



*For people with intellectual and  
developmental disabilities*

## **2020 Policy Agenda**

**Funding and policy changes to strengthen the CO Medicaid State Plan, state programs, and HCBS Medicaid waivers for people with disabilities to include support for:**

- Changes in Colorado statute, where needed, to comply with the requirements established in federal law for Home and Community Based Services (HCBS);
- Therapeutic, out-of-home placement, and intensive treatment options for children with I/DD and dual diagnosis/secondary diagnosis of serious health, mental health, and behavioral conditions;
- Full implementation of Colorado's Olmstead Plan including implementation of strategies for integrated competitive employment;
- Phase out and permanently end the use of sub-minimum wage employment in Colorado and provide necessary supports to eliminate the need for sub-minimum wage employment through the advancement of opportunities for meaningful employment at or above the Colorado minimum wage;
- Fair and equal access to personal care services for all people currently receiving long term services and supports. Access should be at a level that meets individual needs and not be limited based on specific waiver participation;
- Increased funding for respite and other services needed to maintain family stability;
- Expansion of Cross-System Behavioral Health Crises Pilots;
- Accelerated Medicaid waiver simplification with the purpose of creating single, easily accessible HCBS waivers for 1) all eligible children and 2) all eligible adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Each waiver should further access to quality services and supports when and where needed throughout their lifetimes;
- Increased Supported Living Services and equitable access to services across all LTSS with rate increases;
- Consumer and participant directed service delivery options in all HCBS/LTSS waivers.

**Colorado students with disabilities have a legal right to free, appropriate and inclusive educational opportunities in all settings within the least restrictive environment. Colorado must provide for:**

- Adequate funding, professional development, and staffing resources for public schools for inclusive, student-centered programs for all students;
- Alternatives to harmful disciplinary practices such as suspension and expulsion for young students and requirements that schools work to de-escalate minor school infractions rather than call for police department assistance.
- Expansion of Inclusive Higher Education programs across Colorado; and encourage future and current programs to attract and support students with disabilities and I/DD,
- Elimination of corporal punishment in public schools that receive federal funding;
- Special education services provided in the least restrictive and most inclusive setting by qualified teachers, staff and therapists for all eligible students including an appropriate continuum of services, para-professional support, and related supports including transportation;
- Adequate and quality educational supports to ensure appropriate and accountable progress;
- Adequate medical, nursing, and behavioral support services (with appropriate staffing) for students with complex needs;
- Meaningful transition services and a strong pipeline of employers for students with disabilities that are person-centered and that prepare them for continuing education resulting in competitive integrated employment, and successful community living;
- Achieve equal access to appropriate supports and services in publicly funded education services for student age birth through 21.

### **Protection of civil rights for people with disabilities including:**

- Promoting alternatives (e.g., health-care proxies, advance directives, supported decision-making, powers of attorney, notarized statements, representation agreements, etc.) in favor of permanent, restrictive protective arrangements; guardianship policies should respect the rights of people with disabilities to manage their own affairs with informal assistance and guidance from family, friends, and others. If guardianship is essential, it should be limited to the fewest restrictions necessary for the shortest amount of time and tailored to the individual's specific capacities and needs, always with a presumption in favor of limited rather than full guardianship;
- Promote development of policies, procedures, and funding to ensure that the preferences, needs, and complaints expressed by people with IDD are respected, honored, and enforced effectively to enhance quality of life;
- Affordable, safe, accessible, integrated, and community-based housing options that promote independence, freedom, authority, and support to exercise control over their housing, reflect personal preferences and styles, and are free from housing discrimination;
- School discipline policies that provide positive behavioral supports for students with disabilities that avoid trauma, seclusion, restraint, and involvement of law enforcement;
- Appropriate accommodations, modifications, and preventative measures designed to support individuals with disabilities in the criminal justice system.