

OPRA FRIDAY FIVE

News, Resources and Events for OPRA Members

APRIL 23, 2021

Budget Bill: Following last week's release of a substitute budget bill, on Wednesday Ohio's House of Representatives passed a \$74 Billion dollar state budget, HB 110, which will now move onto the Senate. The major budget initiatives include an overhaul and large investment in K-12 Education, as well as a 2% income tax cut. The budget bill passed the house 72-27. As we have mentioned previously, the budget requests that OPRA and our coalition partners had advocated for were not included in the House's bill, with the exception of an approximately 1.8% increase for Adult Day services. Although we are disappointed that our priorities were not included in the house bill, our advocacy moves onto the Senate, where we had important meetings with Senators Roegner and Hackett this past week. Following Pete's testimony in front of the House finance committee last week, the Gongwer legislative news outlet [published this story](#), covering the testimony and highlighting the need for improved wages for DSPs. [Click here to read more about the budget bill.](#)

Workforce Priorities: Over the past several months, OPRA has been engaging with our members, committees and system partners on developing priorities to address the workforce crisis in Ohio. As a result of those discussions, we [developed a set of Workforce Priorities](#) that will guide our advocacy efforts on policies that can improve the situation. This afternoon we will be meeting with Director Davis, as well as OACB, OHCA, and OWN to discuss next steps in addressing the priorities of DSP base requirements, rates and job requirements, MUI Culture, Onboarding staff and the Direction of our Service System. We hope this multi-front effort, as well as additional advocacy on the state and federal level will begin to bring to meaningful changes to address the workforce crisis.

Core Committee: On Wednesday, DODD's core committee met again to continue discussions on the next phase for day and vocational services regarding pandemic-related orders, rates and guidance. We shared draft surveys developed for both providers and individuals and families regarding the challenges to reengaging or returning to services. The surveys will be distributed May 1st and the results will inform the group's next steps. The committee also began discussions on draft rule language to make STEP-type services and rates continue past the pandemic.

OISP: The workgroup developing a [statewide ISP and assessment](#) met this past week, where the newly formed sub-committees focusing on training, communication and the online platform reported on some of their progress, including a short video developed by the communications team. During the meeting, DODD proposed another 'phase-in' approach, where 'early adopter' counties would begin using the plan and testing to see if any further revisions are made before statewide implementation. While we understand the need for additional testing, we also understand the need for a consistent planning process for providers and will continue to advocate for that as this work moves ahead.

EVV Stakeholders Meeting: On Wednesday, ODM held a virtual EVV stakeholder meeting, [summarized by Christine here](#). A reminder to members that ODM has delayed turning on the edits for claims not supported by enough EVV units to the beginning of the year. They plan to begin with a reduction in the claim as opposed to an outright denial in these instances. Please reach out to Christine at Ctouville@opra.org with any questions.



In Case You Missed It...

Additional Updates From The OPRA Team and System Partners

Memo Monday: This week's Memo Monday from DODD included information on Learning Aid Ohio's Summer program, the OISP workgroup, and the NCI in-person survey. The MM also includes several training announcements that may be of interest to members. [Click here to read Memo Monday.](#)

Townhall Tuesday- We want to thank everyone who joined us on Tuesday for our conversation with Abigail from Senator Brown's office on the HCBS Access Act. With events like this, we are hoping to bring you closer to the advocacy and legislative process, so we hope you found it helpful and informative. Click below for HCBS Access Act links.

[HCBS Access Act RFI](#)

[HCBS Access Act Text](#)

Abigail Duggan's email: Abigail_Duggan@brown.senate.gov

COBRA Resources- On this morning's call, there was a question regarding the the American Rescue Plan and provisions around COBRA. [Linked here is a written explanation](#) of the changes from Vorys and additional resources can be found at <https://www.vorys.com/publications-2902.html>
[Also, click here to view the recent Webinar](#) by Vorys, where this issue is covered at length.

Committee Week: A big thank you to all of the members who attended, participated and provided feedback in our ICF, Residential Waiver, Day service and Employment service committees this week. We had a great turnout at all of the committee meetings and covered several important topics and updates. We also want to welcome and congratulate Nicole Smith of RHDD, who will be joining Greg Ferrall of Auglaize Industries as co-chairs of the Day Service committee.



[Click here to REGISTER & VIEW AGENDA](#)

Upcoming Events

[5/6-5/7: OPRA Virtual Spring Conference](#)

[5/12: OPRA Policy Committee](#)

News and Resources

["Coronavirus in Ohio: 1,724 more cases reported; new case rate released"](#)

[KFF: "How Could \\$400 Billion New Federal Dollars Change Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services?"](#)

["The disabled hope to impact Oscars"](#)

[Disability Scoop"New Push Underway To Eliminate Subminimum Wage"](#)

