



Alliance for the Betterment of
Citizens with Disabilities

Empowering People: Providers Shaping Policies

Increase for Direct Care Workers and Supervisors Serving Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in the Community

Please Support the Governor's Proposed FY'23 Budget Increase of \$31.3 Million for Director Support Professionals and \$10.4 Million for Front Line Supervisors and Managers for a Total of \$41.7 Million in State Dollars

For years we have borne witness to the nationwide acute shortages in direct care workers. Direct Support Professionals (DSP) work directly with I/DD to enable them to lead a self-directed life and are accurately referred to as the "backbone of the support system." It is therefore imperative that the DSP wage truly reflect the responsibilities they hold. But there were negative consequences to this narrow strategy not the least of which was the response of supervisors and managers, the "glue of the support system," who were demoting themselves to be DSPs due to the shrinking pay differential and opportunity to collect overtime. It is for these reasons we were very grateful to the New Jersey Legislature for their commitment in FY'22 to new funding to ensure DSPs were paid above the state's increasing minimum wage and to raise wages of managers and other senior members of the DD frontline workforce.

This year we faced two concurrent crises: Covid and a critical labor shortage. Despite the strain our managers, supervisors, and DSPs faced, for two years they have remained vigilant, maintaining the relatively low incidences of Covid among the DD population. Covid is dangerous, but so are the situations our industry faces because of a strained and overburdened workforce who care for people who depend on them. We respectfully request the New Jersey Legislatures continued support for DSP/Supervisor increases proposed by the Governor in his FY'23 Budget as the minimum wage is raised in January of the fiscal year.

March 9, 2022