



# DSP Investment and Compensation Reporting

Collaboration among the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), the Ohio Association of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities (OACB), and other developmental disabilities system partners during Governor Mike DeWine's first state budget resulted in the largest rate increase for providers of Homemaker Personal Care (HPC) services in the history of Ohio's developmental disabilities system. This state and local partnership demonstrates buy-in and collaboration to a critical need in our system – the compensation of direct support professionals (DSPs).

This issue is not new. DSPs, the Ohioans they support, their families, and the entirety of the DD system have long discussed the dire need to increase the compensation of DSPs. This collaboration is the result of listening to those discussions and this rate increase is a significant piece of the equation to support DSPs throughout Ohio.

## Implementation

With support from Governor DeWine and Ohio's General Assembly in the Fiscal Year 2020/2021 budget, DODD and county boards of DD agreed to share the cost of the increased Homemaker Personal Care (HPC) service rate. The first part of the increase went to effect on January 1, 2020, and the second part of the increase went into effect on January 1, 2021. County boards are paying for both the state's portion and the local portion of the second part of the rate increase. These rate increases are intended to provide additional compensation to DSPs providing HPC services in residential and community settings. Providers can implement the rate change in ways that increase the compensation of their DSPs, including increased wages, bonuses, benefits, and other ways that directly benefit the DSP.

## A New Compensation Reporting Tool

A team of stakeholders, representing a cross-section of organizations, is working together to develop a reporting tool to ensure this budget investment is improving the compensation of DSPs. These organizations include DODD, OACB, Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA), Ohio Health Care Association (OHCA), Ohio Waiver Network (OWN), and the Arc of Ohio.

The reporting tool will standardize the method by which DSP compensation data is collected from agency providers. The original intent was to introduce and test the tool in early 2020, however, it has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts of providers, county boards, and DODD have been devoted to responding to the pandemic and ensuring health and safety for Ohioans with developmental disabilities.

The stakeholder group was sensitive to introducing new requirements to providers while they responded to the demands of the state of emergency.

The efforts to achieve the historic budget investment were successful and so too will be the promise of provider reporting on DSP compensation.

### **Testing and Survey Cohort**

The team of stakeholders has identified 16 providers that will test the compensation reporting tool and provide initial feedback to the workgroup in early 2021. Testing feedback will inform the workgroup on the need for any additional changes and training development.

Providers will not be required to complete the NCI Staff Stability survey in 2021. Instead, a representative statewide sample of approximately 400 HPC agency providers will be selected to use the new reporting tool. The selected providers will receive training on the tool in early 2021. The tool will be available to the sampled providers beginning in March 2021 and responses will be due by July 31, 2021. The results of this survey will inform the workgroup on improving data collection and related reporting dashboards before statewide implementation in 2022.

### **Reporting and Transparency**

Once fully implemented in 2022, every agency provider of HPC services in Ohio will be required to report aggregate DSP compensation data to DODD and the reporting results will be publicly available on DODD's website. The data will be used to show how each provider improved compensation for DSPs and to trend DSP compensation in anticipation that the statewide average will improve over time with the increased rates.

DODD will issue updates and training for the reporting requirements and compensation tool as resources are developed and made available.

Ohio's support system for people with developmental disabilities and their families depends on the job that DSPs do. This new reporting tool will provide the transparency needed to show how the rate increase was applied to raise the overall compensation of DSPs in the DD services system that depends on them so heavily.