



Budget:

What.Can.You.Do.Now?

Summary:

We understand that this legislative session presents significant challenges, and you are facing tough decisions. We strongly urge you to protect the essential services that individuals with developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families depend on to live, work, and fully participate in their communities. These services are not just support—they are a lifeline. When these services are reduced or eliminated, it often leads to costly crises that could have been avoided. The state has both a moral and legal obligation to protect and provide for these individuals.

Why it matters

People with I/DD and their families require continuous support across their lifespan. This includes assistance with day-to-day activities such as eating, dressing, bathing, accessing medical care, and participating in the community. Whether individuals are in the family home or in residential settings, these vital services are essential to ensuring their well-being.

These services function as a critical safety net, protecting the health and stability of individuals with I/DD and their families. Without this safety net, families are forced to make impossible choices, such as quitting their jobs to care for loved ones, which can result in individuals being placed in emergency rooms, jails, homelessness, or inappropriate settings. This is a crisis that can be prevented by maintaining robust community supports. We must protect this safety net for those who rely on it.

What you can do now

- **Protect community-based supports** and funding across the lifespan: preserve Early Supports for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT), Medicaid waiver eligibility, and access to medically necessary services and therapies.
- **Preserve Provider rates** to retain a qualified, dedicated workforce that is equipped to provide high-quality, consistent care and support to individuals with I/DD. A stable workforce ensures that people with I/DD receive the care they deserve.

Things we are concerned about

- The proposal restricts access to **medically necessary occupational, physical, and speech therapies** for Medicaid clients. These therapies are essential to:
 - Maintain strength, mobility, and independence
 - Improve communication and reduce crisis behaviors
 - Ensure safe swallowing and prevent aspiration pneumonia
 - Build daily living skills that support employment and community participation. Cutting therapies will not reduce need — it will increase emergency, hospital, and long-term care costs.
- The aggressive clawbacks of **underspent funds in Employment and Day services** risks forcing program contractions within Developmental Disabilities Community Services (DDCS), resulting in:
 - Shutting the front door to DDCS waiver services- making longer waits for services
 - High school graduates with I/DD losing timely access to employment and day supports

Protect the safety net that enables people with I/DD to thrive. Uphold funding for community supports, medically necessary services, and provider rates now — it saves lives, preserves dignity, and reduces long-term costs.