

Frequently-Asked Questions
“Direct Support Workforce Stabilization” Bill
2023 Legislative Session

Q: What does this bill seek to change?

A: This bill seeks to infuse new state and federal funding to the Medicaid-funded system that serves persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) by increasing the minimum floor that a direct support professional (caregiver) may be paid to 150% of the minimum wage. The bill also directs the New Mexico Department of Health to collect workforce data from employers of direct support professionals.

Q: Where did the idea for this bill come from?

A: A broad-based coalition of advocates, persons with disabilities, caregivers and employers proposed this bill as one solution for stabilizing the direct care workforce.

Q: Did the coalition supporting this bill work proactively with employers to craft this bill as the solution?

A: Yes, the coalition of supporters of this bill is working directly with providers now (9/30), and has also worked directly with the trade association, called Association of Developmental Disabilities Community Providers (ADDCP) since early in 2021.

The New Mexico Caregivers Coalition and ADDCP jointly signed a letter dated July 2, 2021 recommending that the New Mexico Department of Health collect workforce data from employers of direct support professionals.

In late August 2022, ADDCP as an organization walked away from negotiations on this bill, stating their members would not support any bill that recommended a wage floor for direct support professionals.

The coalition is currently working with, and will continue to do so, with any and all employers of the DD Waiver system on this bill.

Q: Do any other states set minimum wage floors requiring employers to pay lowest-pay direct care workers?

A: Yes, 24 other states have minimum wage floors for direct care workers. In most of those, state legislation (rather than administrative action) was used as the method for setting that wage floor.

Q: Why are only workers caring for persons with developmental disabilities included in this bill? Shouldn't wages of ALL direct care workers be increased?

A: Yes, wages of ALL direct care workers should be increased, especially those funded with state and federal monies. The coalition supporting this bill is also working with advocates and employers of the Medicaid-funded system that serves persons who are elderly (Personal Care Services or PCS) on a similar bill, one that will effectively accomplish the same for direct care workers of persons who are elderly.
