

DRAFT: DO NOT DISTRIBUTE

We hope this letter finds you doing well.

We are writing to inform you of the results of the Ohio State Biennium Budget Process. We, along with a coalition of partners have been working on increasing investment in the developmental disability field for nearly two years. The budget which was signed by Governor Mike DeWine impacts funding for state fiscal years 2024 and 2025 (state fiscal years start on July 1st and end on June 30th).

How does increased budget funding impact the service I provider?



What rates/services will receive increases?

Services provided in Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs)

Home and Community-Based Waiver Services:

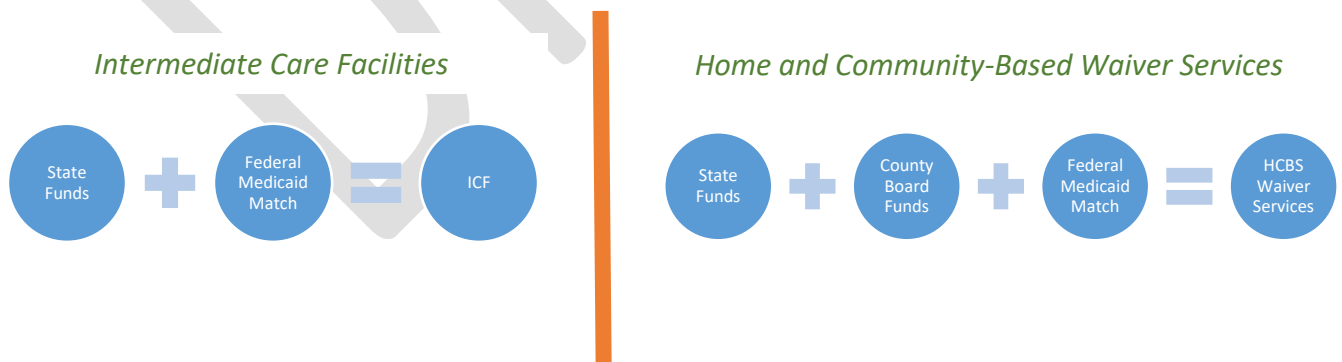
Residential Services

- Homemaker/Personal Care and Participant-Directed Homemaker/Personal Care;
- On-Site/On-Call;
- Remote Support Services;
- Respite Services;
- Shared Living; and
- Transportation

Day Services

- Adult Day Support
- Vocational Habilitation
- Career Planning
- Individual and Group Employment Support
- Non-Medical Transportation
- Self-Directed Transportation

Who contributes to the funding of services for people with developmental disabilities?



DRAFT: DO NOT DISTRIBUTE

What is the total investment?

Service	State Contribution	Total with Federal Contribution
Intermediate Care Facility		
Waiver Residential Services		
Waiver Day Services		

What does the investment mean to the field?

The goal of this budget effort was to ask the State of Ohio to invest in services to help providers attract and retain quality Direct Support Professionals (DSP) and Frontline Supervisors. The focus was obtaining funding that allows providers the opportunity to increase compensation for their front-line professionals. Each provider will design a strategy to compensate their staff. Approaches will vary across the state, so it is important that providers talk with their staff as to how the increased funding will be used within the organization. Let's consider two scenarios:

1. Over the past few years, my provider has increased DSP and frontline supervisor wages and compensation.
 - Many providers in this scenario relied on unsustainable or limited funding to pay for these wage or compensation increases. With this scenario, the provider will use the budget's increased funding to pay the costs from increased wages. DSPs and Frontline supervisors may see no increases in wages or may see small increases.
2. Over the past few years, my provider increased wages a little or not at all
 - Providers in this scenario did not have access to outside funding. The increased funding in the budget will help these providers increase their compensation levels to be more competitive in their communities.

Again, agencies must work with their staff to understand what is happening in their communities to determine how the increased funding will impact their wages offered to DSPs and frontline supervisors. Providers should communicate with their staff on how the increased funding from the state budget will impact their organization.

Does this funding mean every DSP and frontline supervisor will make the same hourly wage across the state?

No. Agencies should communicate with their staff on how they will use the funding and how it will impact wages across the agency.

When will agencies start to see the increased funding from the budget?

Waiver services: 1/1/24 with an additional increase in funding on 7/1/24

ICFs: 7/1/23 with an additional bump on 7/1/24

ICFs will need time to develop, communicate, and implement any wage increases. Your agency should communicate with you about if and when you can anticipate any wage increase.

What are the expectations of the funders and the regulators (Governor, State Legislators, and the Department of Developmental Disabilities, and County Boards)?

DRAFT: DO NOT DISTRIBUTE

The advocacy for this budget focused heavily on the needs of Ohioans with developmental disabilities and a provider's ability to provide quality services. We focused on the importance of DSP's and the crucial role they play in the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families. We made the case that the rates do not allow providers the ability to pay their staff more and major investment is needed to give them the ability to invest in their staff. We made the case that increased rates, leading to increased compensation, are crucial to a provider's survival. The legislators who voted for this investment and the county boards who contributed to the increased rates expect the average wage for front-line professionals/DSPs to increase across the state.

How will the state monitor the statewide average wage?

There are two mechanisms currently in place to monitor front-line professional/DSP wages.

- Homemaker/Personal Care (HPC) providers are required to complete a DODD-administered wage verification survey. This was developed based on a promise to the state legislature during the fiscal year 2020/2021 budget process.
 - Currently providers of Day, Vocational, Employment, and Transportation services are not required to complete the wage verification survey, but we believe it will become a requirement in 2024.
- ICFs cost reports which provides the data needed to show staff compensation.