



Florida ARF 2022 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

- **Address the Direct Care Workforce Hiring Crisis:** A rate increase is needed for all iBudget waiver services, but we are specifically requesting increases for Res Hab, ADT, Personal Supports and Respite. This is needed to allow provider agencies to stay in compliance with the constitutionally mandated minimum wage and to increase wages to a point where they are able to fill open positions. We are asking for an increase which should allow providers to reach a minimum wage of \$14 per hour. This investment in the ID service system will cost \$93 million in General Revenue funds and will draw down an additional \$147.5 million in federal Medicaid match.
- **Protecting ICF/IID Services:** Increased funding is needed for the community ICF program to ensure staffing requirements and health and safety are met. In order to ensure appropriate funding for the program, amendments to the current proviso language are sought to eliminate funding cuts when projected costs exceed appropriation levels or by ensuring better data is used to estimate the need during the Social Services Estimating Conference. Additionally, seek funds in the GAA back of the bill to help fund the cut providers faced in 2021.

Watch and Act Issues

- **Enhanced HCBS FMAP Funding:** Seek Legislative Budget Commission (LBC) approval for the CMS approved state plan to ensure funding is dispersed before the 2022 Session. Work with AHCA and APD on how the funding will be regulated to meet provider needs as well as compliance with CMS regulations.
- **Maintaining Employment & Intervention Services:** Funding for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Early Steps (Part C) programs must not drop below the current levels.
- **Promoting Quality Residential Care:** Legislative authorization is needed to update Room and Board payments for individuals in residential care to cover inflationary increases. Approval of this request should have a minimal fiscal impact for the state (less than one million dollars).
- **Statutory Amendments:** Amendments to Chapter 393, F.S., must meet the needs of individuals with intellectual disabilities and should include removal of Supported Living service limitations.
- **Public Policy Changes:** 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:** The Association will oppose legislation mandating competitive, unrestricted bidding for services.

Track and Report Issues

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