



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Acting Commissioner

February 8, 2017

To all DDS employees

Message from Acting Commissioner Jordan Scheff

Good evening. Today Governor Malloy presented his proposed budget for State Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019 (FY18/FY19). Connecticut is facing a severe fiscal crisis and in support of the [Governor's Proposed Budget](#), the Department of Developmental Services must continue to evolve in a way that allows us to support as many individuals as possible within our available appropriation.

Governor Malloy recognized this in his budget today by investing \$3.8 million in annualized funding to support a number of new initiatives for individuals with intellectual disability (ID) and their families. The document on page 2 of this memo describes the ID Partnership Initiative in more detail.

\$1.4 million was also committed to support wrap-around services and rental assistance for 70 individuals with intellectual disability or autism spectrum disorder residing in new supportive housing units anticipated to open in late FY19.

We are very relieved the Governor was able to close the anticipated budget gap without jeopardizing core services like case management or quality assurance. While there are certainly challenges to be faced going forward, including continued efficiencies in our public services, minor changes to our grant account, and a lack of funding for new high school graduates, DDS will continue to rely upon cooperation, collaboration and innovation within and among the many stakeholders to mitigate these challenges.

As you know, the Governor's submission of a proposed biennial budget is the first step toward a new budget. The process now moves to the legislature where there will be months of deliberation. On Thursday, February 23rd there is an opportunity for persons interested in offering an opinion about the Governor's proposed budget to testify before the Appropriations Committee.

After the Appropriations Committee hearings are completed, there will be follow-up meetings between state agencies and Appropriations' subcommittees to further understand the Governor's proposal. The Appropriations' subcommittees then make recommendations to the full Appropriations Committee, which will vote their own proposed budget out of the committee. Once a budget is voted out of the Appropriations Committee, negotiations will begin between the administration and relevant legislators. These discussions continue until a consensus is reached. Eventually, the budget is presented to the entire General Assembly for a vote. As the process occurs, I will do my best to keep you updated and informed in a variety of ways:

- 1) The [DDS Website](#) on the [Legislative Affairs](#) webpage has a link to [2017 DDS Legislative Updates](#) to help you track the progress of pertinent bills. The Legislative Affairs webpage also has a link to [DDS State Budget, Testimony, and Updates](#).
- 2) I will be communicating routinely with regional leadership throughout the process.
- 3) I hope to be able to visit the regions during this legislative session so I can meet with staff directly in a variety of places.

I hope you find this communication helpful.

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**Department of Developmental Services
FY 2018 – 2019
ID Partnership Initiative**

The new Intellectual Disability (ID) Partnership, a collaboration between Department of Developmental Services (DDS), Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), met regularly during the past year and made considerable progress on the effort to develop a methodology to convert payments to providers from DDS grants to Medicaid fee-for-service payments. This new, multi-pronged plan will move other efforts forward.

Additional \$3.8 million (annualized) funding plus \$1.0 million in available capital funding will:

- 1) **Address the Waiting List** - \$1.0 million will fund services that support targeted placements off the waiting list into existing vacancies in Community Companion Homes (similar to DCF foster care).
- 2) **Explore initiatives that create a broader continuum of services** - \$1.0 million will fund small pilots to explore best practices. Possible considerations:
 - a) **Expand and revise respite** – develop age-appropriate socialization and independent living opportunities that could be conveyed during individuals’ time in respite.
 - b) **Assertive Community Teams (ACT) team** – adjust ACT Team model for ID population to support families and private providers to prevent emergency placements or emergency department visits.
 - c) **Develop capacity on mobile crisis teams to better address behavioral emergencies for individuals with ID** to prevent emergency placements or emergency department visits.
 - d) **Wrap-around services** – develop wrap-around services models to support individuals with ID in supportive housing
- 3) **Support Rate equalization** - \$1.8 million will stabilize providers undergoing conversion of DDS grant-funded services to Medicaid fee-for-service payments. Allows rates for the lower-paid providers to be increased without having to reduce funding from the higher rate providers
- 4) **Bond funding** - \$1.0 million will provide funding to convert group homes to Supportive Housing units, Residential Care Homes or Community Companion Homes for the ID population

No Cost Components

- 1) **Risk tolerance** - a new charge will be added to the tasks of the ID Partnership to examine how fire codes, scope of practice, licensure, regulations and other policies impact consumer choice and independence and ultimately resource allocations
- 2) **Study of group home capacity** – DDS’ Commissioner will examine the system, including a review of individuals on the waiting and planning lists, to identify group home need and create additional capacity by removing low quality housing stock with the ultimate goal of redistributing funds that supported those homes to lower level housing supports (through attrition)
- 3) **Long-term family supports** - continued education of parents and guardians on ABLE and other special needs trusts options, as well as other resources available to families like the family support network, which provides opportunities to list serve with other families