

Workforce Crisis Letter to People Served and Families: Localization Suggestions

Statewide developmental disability organizations representing providers, county boards, and other stakeholders have drafted a joint informational letter outlining the current state of Ohio's DD workforce crisis. This letter, which is primarily intended for people served by Ohio's DD system and their families, is attached.

All of the signatory organizations understand that the DD workforce crisis is affecting each community differently. For this reason, they are strongly recommending that members of their respective groups pair the letter (which cannot be modified) with a similar message from each local organization outlining how the current crisis is (or is not) affecting people with disabilities at the local level. The following are prompts that can help localize the information contained in the letter from statewide associations:

For Providers

- Are you currently experiencing a workforce shortage? How is this impacting the level of services you are offering? What strategies are you putting in place to reduce the potential negative impact in the lives of people you serve?
- Are you not currently experiencing a workforce shortage but predict that you may experience one soon? When do you think this may occur (i.e., six months, next year, in the distant future)? What are you doing to prepare for this possibility?
- Have you been experiencing a periodic and inconsistent workforce shortage? How did this impact the services you offered? How might it impact services if it occurs again in the future? What are you doing to overcome this instability?
- How can the people and families you serve volunteer to help reduce the strain on your staff while not sacrificing their needs, goals, or services (i.e., scheduling, living arrangements, transportation needs, etc.)?
- How might your agency be using technology, remote supports, and virtual services to help bridge gaps caused by the current workforce shortage, both in the short-term and the long-term?
- Who can the people and families you serve contact at your agency if they are concerned about their ability to receive services or to ask questions?

For County Boards

- Are providers in your community experiencing a workforce shortage? Describe strategies that local providers have been using to temporarily overcome these challenges.
- Are workforce shortages impacting the quantity or type of services that local providers can offer? If so, how is the county board working to connect people with alternate provider options?
- Is your community not experiencing a workforce shortage right now, but you predict that it might experience a shortage soon? How is the county board preparing for this possibility?
- How can the people and families you support voluntarily modify their supports to ensure their expectations are met, but without sacrificing their needs, goals, or services (i.e., scheduling, living arrangements, transportation needs, etc.)?
- How can people consider accepting the use of technology-based solutions, remote supports, and virtual services to help bridge gaps caused by the current workforce shortage, both in the short-term and the long-term?
- What should the people and families you support know about how the county board will support them if the provider shortage occurs or worsens locally?
- Who can people and families you support contact at your county board if they are concerned about their ability to receive services or to ask questions?

Questions about this effort should be directed to a county board or provider's respective trade association.