

KNOW THE FACTS

- **Home and community-based services are essential to keep individuals with disabilities healthy and in their own homes and communities.**
- **Rates are ONLY at 2008 levels while the actual cost to serve individuals has increased each of the last 13 years.**
- **Providers, individuals and families are not able to offer Direct Service Workers (DSWs) a competitive and living wage creating a work force crisis.**
- **The DSW turnover rate in Louisiana is over 34%.***
- **Louisiana's median hourly pay is only \$8.00 compared to a national median of \$12.00.***

What Can Legislators Do?

Increase home and community based service rates by two dollars (\$2.00) for services provided by direct service workers (DSW) and require DSW starting pay of \$8.65 per hour.

Approximately \$27.9 million in State General Funds is needed to increase this rate.

Why Do This?

The service rates paid to providers, individuals and families are not sufficient to pay staff a competitive living wage. The low pay and often challenging work has resulted in a **severe shortage of DSWs**. Individuals receiving services are paying the price.

Individuals struggle to find workers willing to provide the services they need due to these low rates. This creates an incredible burden on parents and family members to fulfill the needs of their loved ones without support and may increase the potential for someone having to live in an institution.

Increasing home and community based direct service rates and requiring a starting pay of at least \$8.65 per hour gives providers, individuals and families a greater chance of hiring and retaining a sufficient, skilled workforce capable of meeting the needs of individuals currently receiving home and community-based services. These services are **more cost-effective** than institutional settings and afford individuals with disabilities a **better quality of life** in their own homes to bond with family members resulting in more natural supports.

*National Core Indicators. (2019). National Core Indicators 2019 Staff Stability Survey Report. Retrieved from the National Core Indicators website: <https://www.nationalcoreindicators.org/staff-stability-survey/>