



Florida ARF 2019 Legislative Platform

Florida ARF represents more than 100 community agencies in the State of Florida, many of which were founded more than 50 years ago by families to provide critical care to their loved ones. These agencies and others provide services to thousands of individuals with disabilities and collectively provide jobs for more than 20,000 Floridians.

Platform Issues

- ***Addressing the Direct Care Workforce Hiring Crisis:*** Florida ARF requests a rate increase for three iBudget waiver services (Residential Habilitation, Adult Day Training (ADT), and Personal Supports) so that provider agencies can pay competitive wages to their direct care staff. This investment in the ID service system will only require \$15.8 million in General Revenue funds and will draw down an additional \$23.7 million in federal Medicaid match dollars to increase average direct care wages and help stabilize a service system that is grossly underfunded.
- ***Protecting ICF/IID Services:*** Funding for the Community ICF/IID program must be funded at \$266,002,163, and legislative proviso language is needed that does not result in automatic rate cuts for this cost reimbursement program when funding levels are inadequate.
- ***Maintaining Employment & Early Intervention Services:*** Funding for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Early Steps (Part C) programs must not drop below the current levels.

Watch and Act Issues

- ***Statutory Amendments:*** Amendments to the DD Act, Chapter 393, F.S., must meet the needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and should include removal of Supported Employment and Supported Living service limitations within the statute.
- ***Public Policy Changes:*** Any public policy changes must ensure that individuals with disabilities have the right to make informed choices regarding employment including the opportunity to choose their work settings.
- ***Employment Options:*** State policy that promotes gainful employment through state purchasing of products and services offered by RESPECT of Florida must be supported.
- ***VR Services:*** Statutory language mandating competitive, unrestricted bidding for VR services will be opposed.

Track and Report Issues

Legislative activity will be monitored and all pending legislation that affects Florida ARF members and the individuals they serve will be addressed. Bills that require more than "Tracking and Reporting" will be moved to the "Watch and Act" status as appropriate.