

Policy Profile

-Submitted by Hanni Raley, Assistant Executive Director-

With less than a month left in the 71st Regular Session of the Colorado General Assembly, the pace is hurried and the calendar is full of legislative bills ready for discussion and potential passage. This session, while marred by internal challenges as the Legislative body has grappled with issues of sexual harassment among its ranks, has managed to be productive via the passage of bills that help all Coloradans! People with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families have specifically benefited from some of the discussions. We've compiled a list of successful legislation, signed by the Governor, that we think you might be interested in.

HB18-1040: Inmate Treatment Incentive Plans

House Sponsor: A. Benavidez

Senate Sponsor: R. Fields

The bill requires the Department of Corrections to institute an incentive plan to contract more mental health professionals in difficult-to-serve geographical locations if the number of people needing those services is greater than 20% of the population. This bill effectively allows increased access to mental health services for inmates in difficult-to-serve locations.

HB18-1050: Competency to Proceed Juvenile Justice System

House Sponsor: J. Singer

Senate Sponsor: R. Fields

The bill establishes a juvenile-specific definition of 'competent to proceed' and 'incompetent to proceed' for those involved in the juvenile justice system, as well as specific definitions for 'developmental disability', 'mental capacity', and 'mental disability'. The bill clarifies the procedures for establishing incompetency, as well as for establishing the restoration of competency.

HB18-1196: Applications for Aid To The Needy Disabled Program

House Sponsors: T. Exum Sr.

Senate Sponsors: N. Todd and B. Martinez Humenik

Under current law, in order to receive assistance under the aid to the needy disabled program, an applicant must be examined by a physician, physician assistant, advanced practice nurse, or registered nurse. The bill adds to the list of persons authorized to perform an examination a licensed or certified psychologist, a licensed social worker, a licensed professional counselor, or any other qualified personnel the department of human services deems appropriate. Any person who performs an examination is

required to certify the diagnosis, prognosis, and other relevant medical or mental factors relating to the applicant's disability.

SB18-096: Modernize "Mental Retardation" Terminology

House Sponsor: D. Thurlow

Senate Sponsor: B. Martinez Humenik

The bill modernizes and makes non-substantive changes to provisions of the statute that use terms like "mental retardation" or "mentally retarded" by replacing the terms with more appropriate "intellectual and developmental disability" language.

Look for our 2018 legislative wrap up in July where we'll fill you in on ALL of the legislation that passed this session that could impact you and your family. As always, if you have any questions about any of these bills or their impact, please contact Hanni Raley at hraley@thearcofaurora.org.