

DDS Legislative Update – January 17, 2013

New Session Begins January 9, 2013 and Ends June 5, 2013

The 2013 legislative session began on January 9, 2013 and will end on June 5, 2013 at midnight. This session is called a “long” session which occurs in odd numbered years. The main task of the General Assembly in a long session is to craft and pass a new two-year budget for the state. **The budget that the Governor, the House and the Senate will be working on this session is for fiscal years (FY) 2014 and 2015.** The budget, when passed, will go into effect July 1, 2013 and be in effect through June 30, 2015.

Besides passing a new two-year budget, House and Senate members are allowed to submit proposed bills. These proposed bills can be on any topic of interest to the legislators. Most of the proposed bills do not become law but some of the concepts contained in proposed bills eventually make their way into other bills, which do become law. Bills also are “raised” by legislative committees based on input from various constituencies and executive branch agencies like DDS.

All bills must have a public hearing before they can be voted on and move forward. **Public hearings are where Connecticut citizens have their voices heard on the range of issues that the legislature will be working on during this session.** For the Department of Developmental Services and the individuals and families that receive supports and services from DDS, the public hearings of the Appropriations Committee, the Public Health Committee and the Human Services Committee are very important.

Some Important Dates

The Governor’s proposed budget for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, February 6, 2013. The Governor will also give his budget address before the General Assembly on February 6th.

The Appropriations Committee is scheduled to hold public hearings on the Governor’s proposed budget the weeks of February 11th and February 18th. Each section of the budget has a public hearing typically scheduled to begin at 5:30 p.m. in Room 2C of the Legislative Office Building. The Health and Hospitals section of the budget contains the Department of Developmental Services budget. When more information about the Health and Hospitals budget public hearing is available, we will let you know.

DDS Legislative Proposals for 2013

The Department is asking the Public Health Committee to raise two bills for us this year. **One bill will update the statutes of various councils that DDS oversees. The other bill will change the term “Intermediate Care Facility for the Mentally Retarded (ICF/MR)” to the new federal term “Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID).”** This bill also will remove most remaining references in Connecticut statutes to the term “mental retardation.”

If the Public Health Committee allows DDS to go forward with these bills, we will post them to the Legislative Affairs website at:

<http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2039&q=394202>

Links to the General Assembly and Legislative Committees

[Connecticut General Assembly](#)

[Appropriations Committee](#)

[Public Health Committee](#)

[Human Services Committee](#)

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