

Membership Value Statement: 2015

Florida ARF is a statewide, professional association that provides advocacy, information, and networking services for community agencies serving individuals with disabilities. We are a leader in the initiation of public policy change to promote and protect the interests of individuals with disabilities. Within the last year, Florida ARF accomplished the following:

- Advocated for \$40 million in additional funding for the HCBS waiver waitlist to serve approximately 1,200 individuals that was funded.
- Successfully advocated for a 2.5% rate increase for Personal Supports services.
- Protected language in the Back-of-the-Bill to cover cost of the U.S. Department of Labor Home Care rule changes that eliminate previous wage exemptions for in home staff.
- Prevailed in supporting continuation of VR program which was under threat during the 2015 Legislative Session.
- Coordinated a comprehensive grassroots advocacy campaign featuring local community agency involvement including provider testimony at legislative committee meetings, legislative visits at community agency sites, and legislative visits to the Capitol. Also, provided professional lobbying support for member approved issues.
- Disseminated timely information including: *Issues Forum Breaking News* and *Issues Forum Grants* monthly, *Industry News* publications, *Capitol Breaking News*, and email alerts.
- Provided members with monthly updates on available grant and funding opportunities.
- Maintained an online library for members including work products, white papers, grassroots materials, and information to assist member agencies with resolution of policy questions.
- Represented Florida ARF member interests on multiple state committees and workgroups such as DD Abuse and Neglect, DD Waitlist, the Governor's *Employment First* Initiative, and APD model projects work groups.
- Provided testimony and represented Florida ARF member interests at multiple hearings on topics such as: iBudget administrative rules, provider rate rules, ICF/IID Handbook, ICF/IID Rate Reimbursement Plan, and iBudget Waiver Handbook.
- Provided provider input into new federal rules on HCBS waivers, Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act, and DOL home care rules.
- Held training sessions across the state on the Employment Outcomes Professional module to assist members and employment providers in achieving more competitive employment outcomes for individuals served.
- Provided networking opportunities for members featuring opportunities to interact one-on-one with APD and VR program directors as requested.
- Successfully achieved multiple amendments to state agency policies based on member input particularly in the iBudget Handbook that is to be promulgated in late 2015, particularly regarding staff background requirements.
- Realized sales growth in the RESPECT of Florida program.
- Served as information and referral resource for interested parties seeking providers and services in specific geographic areas.