

# 2024-25 NYS Budget Priorities

## INVEST IN NEW YORKERS WITH I/DD

Non-profit providers that support 85% of New Yorker's with I/DD have not received the investment from the State to address the decade-long workforce crisis that impacts the quality and availability of services to people with I/DD.



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



**Non-profit provider agencies are dealing with a crippling 30% annual workforce turnover rate**



**Non-profit provider agency staff vacancies remain in excess of 17% in 2023**

### **NYDA is urging Governor Hochul to include the following in the SFY25 Executive Budget:**

- Investment in Direct Support Professional Wages in the form of a Direct Support Wage Enhancement (DSWE)
- A 3.2% COLA for non-profit I/DD service providers to meet rising costs as a result of inflation and keep our system from slipping further.

## WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

### **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 daily 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 support. 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.

### **INVESTING IN DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS (\$4127/A5268)**

**NYDA is recommending the establishment of a new Direct Support Wage Enhancement (DSWE) as part of the SFY 2025 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 low-paid staff who have direct care/support responsibilities for individuals with I/DD.

The proposed \$4,000 increase equates to approximately \$2.00/hour for a full-time employee. This investment in the critical workforce is essential to recruiting and retaining staff to work for non-profit provider agencies that support people with I/DD. Over the past two years, OPWDD has provided significant increases to their own DSPs workforce who provide the same supports and services to the same population. Current OPWDD employed DSPs make up to \$10/per hour more for the same job.

Therefore, the inclusion of the DSWE is critical to providing 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 FY25 EXECUTIVE BUDGET**

Average DSP Starting Wage at Non-Profit Provider Agency	\$16.13
Region 1 (NYC METRO)	\$16.45
Region 2 (Hudson Valley)	\$15.78
Region 3 (Capital District)	\$16.13
Region 4 (Western, Central and North Country)	\$16.15

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

## INVEST IN DISABILITY SERVICE PROVIDERS

### COLA - 3.2% FOR SFY 2025

Due to the inflationary growth that has occurred over the past year, not-for-profit provide agencies' operating costs have subsequently increased accordingly necessitating a 3.2% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) in the upcoming Executive Budget.

This Medicaid rate increase is essential for non-profit provider agencies to maintain operations.

Cost increases related to mandated fringe benefits, repairs and maintenance, utilities, food, supplies, transportation, and insurance over the past year has resulted in 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.**

**INCLUDE 3.2% COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA) TO PROVIDER AGENCY RATES IN FY25 EXECUTIVE BUDGET**

High levels of staff turnover costing the state's non-profit providers \$100.5M annually. This cost directly hampers funding essential supports and services for New Yorkers with disabilities. **The 2023 NYDA survey results reflect staffing data as of July 2023.**

It is important to note that the OPWDD Strategic plan highlights the need to "improve the recruitment, retention and quality of the Direct Support workforce, and recognizes that "state and voluntary providers continue to face significant staff shortages requiring many to close programs or reduce operations." The plan cites data from the NCI Staff Stability Survey, which showed a 35.6% turnover rate in the voluntary DSP workforce, a vacancy rate of 17.2% for fulltime positions, and a vacancy rate of 21.3% for part-time positions.

Region	Average Statewide Staff Vacancy Rate	Average Statewide Annual Turnover Rate
Region 1 (NYC METRO)	17.77%	26.65%
Region 2 (Hudson Valley)	18.42%	21.16%
Region 3 (Capital District)	19.19%	34.73%
Region 4 (Western, Central & North Country)	14.93%	38.08%
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>17.22%</b>	<b>31.09%</b>