

Membership Value Statement: 2020

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:

- Successfully advocated for iBudget rate increases: \$5.4 million increase for Res Hab, \$16.1 million increase for Adult Day Training, \$36.8 million for Personal Supports/Companion, and \$1.8 million for Respite rates for Direct Care Wages. During the Governor's veto process, the increases were eliminated aside from Respite.
- Successfully advocated for a \$215.6 million in funding to eliminate the deficit in the Agency for Persons with Disabilities program.
- Prevailed in supporting continuation and expansion of the Adults with Disabilities (AWD) Program in the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation at approximately \$7.7 million.
- Prevailed in securing a new Level of Care (Level 3) to serve individuals with behavioral challenges in Community ICF/IIDs.
- Coordinated a comprehensive grassroots advocacy campaign featuring testimony at legislative committee meetings, legislative visits at community agency sites, legislative visits to the Capitol, and provided professional lobbying support for member approved issues.
- Operated the first competency-based statewide apprenticeship for Direct Support Professionals to respond to a provider hiring crisis for direct care staff as well as securing one-time grant funding.
- With changes in employment laws due to COVID-19, the Association provided guidance from Employment Law experts on the Families 1st Coronavirus Act and FMLA Expansion Act.
- Provided information and advocated for issues impacting provider agencies due to COVID-19.
- Provided APD and AHCA with program flexibility options to keep provider agencies whole while also continuing service offerings during COVID-19.
- 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 members with resolution of policy questions.
- Represented member interests on multiple state committees and workgroups such as the Governor's *Employment First* Initiative, Workforce Collaborative Training Initiative, and other workgroups.
- Provided testimony and represented member interests at multiple workshops, hearings, and committee meetings on various issues and topics impacting the industry to positively influence public policy changes.
- Provided networking opportunities for members featuring opportunities to interact one-on-one with APD, AHCA, and VR program management.
- Served as information and referral resource for interested parties seeking providers and services in specific geographic areas.
- Provided opportunities for members to network and share best-practice experiences.
- Provided trouble-shooting assistance to assist members in navigating state policy compliance.