

SFY 2024 Budget Priorities

INVEST IN NEW YORK'S CARE ECONOMY

With rising costs of inflation, coupled with the decades-long workforce crisis and a historic lack of funding, the operational costs for non-profit I/DD provider agencies have drastically outpaced the funding this sector needs to care for over 130,000 New Yorkers with I/DD.



85% of individuals with I/DD in NY are supported by non-profit providers



\$100.5M is the annual cost of high staff turnover rates for agencies



19,788 vacant direct care positions need to be filled by the non-profit sector

WORKFORCE SUSTAINABILITY

DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

Permanent investment in Direct Support Professionals' (DSP) salaries is essential to recruit and retain staff for the future viability of the field. As highly skilled professionals dedicated to the essential care of individuals with I/DD, DSPs take on numerous critical responsibilities to uplift the safety, productivity, and well-being of the entire I/DD community.

DSPs are responsible for providing important practical & administrative support such as first aid & CPR, administering medication, meal preparation or transport facilitation, as well as, attending to the comprehensive social, emotional, & psychological needs of those they care for. Whether it's teaching personal care skills and money management or directing crisis de-escalation, DSPs are required to be well trained, skilled, and constantly prepared for all the essential life-support services their profession demands.

Through their fundamental support & services, DSPs are integral pillars of support for New York's I/DD community and are crucial in ensuring that over 130,000 New Yorkers with I/DD can live their highest quality of life.

DIRECT SUPPORT WAGE ENHANCEMENT (DSWE)

NYDA is recommending the establishment of a new Direct Support Wage Enhancement (DSWE) as part of the SFY 2024 New York State budget. Through the proposed DSWE, provider agencies would receive an annual funding allocation of \$4,000 per eligible employee to be used for the purpose of enhancing the hourly rate of pay for all staff that have direct care/support responsibilities for individuals with I/DD.

The proposed \$4,000 increase equates to approximately \$2.19/hour for a full time employee. The DSWE is also reflective of the 13% increase provided to DSPs employed by OPWDD in the SFY 2023 Budget. Furthermore, OPWDD is proposing an additional \$4,000 - 6,000 increase for OPWDD DSPs as part of the SFY 2024 Budget.

Therefore, the inclusion of the DSWE is critical to provide an equitable increase to employees who are providing the same services to the majority of people with I/DD in New York State.

INCLUDE: ESTABLISHMENT OF A DIRECT SUPPORT WAGE ENHANCEMENT AS PART OF SFY 2024 BUDGET

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SYSTEM SUSTAINABILITY

COLA - 8.5% FOR SFY 2024

Due to the significant inflationary growth that has occurred over the past year, not-for-profit provider agencies' operating costs have increased significantly necessitating a 8.5% COLA in the Enacted SFY 2024 Budget. The proposed 2.5% increase in the Executive Budget unfortunately does not provide the necessary resources to continue to invest in the vital workforce needed to provide high quality life supporting services and will erase the progress that has been made over the past year.

Significant cost increases related to mandated fringe benefits, repairs and maintenance, utilities, food, supplies, transportation, and insurance over the past 12 months have resulted in significant financial pressure on agencies. Additionally, since the I/DD provider agencies are solely funded by Medicaid, **agencies are unable to increase reimbursement for services to compensate for increased costs of operations.**

MODIFY: HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE PART DD TO INCLUDE 8.5% COLA

NYDA provider organizations recently conducted their annual statewide workforce survey. The survey found that there are high levels of staff turnover are costing the state's nonprofit disability service provider \$100.5M annually. This cost directly hampers funding essential supports and services for New Yorkers with disabilities. **The 2022 survey results reflect staffing data as of December 31, 2022.**

It is important to note that the Draft OPWDD Strategic Plan highlights the 2019 NCI Staff Stability Survey, which was published in January 2021 and cites vacancy rates and turnover rates, "11.9 percent of full-time positions were vacant, and 17.5 percent of part-time positions were vacant. The turnover rate for DSPs was 36.2%..." The December 31, 2022 NYDA survey shows that statewide staff vacancy rates are still 42.5% above pre-pandemic levels. **Notably, the July 2022 NYDA survey also collected wage information for DSPs from the provider agencies, which showed the following results:**

| Region | Average Statewide Staff Vacancy Rate | Average Statewide Annual Turnover Rate |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Region 1 (NYC METRO) | 16.07% | 28.93% |
| Region 2 (Hudson Valley) | 20.96% | 23.18% |
| Region 3 (Capital District) | 19.39% | 33.04% |
| Region 4 (Western, Central & North Country) | 15.70% | 35.42% |
| Statewide | 16.96% | 30.70% |

| Average DSP Starting Wage at Non-Profit Provider Agency | \$16.07 |
|---|---------|
| Region 1 (NYC METRO) | \$16.24 |
| Region 2 (Hudson Valley) | \$16.15 |
| Region 3 (Capital District) | \$16.12 |
| Region 4 (Western, Central and North Country) | \$15.84 |

| State Operated Hourly Starting Wage | |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| Upstate | \$23 |
| Downstate | \$25 |