



**Missouri Association of County Developmental Disabilities Services
2018 Legislative Priorities**

Protect the health and safety of Missouri's most vulnerable citizens by restoring funding for providers of essential services.

- Adequate funding for provider rates is necessary to continue essential services provided to Missouri's most vulnerable citizens. These supports ensure daily needs are met such as basic health and safety, bathing and toileting. The already underfunded providers struggle to find, train and retain qualified employees. Without restored funding the health and safety of many Missourians with physical and developmental disabilities will be compromised.

People with developmental disabilities want to work.

- The majority of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are either unemployed or underemployed - the percentage of working-age people with disabilities in the labor force is about one-third that of persons without a disability.
- Missouri's "Employment First" focus is critical for individuals who want to be employed to have opportunities in the workforce and be productive citizens with integrated employment as the first option offered to individuals with I/DD.
- People need flexibility to move in and out of sheltered employment based upon the needs and choices of each individual. Eliminate barriers so people with developmental disabilities have flexibility to participate in community employment without losing options for returning to sheltered employment.
- Missouri needs a comprehensive continuum of training and employment options for individuals with disabilities that does not inhibit people from transitioning through the necessary steps to obtain and maintain community employment. Missouri needs to create a system for employment for individuals with developmental disabilities with no wrong doors.
- Incentivize businesses to employ people with developmental disabilities at or above minimum wage.
- Support pilot sites where Vocational Rehabilitation, DESE, and DMH can easily collaborate and expedite the employment of individuals in the community at minimum wage or above.

Medicaid Managed Care does not work successfully for people with developmental disabilities and would destroy the current system that is meeting needs and has eliminated waitlists.

- A Medicaid managed care model is not cost effective for developmental disability services. In other states, administrative costs have actually risen; services have been reduced; and waiting lists have lengthened. The system works better when developmental disability services remain carved out. If Medicaid is block granted to states, services for people with developmental disabilities need to be carved out and secured. Services to our most vulnerable citizens with developmental disabilities is a proper role for government and must not be considered "discretionary".

Legislate Additional safeguards for health, safety and client rights are needed. The Missouri Association of County Developmental Disabilities (MACDDS) recommends:

- The Missouri Legislature should require communication and information sharing between a County Board and the Division of Developmental Disabilities when abuse and neglect or exploitation is suspected involving a client for whom the state and county agencies are purchasing services or when the county board is contracted to do service monitoring. The Department of Mental Health, as the state assigned government agency, and the county board as the local government agency, should clearly in statute be authorized and expected to cooperate and communicate.
- In statute assign responsibility for investigating retaliation against mandated reporters and establish legal penalties.
- In statute require criminal background checks for court appointed guardians.
- The Missouri statutes should be amended as follows. "Unless the guardian or an immediate relative is the subject of an investigation, MACDDS recommends the Missouri statutes be amended to authorize upon initiation of an investigation, or upon the decision to decline an investigation the Department of Mental Health shall provide the guardian copies of all records related to abuse, neglect and exploitation decision and investigations for the guardian's ward. Provisions for the confidentiality and protection of reporters should be clarified."



"MACDDS champions inclusive communities through the leadership and collaboration of its member organizations."

www.macdds.org

**Gamble &
Schlemeier**
GOVERNMENTAL CONSULTANTS
www.molobby.com