

## APD iBudget Rate Increase Needed to Serve Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

- **We provide vital care to adults who cannot care for themselves.** Without the service of iBudget waiver providers, thousands of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who have no means of caring for themselves would be left with no help.
- **In the past year alone, over 100 homes have closed.** Countless others have shed beds and these closures will continue if changes are not made.
- **These closures are occurring because we are not reimbursed enough by Medicaid to adequately pay employees who work in very difficult jobs.** They have the option to work in less stressful jobs that pay nearly as much or more and the labor market is reflecting this reality. Providers have virtually no mechanism to compete since we are 100% Medicaid funded.
- **Providers simply cannot pay competitive wages.** Staffing costs represent about 70% of provider agency operating expenses. These antiquated and inadequate rates prevent providers from paying adequate wages. The average direct care wage paid is \$11.40, but even at that rate 23% of positions remain unfilled and 75% of providers have had to reduce or discontinue services.
- **An investment of \$93 million in general revenue funds will draw down additional federal Medicaid match.** The federal match will add \$147.5 million to the Florida iBudget waiver service system.
- **The Medicaid Waiver program managed by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (iBudget) has operated under an inadequate rate system.** These rates have undergone multiple cuts over the years, on average, they are lower than the July 2003 rates - while inflationary costs have increased nearly 48%.
- **With minimum wage rising, this continues to create upward wage pressure and a labor shortage.** This problem will only get worse if not remedied.

### Remedy

- **To address this crisis, Florida ARF requests a rate increase for four iBudget waiver services** (Residential Habilitation, Adult Day Training, Personal Supports/Companion, and Respite) to allow provider agencies to reach a minimum wage of \$14 per hour to hire and retain quality direct care staff.