



Achieve with us.

*For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities*

2018 Legislative Priorities: Pay Fair for Care Campaign

October 2017

Issue: Continue rate increases funded from non-recurring funds

The Ask: \$41.0 million (\$17.5 million General Revenue Funds)

The 2016 Legislature provided funding from non-recurring funds to allow workers providing direct care to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to receive minimum wage. The Legislature has also recognized that existing rates do not allow living, or competitive wages, in a number of critical services as documented by cost models developed jointly by the Arc of Florida, Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities and the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. An independent actuarial analysis conducted for the Legislature and Agency for Persons with Disabilities for a limited number of services also indicated that rates are inadequate given the labor market and other economic realities. It is important that this funding be continued on a permanent basis to ensure that the affected services will continue to be available. Otherwise, a number of individuals who lose access to cost-effective supports and services provided in community-based settings will likely be forced into more restrictive settings at increased expense to taxpayers.

Issue: 3% increase to select services rates to continue recent progress toward addressing competitive wage for direct care workers

The Ask: \$22.6 million (\$8.7 million in General Revenue Funds)

The Arc of Florida and the people we serve are grateful for the rate adjustments previously approved by the Legislature. However, these adjustments did not fully fund what our conservative, objective cost models demonstrated to be the actual costs incurred by efficiently operated business entities given the current demands of the labor market in Florida plus other overhead costs. Examples include insurance and increases in regulatory requirements from the state of Florida. Hurricane Irma further demonstrated the importance of our direct care staff in times of disaster as they were critical in ensuring the safety and comfort of our clients before and after the storm. We are therefore asking to continue the recent progress made toward addressing this issue by adding an additional 3% rate adjustment for the following services: Residential Habilitation, Adult Day Training and Personal Supports.

Issue: Enact restrictions on use seclusion/restraint in the Public School System

The Ask: Support HB 63 and SB 260

The current lack of guidelines for use of physical restraints and seclusion in the public schools creates the potential for abusive behavior that create serious issues related to the basic human and due process rights of children and their parents. Interestingly, children are subjected to the use of restraints and seclusion that would be strictly prohibited in facilities serving adults and would be considered abusive in these settings. Children deserve the same protections as adults. Therefore, the Arc of Florida supports House Bill 63 and Senate Bill 260 that outlines requirements for the use of seclusion, restraint and exclusionary and non-exclusionary time out activities in public schools. It also requires continuing education and in-service training relating to the use of these techniques.

For further information or questions regarding this request, please contact: Deborah Linton, CEO at The Arc of Florida