

March 2023 marks the start of the 36th month since the announcement of the state of emergency. At that time, thousands of persons with disabilities lost access to day programs or related services. Many of those have not been able to return to day services. Over 3,000 have turned 22 years of age, with the FY'24 transition age class of graduates being the highest in history. Individuals with complex medical or behavioral conditions or otherwise requiring 1:1 assistance are the largest underserved or unserved group. These are individuals who need it the most, and the isolation, along with caregiver stress, is profound.

1. We ask that the legislature *increase the Chapter 257 reserve to ensure that staff compensation is consistent with the 75th percentile of similar occupations listed in the Mass. Bureau of Labor Statistics.*
2. Maintain \$200 Million investment in MassHealth for day programs (Day Habilitation/Day Health)
3. Increase DDS Employment/Day by \$5.6 Mil of A rate funding to serve 450 adults who need 1:1 services and language.
4. Maintain Gov. Healey's budget request.
5. Cosponsor and prioritize S.83 & H.171 An Act relative to rates and impacting workers providing supports and services at DDS and MassHealth Day Hab (Finegold, Garballey & Cataldo)
6. Continue & implement the FY'23 language, "Bridge to the Future" in 5920-2025

Line Item	Description	FY'23 Conference Budget	FY'24 H1 Proposal	House-Senate Request	Comment
DDS 5911-2000	Transportation	33,869,314	33,535,611	33,535,611	See below
DDS 5920-2000	Community Residential	1,442,384,037	1,715,777,146	1,715,777,146	Maintain
DDS 5920-2025	Community Day/Work	278,562,283	240,080,258	245,680,258	\$5.6 Mil Request
DDS 5920-3000	Respite/Fam Support	90,628,537	98,053,790	98,053,790	Maintain
DDS 5920-2003	Technology for Individuals	1,750,000	2,750,000	2,750,000	Maintain
DDS 5920-3010	Autism Waiver Children	13,933,900	10,940,691	10,940,691	See below
DDS 5920-3020	Autism Omnibus	42,300,000	52,540,994	52,540,994	See below
DDS 5920-3025	Aging w/DD	100,000	100,000	100,000	Maintain
DDS 5920-5000	Turning 22	84,099,551	105,653,241	105,653,241	Maintain
5948 & 7061-0012	DESE/DDS In Home	10,500,000	10,500,000	10,500,000	Need Language
DDS 5920-2010	State Operated Homes	255,532,588	317,747,049	317,747,049	
DDS 5911-1003	Admin-Service Coord	88,212,555	91,022,293	91,022,293	
DDS 5930-1000	State Schools	109,102,137	123,632,585	123,632,585	
4000-0601*	Mass Health- Keep Day Invest.	3.8 Billion	4.87 Billion	4.87 Billion	Maintain
1599-6903	Ch 257 Human Services Reserve	230,000,000	173,000,000	173,000,000	See below

## **Day Services**

1. An estimated 3,000 plus persons need day or employment services at DDS and MassHealth Day Habilitation (Day Hab). Day Hab will benefit from part of a \$200 Million investment at MassHealth (either in 4000-0601 or 4000-0700, both lines impact persons with disabilities.) Persons in Day Hab require allied health services and often personal daily assistance such as eating, mobility, behavior supports and hygiene.
2. DDS 5920-2025 also addresses individual day and employment needs. DDS was unable to allocate additional funds from the legislature nor provided accommodations to providers so they could serve persons needing 1:1 assistance. We request that the \$5.6 Mil additional include language, "provided that 5.6 million dollars at A rate funding shall be expended for persons who have not returned to day service and require 1:1 support."
3. We ask that the DDS budget as presented by Gov. Healey be otherwise maintained. We do believe more funding will be needed through a supplemental budget for a number of line items, as rates establish a competitive wage for staff. The following accounts which have been underspent include: Transportation (Note \$4.2 cost to serve 700 more persons), Employment/day, Autism kids, and Autism omnibus.
4. Ensure that Governor's proposed DESE-DDS funding is noted in the 7061-0012 line item as in previous years (transfer to 5948-0012).
5. In FY'23, the legislature authorized additional funding with transferability for DDS, and a bridge to the future language including: "re-design the service system to respond to the new needs... in-home or in-community services... new, more fluid service model based on the real-time, individual needs" (5920- 2025). The funding was not made public, and the language not fully implemented. Please continue the language and transfer capability.

**Chapter 257 Reserve:** Please get persons back to day programs and other services. Please increase the Chapter 257 reserve to ensure that staff compensation is consistent with the 75th percentile of similar occupations listed in the Mass. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## **Other Priority Workforce Bills**

S. 812 & H.1285 An Act establishing a fund to further educational opportunities for caregivers to adults with disabilities. *Sen. Mike Barrett & Rep. Dave Rogers.* Creates a pilot to provide free community college to direct support staff with two years of service.

S. 775 & H.1232 An Act relative to family members serving as caregivers. *Rep. James O'Day & Sen. Joan Lovely.* This bill allows guardians, caregivers, and others with legal standing to be paid for providing AFC and PCA services.