



## The Arc of Massachusetts FY26 Budget: House Amendment Priorities

The Arc of Massachusetts is the state's leading advocacy organization for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families – about 250,000 Massachusetts residents.

We appreciate the House Ways & Means Committee budget proposal and look forward to working with our partners in the legislature through the remainder of the budget process. **Especially as the marginalized disability community faces great uncertainty and impending cuts from the federal government, it is critical that we have the support of our state lawmakers.** We must prioritize taking care of the most vulnerable in our communities. The programs mentioned below also provide critical cost-savings to the Commonwealth—without them, ER visits and healthcare costs will increase, and the economic productivity of individuals and families will drop dramatically.

As the House debates the FY26 budget, The Arc is advocating for the following amendments:

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### **Amendment #953: DESE-DDS Residential Prevention Program (Rep. Gordon)**

We are deeply concerned about an \$8.5 million (81%) cut to this critical line item, which has been consistently funded at \$10.5 million for years. A residential placement prevention program, this line item allows for substantial supports in the home so that individuals can successfully remain in their community—particularly those with profound autism and complex needs. We believe that this cut may have been an oversight. This corrective amendment restores funding. Without restoration, this cut will have devastating impacts. This line item also provides significant cost savings to the commonwealth – as many individuals would be placed in residential care, which is far more costly.

### **Amendment #436: Operation House Call (Rep. Lawn)**

Operation House Call (OHC) is a program run by The Arc of Massachusetts that teaches students in medical, nursing, and other schools the essential skills and mindsets to improve access and reduce disparities in health care of persons with autism and IDD. This unique program teaches students from the perspective of the individual with the disability and their family members. The legislature passed the OHC bill into law in 2023 and has consistently included an earmark for OHC. This \$175,000 amendment would allow the program to continue to grow. The program currently reaches 1,200 medical and nursing students in MA.

## **Amendment #885: Turning 22 (Rep. Garballey)**

Individuals with IDD, including autism, often stay in the school system until they turn 22, at which time they transition to adult services. At this transition, they often face a “cliff” where they lose access to critical services, interventions, and opportunities. The budget proposal reduced this line item by 11%, despite the [reality](#) that 1,400 people are currently unable to access programming. This \$6.7 million amendment will partially restore this line item, making progress towards increasing access.

## **Amendment #1528: Mobile Crisis Teams (Rep. D. Rogers)**

This amendment would provide \$75,000 to ensure that mobile crisis teams have the tools to respond to individuals with autism and IDD who are in crisis. Currently, individuals in crisis and families are not comfortable accessing mobile crisis services because the professionals are not trained to respond appropriately to their needs. The newest CDC prevalence for autism is 1 in 31. Our professionals must be trained on how to best respond to this growing and complex population. This is particularly critical for individuals with profound autism.

## **Amendment #1261: Community Day & Employment Programs (Rep. Howard)**

This line item funds community-based adult services, which provide meaningful support to adults with autism and IDD. According to a recent [survey](#) conducted by ADDP, there are over 2,400 people waiting for access to these services—leaving them isolated and regressing. This amendment seeks to increase this line item by \$3.5 million, which would make a significant impact on these staggering wait lists numbers.

## **Amendment #1216: Ensuring Adequate Human Service Wages (Rep. Finn)**

We are aligned with other organizations, including ADDP and The Collaborative, to increase wages for direct support professionals. This amendment seeks to raise the Chapter 257 line item, which funds human service worker salaries, and align it with the 63rd percentile of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This would ensure a competitive rate, improving recruitment and retention efforts.

**For More Information, Please Contact**

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