



Wednesday, January 3, 2024

Legislative Update for Clark County DDAB

Presented by PEACE NW (Darla Helt – Executive Director & Hattie Stigum – Program Manager)

As we gear up for the 2024 Legislative Session, PEACE NW has been having vital conversations with individuals, families, and community partners about the challenges and barriers they face living with, caring for, and supporting people with I/DD every day. Through these conversations, we have been able to identify several common themes which include the following:

- Individuals with I/DD have a right to be safe in their homes and communities, and to receive support wherever they choose to live.
- Provider shortage, a well-trained provider workforce is needed. Providers need to make a livable wage and receive relevant training to be able to meet individual support needs.
- Individuals with I/DD have a right to affordable, accessible, and sustainable housing in an individual's chosen setting. Individual level of needs, services, support and regular access to the community must be available no matter their residential setting. Services and funding should follow the person, wherever they choose to live, including their own family home.
- Support rate parity across DDA services (Community Inclusion, Community Engagement, Supported Employment, and Respite). to build a robust provider network and more equitably distribute DDA funding. As rates go up, individual hours go down for many on DDA waivers.
- End isolation and restraint of all forms within the K-12 school systems.
- End the funding cap on Special Education.
- Support the implementation of paying parents of minor children to provide personal care to their own child.

Known Bills/Legislation

- REET Bill – portion of Real Estate Excise Tax to go to housing for people with I/DD
- Isolation and Restraint
- OSPI request pay increase for Para Educators to a “livable wage” across the state
- Nothing about us without us – brought forth by self-advocates, this bill would establish a best practice for inclusion of people with disabilities to be on boards, commissions, workgroups, and anywhere else conversations are being held about them.
- End the funding delay between ESIT and the providers

Key Dates

- January 8, 2024, first day of Legislative Session
- January 10, 2024, Advocacy Days begin (you must register for each day individually)
- January 16, 2024, PEACE will be making our first trip to Olympia
- January 17, 2024, DDC Legislative Kick off 4pm – 6pm in Olympia, no virtual option

People Empowered and Communities Enhanced
Enhancing Communities for Individuals of All Abilities
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Advocacy Day Schedule (as of 01/03/2024)

- January 10 – What Are Our Rights and How Do We Advocate?
- January 17 – What Do People Need to Live in their Community?
- January 24 – How Do We Create Safe, Affordable Places to Live?
- January 31 – How Do We Support Families to Support their Loved Ones?
- February 7 – What is Needed to Ensure Every Student has an Inclusive Education?
- February 14 – Engaging in Our Communities – How Do We Make Our Communities Welcoming?
- February 21 – Why are so Many People in Crisis?
- February 28 – What Can You Do Now? (Our Final Push Day of Action)

Final Thoughts and Details

- PEACE NW plans to go to Olympia weekly and will be offering transportation from Clark County
- The Governor's Operating Budget was released in December (<https://arcwa.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/35/2023/12/2024-Operating-Gov-12-22-2023.pdf>)
- The Legislative Notebook is now up on The Arc of Washington State's website (<https://arcwa.org/advocacy/2024-legislative-session-notebook/>)
 - Data and Charts can be viewed here (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1POayErUjJ8pnxz4GRo5XKnrWshK6On0F/view?usp=drive_link)

To be notified of any legislative updates, schedules, and to join our legislative information email list, please email HattieS@peacenw.org or call 360-991-6755. We will also be sending out a registration link as well.