

Budget Conference Season is Here! from FDDC Capitol Update April 19, 2021

We are in Budget Conference Season and we have our recommendations for funding the iBudget Waiver. Please share your opinion via phone call or email with the following linked lawmakers. The Council will educate these [Senate](#) and [House](#) lawmakers who currently oversee all state health funding in Florida with the following recommendations:

- First, we would like to recommend that there be ***no cuts to services*** for people on the iBudget waiver. The pandemic has affected most of us and this is not the time to cut services that could send families into more stress and potentially having a need for more state assistance.
- Second, we are recommending ***that more than 300 people in crisis come off the waitlist***. In 2018 and 2019 over 900 individuals were in crisis or foster care categories each year and I suspect those numbers were higher last year due to the challenges families and individuals faced due to the pandemic.
- Third, we recommend ***reinstating rate increases that were vetoed last year and assist providers to afford the new \$10.00 an hour minimum wage***. Individuals and families need a more reliable group of Personal Support Workers. Currently there is a 51% turnover rate for personal support services in the family home, independent living situations and group homes. Many of these workers barely make minimum wage and providers may not be able to stay in business when the minimum wage goes up to \$10.00 an hour without state assistance.
- Finally, we have a recommendation for ***funding those on the waitlist through the Employment Enhancement Fund (\$500,000) and the Individual and Family Support Fund (\$900,000)***. These dollars aid with critical services while individuals are on the waitlist to prevent individuals and their families from going into crisis.

Several bills the Council is providing education and support on are up either in their last committee or poised to be heard on the floor. Please see the linked bills below for more information!