from crime; cost; location; proximity to family; and quality of services and supports. The dream home setting of 61.8% of study participants was their own home or apartment, followed by a supervised group home (14.4%) and home of family member or friend (11.9%) (Friedman, 2019, *There's no place like home: A national study of how people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their families choose where to live*. Washington, DC and Towson, MD: The Arc of the United States and The Council on Quality and Leadership).

In Fiscal Year 2019-20, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities reported that 4,794 clients were served in supported living, which exceeded the agency's approval standard of serving 4,000 individuals. (2019-20 OPPAGA Program Summary, Agency for Persons with Disabilities). <https://oppaga.fl.gov>

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The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council in conjunction with the Florida Housing Coalition worked over the past 4 years with a State-wide Stakeholder Work Group to conduct training and create resources to better engage individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in the Consolidated Plan process for housing. A “Community-Based Planning Guide” was developed in 2018, and a “Community Engagement Plan” was developed in 2019. The “Community Engagement Plan” detailed the most effective means for individuals, families, and advocates to become active in housing policy discussions and decision-making to ensure that funding for safe, affordable, and inclusive housing for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities is prioritized in each city’s and/or county’s Consolidated Plan for housing. The effort contributed to the knowledge base on how to impact funding decisions and become involved in planning processes which ultimately determine local government investment in housing.

Training was developed and provided to individuals with disabilities, families, and other stakeholders in 2020 to increase their knowledge of how to engage effectively in local planning processes surrounding Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds and to advocate for long-term policy change state-wide. In 2020, \$250 million in CARES Act funding for rental and mortgage assistance was allocated to affordable housing programs. These funds enabled housing program administrators to activate their disaster strategies with guidance from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation and assistance from the Florida Housing Coalition, helping local communities to respond to housing emergencies in terms of keeping families out of homelessness by staying in their rental housing and in their homes.

In 2021, training was developed and conducted with local governmental agencies and organizations to assist them in better understanding the need to include individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in all aspects of Consolidated Plan development. The long-term outcomes of this work should result in greater involvement and access to safe and affordable housing for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Florida.

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#### VIII. Transportation:

Created by the Florida Legislature in 1989, the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged develops policies and procedures for the coordination of transportation services for the transportation disadvantaged. The Commission operates under the Florida Department of Transportation. Through the establishment of a planning agency for each service area and relationships with Community Transportation Coordinators (CTC), the Commission assures that local planning is aligned with its mission and that transportation disadvantaged riders receive services. Per Florida Statute 427.011, transportation disadvantaged funds may be used for: planning, Medicaid transportation, administration, operation, procurement and maintenance of vehicles, and capital investments. The statute stipulates that paratransit consists of those elements of public transit that provide service between specific origins and destinations as selected by the individual rider with service being provided at an agreed-upon time. Paratransit services can be provided by taxis, limousines, dial-a-ride services, buses, and other arrangements classified as demand-responsive with non-fixed route operations. Riders include older adults, persons with disabilities (physical or developmental), people with low income, and at-risk children. Chapter 427 Florida Statutes and Commission guidelines are used to determine rider eligibility, which must be established before services can be provided. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that public transit systems be accessible to individuals with disabilities. The ADA mandates that public transit entities that provide fixed-route rail or bus services also provide complementary paratransit services. However, individuals with disabilities must apply and be deemed eligible for paratransit services. The eligibility process is determined by the transit system as described above.

State-wide from 2017-2018, almost 3 million trips were provided for persons with disabilities (Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, 2019, January 1, *2018, Annual Performance Report* p.26-31). The highest percentage of unmet trip requests in Florida were related to employment and medical care. Unmet trip requests were higher in rural counties (Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, 2019, January 1, *2018, Annual Performance Report* pp.52-55).

In Fiscal Year 2018-2019, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities reported serving more than 10,000 individuals with I/DD in the Adult Transportation program and nine children with disabilities in Children Transportation (Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities, 2019).

Recognizing the unmet transportation needs in Florida, particularly for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, the State Legislature passed the 2017-2018 General Appropriations Act in 2017, mandating a Task Force on Transportation Disadvantaged Services. The Task Force examined the design and use of transportation disadvantaged services and provided input into the "Transportation Disadvantaged State-Wide Service Analysis." The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council's Executive Director and an individual with I/DD served on the Task Force. As a result of the work of the Task Force and related educational efforts by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, self-advocates, and other stakeholders, two recommendations from the "Transportation Disadvantaged State-Wide Service Analysis" were legislatively funded in 2018 for the following purposes: 1) To establish a new innovative grant program through the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (the Commission) for services specifically relevant to the market for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities; 2) To redesign the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) transportation model and



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transition the agency toward a collaborative partnership with the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinated System and community transportation coordinators providing mobility management services.

Acting on the key recommendation made by the Task Force and funded during the 2018 Legislative session was the redesign and transition of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities Transportation Business Model toward a collaborative partnership with the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinated System and Community Transportation Coordinators providing Mobility Management Services. The Agency for Persons with Disabilities initiated a Transportation Study Team with the following goals: 1) To provide an assessment of APD's current transportation business; 2) To provide an analysis comparing APD negotiated transportation waiver rates with transportation rates of the transportation disadvantaged coordinated system and community transportation coordinators; 3) To design a new APD transportation business model to include a functional implementation plan with associated cost, infrastructure, resource allocation and timeline for implementation.

Subsequently, at the end of 2019, Governor DeSantis appointed an individual with I/DD to the Florida Commission on Transportation Disadvantaged. Additionally, \$10 million in funding was allocated to the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund to conduct a broader competitive grant program for Community Transportation Coordinators and Transportation Network Companies. CS/HB 411 was passed in 2019 authorizing certain Transportation Network Companies to provide Medicaid non-emergency transportation services to a Medicaid recipient as cited in Section 316.87, Florida Statutes. Legislation also resulted in more stringent requirements for transportation network providers, requiring background screening for drivers.

The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC), in collaboration with the Florida Department of Transportation, funded two pilot transportation voucher projects in 2016—17 that were designed to provide greater transportation options for Florida's residents with I/DD. While both projects resulted in positive outcomes, the urban model, HARTPlus Customer Choice Voucher Program, operated by the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) resulted in long-term and sustainable systems change outcomes with improved access to transportation for individuals with I/DD. The HARTPlus Customer Choice Voucher Program provides door-to-door transportation for people with disabilities and needs that prevent them from using the HART local fixed route buses through Yellow Cab of Tampa. At the culmination of 1 year of funding, the project had provided 27,813 trips at \$16.00 a trip; an operational cost of \$445,008 versus the history of \$1,001,268 through other means; and a total savings of \$556,260 with 8% growth. In January 2020, the HARTPlus Customer Choice Voucher Program reported that it continued to be self-sustainable with an average of 7,000 trips provided per month and an estimated 3.3 million in cost savings since the inception. Individuals seeking community access (e.g., employment, postsecondary education, general community activities) receive priority access to the transportation voucher program. Additional efforts were initiated in 2020 by the FDDC to further expand the Transportation Voucher model in Florida.

In summation, transportation options within the state have been greatly expanded over the past 5 years. New and innovative transportation options specifically for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities have emerged with plans for expansion, and in some cases, legislative recurring funding for long-term continuation. Greater awareness by multiple agency partners, policy

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makers, and the public should result in safe, affordable, and reliable transportation options for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, providing them with a wide range of opportunities for access to their communities.

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#### IX. Childcare:

Early care services, along with before- and after-school care services, are concerns for persons with I/DD and their families and caregivers. The U.S. Department of Health, and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care serves as a starting point in the search for quality, affordable childcare for a child with a disability (HHS, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care, n.d.). Florida has three Parent Training and Information Centers (PTI) and two Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRC) that provide information and support services. The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) regulates childcare providers and offers resources for choosing a child care provider (Florida Department of Children and Families, n.d.). The Florida Department of Education Office of Early Learning offers guidance and referrals for finding quality childcare. There are 30 Early Learning Coalitions throughout Florida that provide childcare resource referrals.

Through the Family Caregiver Support Program, the Florida Department of Elder Affairs provides child day care and/or sitter services for a child under 18 years of age with a disability living with a grandparent. The agency reports having provided 8,877 hours of day care services and 16,047 hours of sitter services for the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 (Department of Elder Affairs, State of Florida. (2019, January). *Summary of Programs and Services*. Retrieved from [http://elderaffairs.state.fl.us/doea/pubs/pubs/sops2019/2019\\_SOPS\\_web.pdf](http://elderaffairs.state.fl.us/doea/pubs/pubs/sops2019/2019_SOPS_web.pdf)).

Families of children with disabilities face challenges with childcare, according to a 2020 study. More than one-third (34.0%) of parents of children with disabilities report having difficulty finding childcare, compared to 25.0% of parents of children with no disabilities. About 34% of parents of children with disabilities report not being able to find care, while 29.0% of parents of children with no disabilities report not finding care. Among the almost two-thirds (66.0%) of parents of children with disabilities who did find care, many had to rely on a patchwork of childcare comprised of paid care, family and friends covering care, and parents missing work. Relatedly, the parents of children with disabilities were found to be three (3) times more likely to experience job disruptions (e.g., arriving late, leaving abruptly or early, needing time off, and/or requesting schedule changes) because of childcare issues (Novoa, 2020).

While data is not yet readily available to gauge the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on child care services, it is anticipated that the availability of day services and respite for families, including adult day programs, will have been significantly impacted.

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## Appendix B

### SAMPLE: Part B. Portrait of State Services from 2022-2026 State Plan

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#### X. Recreation:

A variety of organizations in Florida support and promote recreation services for persons with disabilities. These include the Florida Disabled Outdoors Association, Florida Special Olympics, and the Florida State Park Service, along with its national counterpart, the National Park Service, and local (i.e., county and city) parks and recreation agencies or organizations.

One of the best known programs offered by the Florida Disabled Outdoors Association is SportsAbility, which provides opportunities for people of all ages and abilities along with their families or friends to participate in recreational activities. SportsAbility features a resource expo, indoor and outdoor sports, leisure activities, and clinics. Activities include, but are not limited to, golf, tennis, martial arts, horseback riding, basketball, pontoon boat rides, sit water skiing, sailing, kayaking, target sports, personal watercraft rides, and fishing. The goal of SportsAbility is to show people what they can do and to introduce activities that can be pursued to live a healthier lifestyle. SportsAbility is sponsored by community partners and activity providers and there is no charge to participants. Other programs offered by the Florida Disabled Outdoors Association include, but are not limited to, the following: The Recreation Activity Program for Adults with Disabilities (RAPAD); a hunting program for individuals who are mobility impaired (ALLOUT); Community-based Therapeutic Program for People with Brain and Spinal Cord Injuries; and Miracle Sports. It is important to note that some programs are only offered in selected areas of the state. Another important aspect of the Florida Disabled Outdoors Association is their advocacy and educational efforts that promote accessible and inclusive recreation opportunities through universal design and accessible and inclusive use of public and private lands. Such efforts lead to greater accessibility to recreational opportunities in one's home community.

Special Olympics Florida serves about 58,000 athletes and has more the 38,000 coaches and volunteers. They offer ongoing training and sports competitions in 11 fall and summer sports categories with a complement of additional competitions offered at various county and local levels. Special Olympics Florida brings their Unified Champion Schools education program to public schools and offers the Healthy Athletes program to Special Olympic athletes to improve and maintain fitness. The Little ELITES program (Elementary Level Introduction to Entry-level Sports) guides young athletes from ages 2 to 7 years into the Special Olympics program for those 8 years of age and older (Special Olympics, Florida, n.d.).

Diverse inclusive recreational, social, and leisure activities are also available for youth and adults with disabilities through community-funded and provided recreational center activities in their home communities. Participation in elective courses and activities within Florida's public schools and postsecondary programs are also available and often expanded by after-school bus availability.

The Florida Park Service is the division of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection responsible for operation of Florida State Parks. There are 175 state parks and state trails covering more than 800,000 acres that provide a variety of recreational opportunities. Reasonable accommodations, modification of policies, along with adapted equipment availability upon request, provide greater opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to participate in festivals, special events, interpretive programs, nature trails, boat tours, and other Florida State Park events.

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## **Appendix B**

### **SAMPLE: Part B. Portrait of State Services from 2022-2026 State Plan**

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Eighty-four percent of Florida's participants in the National Core Indicators' 2017-18 Adult In-Person Survey indicated the ability "...to go out and do the things s/he likes to do in the community." This was comparable to the national reported average of 85%. Florida's percentage was greater than the national percentage for the question on the ability "...to go out and do the things s/he likes to do in the community as often as s/he wants" with Florida reporting 84%, and the national average reported at 79%.

In summation, most individuals with I/DD in Florida, as well as their families, have not reported recreation as a high level of need over time. Results from the NCI data support this assessment.