



## Membership Value Statement: 2021

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 the use of the 10% enhanced FMAP for HCBS waiver services to provide temporary relief to iBudget waiver providers.
- Advocated for iBudget rate increases for Residential Habilitation (Res Hab), Adult Day Training (ADT), Personal Supports/Companion, and Respite rates for Direct Care wages.
- Prevailed in supporting continuation of the Adults with Disabilities (AWD) Program in the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation at approximately \$7.2 million.
- Prevailed in securing funding for a new Level of Care (Level 3) to serve individuals with behavioral challenges in Community ICF/IIDs.
- Secured increased community ICF/IID funding to get the program to \$280 million to support the current 2,071 community placements.
- Coordinated a comprehensive grassroots advocacy campaign and provided professional lobbying support for member approved issues.
- Continued operation of the first competency-based statewide apprenticeship for Direct Support Professionals to respond to a provider hiring crisis for direct care staff.
- With changes in employment laws due to COVID-19, the Association provided guidance from Employment Law experts on the various changes impacting providers.
- Provided information and advocated for issues impacting provider agencies due to COVID-19.
- Continued to provide APD and AHCA with program flexibility options to keep provider agencies whole while also continuing service offerings during COVID-19.
- Advocated for COVID vaccine availability for member agencies to provide to the individuals they serve and their staff to ensure the health and safety of the individuals served.
- Disseminated timely information including: *Issues Forum Breaking News* and *Issues Forum Grants* monthly, *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 during multiple workshops and hearings on various issues and topics impacting the industry to positively influence public policy changes.
- Provided networking opportunities for members featuring opportunities to interact 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.