

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 provide 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 several line items. 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, and provided further include DDS eligible individuals who are or were participating in MassHealth day services." (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.