



Association of County
Human Services

Developmental Disabilities Program Committee

2024 Legislative Priorities

- 1. Ensure access to Employment and Community Inclusion services by increasing Employment and Community Inclusion provider rates as recommended in the [October 1, 2022, State Developmental Disabilities Administration's Employment and Day Rate Study](#).**

Employment and Community Inclusion supports provide a critical foundation of stability in the lives of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The current statewide staffing shortage has resulted in reduced or suspended services for many people. We thank the 2023 Legislature for increasing provider rates; however, the funding is not sufficient to fully implement the recommended rates from the legislatively mandated 2022 Employment and Day Rate Study. Sustainable provider rates must be implemented to recruit and retain qualified staff and deliver quality services.

- 2. Improve continuity of care for infants and toddlers by allowing their Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) agencies to receive Special Education funding for the first month of services provided.**

ESIT agencies are mandated to provide services to all eligible children, and the growth in children receiving services continues to increase each year. Under RCW 43.216.580, a child is required to have *"received services within a month prior to the monthly count day."* This means providers are not able to bill the Department of Children, Youth, & Families for Special Education funding for the first month a child receives services.

The legislature should amend RCW 43.216.580 in order to address funding inequities for ESIT, increase capacity for providers to deliver timely services to families, and address unintended consequences of the current RCW language. Suggested amendment:

"(c) For the purposes of this subsection (2), a child is receiving early intervention services if the child has received services in the same month as the monthly count day, which is the last business day of the month."

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- 3. Address the housing crisis faced by individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) by implementing the recommendations in the [State Developmental Disabilities Administration's October 1, 2022, Housing Fund Priority Study report](#) and establishing permanent revenue sources for affordable housing.**

According to [ECONorthwest's Housing Needs for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Washington State report](#) submitted to the Legislature in December 2022, approximately 37,000 adults with I/DD are facing housing insecurity. Affordable housing, with support services, is needed immediately for people with I/DD living in our communities and those who need community living options to leave institutions or hospital settings. Accessibility is key for individuals with I/DD, and a wide range of housing options are needed. Part of accessible housing is the support provided by the community residential services workforce. Addressing these essential needs is critical to successful community living for people with I/DD.

The Housing Trust Fund is the primary source of financial equity for developing and preserving affordable housing across Washington State. Implementing the Housing Fund Priority Study report's recommendations and establishing permanent revenue sources for state and local housing options will increase the supply of accessible and affordable housing for individuals with I/DD and their families.

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