

OPRA FRIDAY FIVE

News, Resources and Events for OPRA Members

FEBRUARY 14, 2025

State Budget: Earlier this week, the Ohio Legislature introduced House Bill 96, the state operating budget for biennium FY2026-27. The 4,000 page budget bill outlines the state's spending appropriations for all of its operational activities, including disability services. The most relevant sections for DODD services begins in section 5123 on page 2943. There is new language in the bill codifying elements of Supported Decision-Making as a potential guardianship alternative (section 5123.68, page 3006, line 86427). Additional Templaw/budget language begins on page 3653 and outlines the different line items and what must be done with those appropriations. To read the full bill, [click here](#). To view the 'Red Books', documents that summarize and analyze the budget proposal, [click here](#). (At the time of this newsletter, the Redbook containing DODD's services has not been published).

To learn more about the state budget, please visit the [OPRA State Budget Resource Page here](#).

Medicaid Week of Action: Given [potential proposed cuts to the Medicaid program](#) in the upcoming Federal budget, our partners at ANCOR have organized "a [Week of Action to protect and strengthen Medicaid](#)". The #SaveMedicaid week of action will be February 24-28. ANCOR will be providing "simple yet impactful actions to ensure members of Congress hear about the importance of Medicaid." Given the importance of Medicaid in funding disability services in Ohio and across the country, we also encourage members to [contact your representatives in the US Congress](#) to share your story and emphasize the importance of funding for disability services.

Employment Services: We continue to engage with our system partners to attempt the most positive outcome with regards to the rule-making related to proposals coming out of the Blueprint committee. Given how much has changed since the conclusion of the workgroup, OPRA sent a letter, signed by many members of the Blueprint committee, asking DODD to reconvene the group to review the latest proposal. We have also requested written clarification from DODD on elements of the latest proposal and their stance regarding community-based pre-vocational and supported employment services. We expected to see a rule for Basic Employment Skills Training (BEST) be published for clearance this week. As of the writing of this newsletter, we still have not seen the rule published and are still awaiting DODD's response on the items mentioned above. Please reach out to [Scott](#) with any questions or additional feedback.

Bird Flu: Ohio saw its [first case of bird flu transmitted to a person in Mercer County](#). We encourage members to review their infection control processes and be as careful as possible.



This week, we noticed a post by our members at [Renaissance House](#), congratulating employee Heather Hillenbrand for 25 years of service. We are so appreciative of Heather's dedication and longevity in the field and RH's celebration of that service. Congratulations to all! "Congratulations to Heather Hillenbrand on her 25 year anniversary. We are fortunate to have a loyal and dedicated employee working for us. We look forward to many more years."



In Case You Missed It...

Additional Updates From The OPRA Team and System Partners

Memo Monday: Click here to read this week's [DODD Memo Monday](#), which includes info on an RFP for a Learning Management System, for DSPs, Supportive Technology Virtual Learning Sessions, Provider Training Series on Community Life Guide and more.

OPRA Vendor Partner Spotlight: Reidy Medical, a family-run supplier, provides PPE, incontinence, nutritional, and household items to ICFs and group homes with next-day delivery. Their sister company, Doyle Medical, offers the same supplies while billing Medicaid and waiver benefits—making it easy to get everything you need in one place!

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OPRA invites you to submit session proposals for our 2025 Spring Conference, scheduled for May 29 & 30 at the [Hilton Columbus](#) at Easton (3900 Chagrin Drive, Columbus, Ohio). This year's focus is on advancing the business of delivering high-quality I/DD services through strategic leadership, operational excellence, and innovation.

Conference Theme: Building Great Providers. The OPRA Spring Conference emphasizes the importance of building “Great Providers” who:

1. Deliver Person-Centered, Outcome-Focused Services
2. Invest in and Support Qualified Staff
3. Cultivate Strong Leadership and Partnerships
4. Establish Strong Operational Foundations
5. Advocate and Innovate Continuously



The deadline to submit your session proposal is Friday, March 7, 2025.

If you have any questions, please contact Sonya Summers at ssummers@opra.org

Upcoming Events

2/19: OPRA Residential Resources Committee

2/20: OPRA Health Care Committee

Click here for a full list of upcoming DODD training events

News & Resources

“Main Operating Budget : As Introduced : HB 96”

“Senate confirms RFK Jr. as Health and Human Services secretary”

“Former Buckeyes football coach Jim Tressel confirmed as Ohio’s lieutenant governor”

“ANCOR Announces New Medicaid Resource Center”

