



Invest in “A Life Like Yours” for
All Virginians with Developmental Disabilities



OUR TIME HAS COME

Budget Hearing Guide

January 2, 2020

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PUBLIC HEARINGS NOTICE

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED 2020-2022 BIENNIAL STATE BUDGET

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS AND SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEES OF THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY WILL HOLD REGIONAL PUBLIC HEARINGS ON THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED 2020-2022 BIENNIAL STATE BUDGET, AS FOLLOWS:

THURSDAY, JANUARY 2, 2020

(Hearings begin at 10:00 a.m.)

- **Northern Virginia** – George Mason University, Hylton Performing Arts Center, Gregory Family Theatre
(10960 George Mason Circle, Manassas, VA 20109)
- **Blacksburg** – Virginia Tech, Classroom Building, Room 206
(1455 Perry Street, Blacksburg, VA 24060)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 2, 2020

(Hearings begin at 12:00 noon)

- **Hampton Roads** – Old Dominion University, Virginia Modeling, Analysis and Simulation Center
(1030 University Blvd., Suffolk, VA 23435)
- **Richmond** – J. Sergeant Reynolds Parham Road Campus, Workforce and Conference Center
(1651 E Parham Rd., Richmond, VA 23228)

The purpose of the hearings is to receive comments on the Governor's proposed 2020-22 biennial state budget. Those persons wishing to speak may register at each hearing site **no earlier than one hour prior** to the start of the hearing.

Speakers will be taken in the order of registration. Each person may register only one speaker at a time. Speakers are asked to limit their comments to three minutes or less. Speakers representing groups and organizations should consolidate remarks to reduce duplication. Persons unable to attend may comment in writing to either:

Delegate S. Chris Jones
P.O. Box 406
Pocahontas Building
Richmond, Virginia 23218

OR

Senator Thomas K. Norment, Jr.
Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr.
P.O. Box 396
Pocahontas Building
Richmond, Virginia 23218

People with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations by calling (804) 698-7480. All requests for reasonable accommodations must be received by 5:00 p.m., Monday December 16th, 2019. Upon request, sign language interpreters will be provided at the specific locations as identified in this Public Hearing Notice.

Background and Introduction

The January 2nd budget hearings provide an opportunity for people with developmental disabilities (DD), families, providers and concerned citizens to provide public input on the state budget. The goal of this budget hearing guide is to support your advocacy at these hearings. Citizens have the opportunity to speak to members of the Virginia General Assembly money committees for 3 minutes. In order to make DD services a priority in the state budget, we need as many people as possible to speak in support of them.

Virginia's progress in serving people with DD and meeting the Department of Justice (DOJ)-Virginia Settlement Agreement is at risk because of the dire crisis that will only continue to get worse if the needs of people are not funded. More than 12,700 Virginians are waiting for essential DD Medicaid Waiver services. This is double the number that were waiting in 2012, when Virginia entered the settlement agreement with DOJ. The workforce crisis is affecting the availability of caregivers and other Direct Support Professionals to provide services to those who have waiver services, putting their health and safety in jeopardy. Virginia's insufficient reimbursement rates for waiver services is a leading factor in the workforce crisis leaving our most vulnerable citizens at risk of costly institutionalization.

We encourage you to use your three minutes to let legislators know why these issues (or any issues in The Arc's legislative agenda) are PERSONAL to you.

You can also encourage others to show their support by attending even if they are not speaking.

A few more tips to help you prepare...

- Begin your testimony by introducing yourself, your city or county of residence and why you are testifying.
- Briefly state your KEY MESSAGE (i.e. fund more DD Waivers, increase reimbursement rates, support inclusive education).
- Tell your story- how are you/family members affected?
- Keep your statement under 3 minutes- but shoot for 2.
- Speaker sign-up begins 1 hour before the start of the hearing. The line often forms earlier.
- If speaking for someone who cannot be there, bring a picture and hold it up while testifying.
- Be respectful.
- If using talking points or statistics, try to use **only** one or two. Your message should be personal.
- Bring extra copies of your statement for press, legislators and committee staff.
- Share your updates, photos and videos on The Arc of Virginia's Facebook page and Twitter (@TheArcofVA) using hashtags #OurTimeHasCome, #RaiseTheRates, #FundPriority1, #InclusiveEducation.



The Arc of Virginia's Message to Legislators:

Thank you for your past support of the DD Waiver program. The Waivers you have provided in the past are helping many people with developmental disabilities live “A Life Like Yours” in their community and have provided much needed relief to family caregivers. These Waivers have literally changed lives.

(We are asking all speakers to include the following message in your statement to the committee members)

We urge you to take the following actions in the state budget:

- Fully Fund Priority One Waiver Wait List
- Increase Reimbursement Rates to ensure individuals have access to quality services.
- Support Inclusive Education by Directing the Virginia Dept. of Education to work with public school divisions in an inclusive education pilot program.



Ideas for Telling Your Story

Here is a list of questions to help you brainstorm and prepare your story for the budget hearings. Please do not feel that you need to answer each question. These are just some ideas to get you started.

For Self-Advocates

- What are your dreams, hopes and goals? What support do you need to reach them?
- Are you on a waiting list? How does that affect you and/or your family?
- Do you have a job? If not, do you want one? Why is having a job important to you?
- Why do you think it is important that people with disabilities are included in schools and communities?
- Do you receive services now (like a job coach or a counselor)? How do they help you?
- If you have a waiver are you receiving the services you need now?
- Have you ever been on a
- waiting list? What was that life like for you? How is your life different now?
- Why do you think legislators should provide more DD Waivers for the waiting list?

For Family Members

- If you don't have services right now, what kind of services/supports are needed?
- If you are on a waiting list, what is life like for your family? How long have you been waiting?
- Is your son or daughter currently included in his/her school or community? Why do you think it is important that people with disabilities are included in their schools and communities?
- How are you/your family affected by a particular issue in the state budget?
- What kind of support needs does your family member have?
- If you have a waiver, are you affected by the DD workforce crisis caused by low reimbursement rates?
- How does the Waiver help your family member have access to the community?

For Friends & Concerned Citizens

- Thank you and Why are you compelled to speak on behalf of people with DD?
- Do you have a friend/neighbor/colleague who is affected by DD services? How are they affected?
- Why do you support additional Waivers for the DD Waiver waiting list?
- As a constituent, why is your legislator's support of people with DD important to you?
- As a constituent, how do you feel about Virginia's near-bottom rankings for developmental disability services?

2020 Budget Hearing Guide

General Assembly Letter Writing

It is critical that we have a lot of people speaking up about community-based services at the Budget Hearings. If you can't make it to a hearing, please write a letter to your legislators as soon as possible. Then send a copy of your letter to the House and Senate money committees (see page 2 for addresses).

To find out who your legislators are and how to contact them, please visit the Virginia General Assembly's website at <http://whosmy.viriniageneralassembly.gov/>

Things to Remember When Writing Your Letter

- Address envelope to "The Honorable Delegate/Senator [name]".
- Address letter to "Delegate/Senator" in the body of the letter.
- Keep your letter concise and to the point. Remember to include the key message.
- Let your legislator know you appreciate their efforts.
- Briefly tell the legislator about how you are affected. If you need help telling your story, please refer to page 5.
- Ask to meet with your representative or speak with him/her over the phone if a meeting is not possible.
- If you have not had a response back from your representative within 2 weeks of mailing the letter, call their office and inquire as to whether they received it. If possible, request a meeting or a time to discuss your situation over the phone.

Have questions or need help? - Contact The Arc of Virginia email: info@thearcofva.org or call.

We have been told it makes a big difference when a legislator receives a personalized, traditional letter from at least 12 different constituents!

Help us strengthen our voice — ask nearby friends and family to join you in a letter writing campaign!

2020 Budget Hearing Guide

Staying Connected with the “A Life Like Yours” Movement

Become a Member of The Arc

Know More. Connect More. Save More.

The primary purpose of membership organizations, such as The Arc, is to have strength in numbers. The Arc’s membership consists of people with I/DD, family members, professionals and concerned citizens who believe in “A Life Like Yours.” When The Arc of Virginia visits legislators, we let them know that we are there representing members in their districts.

When you join The Arc, you help to strengthen and sustain the “A Life Like Yours” movement, joining together thousands of people with I/DD and their families. Contact your local chapter to join The Arc today!

For a list of local chapters, visit www.thearcofva.org/about-the-arc/local-chapters. If you do not have a local chapter of The Arc in your community, you can join The Arc of Virginia by downloading a membership form from our website at www.thearcofva.org/about-the-arc/join-the-arc.

Follow Us on Twitter & Facebook

The Arc of Virginia staff post updates on Facebook and Twitter about how public policy is affecting Virginians with I/DD and their families. We also post items of interest on these pages, such as photos, media articles and upcoming events. Visit us on Facebook (The Arc of Virginia) and on Twitter (@TheArcofVA) to get connected.

Sign Up for Action Alerts

Sign up for email Action Alerts about budget issues and legislation affecting Virginians with I/DD. By signing up for Action Alerts, The Arc can help you contact your elected officials at critical times in the budget — when we need them to hear from you most. When you receive an alert, you will be able to email your legislators directly with just a couple clicks (suggested talking points are provided). You can personalize your email message, even copy and paste your personal story from budget hearing testimony.

For More Information, Please Contact:

Tonya Milling- Executive Director
tmilling@thearcofva.org (804) 649-8481, ext. 101
www.thearcofva.org

2020 Budget Priorities

INCREASING WAIVER REIMBURSEMENT RATES

Sufficient rates are necessary to ensure individuals have access to quality supports and services.

- Sufficient reimbursement rates are essential to address the dire workforce crisis for waiver services and reduce turnover so that people have access to the supports and services made possible by their waivers.
- Waiver rates are based on outdated information from the 2013 study by the Human Services Research Institute(HRSI). Recommendations from the study for rates were not fully adopted resulting in a severe shortage of Direct Support Professionals, leaving individuals without services and at risk.

ADDRESSING THE DD PRIORITY 1 URGENT WAIVER WAITING LIST

Fully Fund Priority 1 urgent waiver waiting list.

- Individuals in Priority 1 have been assessed as needing services immediately, by the Commonwealth's own definition. It is imperative to fund Priority 1 to address the urgent needs of these citizens. There are 3,200 individuals in Priority Level 1.
- The current system of funding has driven people into various states of crisis for services - a method which only ends up costing the Commonwealth more money, both in the short-term and in the long run, and guarantees that the waiting list will only continue to grow.

FURTHERING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Direct the VA Department of Education to work with public school divisions in a pilot program to identify the resources that would be needed to (1) return students in private school placements whose needs can be met in the public setting with appropriate supports and services in place, to their neighborhood schools, (2) prevent out-of-public school placements for students at risk of placement, and (3) suggest a process for utilizing Children's Services Act(CSA) and Department of Education dollars to secure the identified resources and services.

- Since the first study by the Commission on Youth that examined spending by the Office of Children's Services for private special education placement, school division representatives serving on workgroups and offering comment have repeatedly stated that they would prefer to serve the students they have placed in a private special education school. School divisions should be supported in identifying specific training, staffing, or other services they need in order to build the capacity to return students to public schools or to prevent out-of-school placements of students whose parents wish to keep them in public school.
- Current CSA funding methods systematically incentivize the most restrictive environments for students by only providing this additional funding for students IF they are placed outside of the public schools.

DD Waiver Waitlist by Community Services Board

STATE WIDE DD WAIVER WAITING LIST as of 12/4/2019

CSB Organization Unit	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3		Total
ALEXANDRIA	3	72	27		102
ALLEGHANY HIGHLANDS	4	15	3		22
ARLINGTON	5	31	128		164
BLUE RIDGE	108	259	103		470
CHESAPEAKE	48	64	174		286
CHESTERFIELD	313	628	80		1021
CITY OF VA BEACH	12	147	177		336
COLONIAL	65	127	56		248
CROSSROADS	4	39	17		60
CUMBERLAND	19	35	24		78
DANVILLE-PITTSYLVANIA	65	83	133		281
DISTRICT 19	9	103	27		139
EASTERN SHORE	1	8	22		31
GOOCHLAND POWHATAN	0	25	28		53
HAMPTON-NEWPORT NEWS	58	258	166		482
HANOVER	134	142	12		288
HARRISONBURG-ROCKINGHAM	63	93	59		215
HENRICO AREA	116	344	183		643
HIGHLANDS	5	28	35		68
HORIZON	6	101	120		227
LOUDOUN	211	208	212		631
FAIRFAX FALLS CHURCH	636	1327	500		2463
MIDDLE PENINSULA NORTHERN NECK	37	94	101		232
MOUNT ROGERS	19	110	12		141
NEW RIVER VALLEY	94	140	65		299
NORFOLK	69	100	31		200
NORTHWESTERN	82	89	168		339
PIEDMONT	9	94	129		232
PLANNING DISTRICT ONE	0	28	44		72
PORTSMOUTH	2	15	24		41
PRINCE WILLIAM	162	390	197		749
RAPPAHANNOCK AREA V	504	123	112		739
RAPPAHANNOCK RAPIDAN	59	70	190		319
REGION TEN	142	140	39		321
RICHMOND	28	195	116		339
ROCKBRIDGE AREA	2	6	17		25
SOUTHSIDE	2	5	13		20
VALLEY	70	74	19		163
WESTERN TIDEWATER	37	68	66		171
Grand Total	3203	5878	3629		12710