

A

Communication
from the Policy
Information Exchange

Slice of Pie

A *Slice of Pie* is an ongoing publication keeping our readers informed about important public policy issues. It is the mission of the Policy Information Exchange to **educate and inform Pennsylvanians with disabilities, their families and advocates, and the general public, regarding public policy issues and to further the exchange of policy information between the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council and federal, state and local policy makers.**

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STATE NEWS

BUDGET

On February 4, 2020, Governor Wolf released his budget proposal for the Commonwealth for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 that begins on July 1, 2020.

INITIATIVES

The Governor is again calling on the General Assembly to raise the **minimum wage** to \$15.00/hour by July 1, 2026. His proposal assumes the first step of \$12.00/hour would take effect on July 1, 2020 and is projected to generate \$133.3 million in tax revenue plus some offsets in healthcare eligibility. Several programs where wages may not be at or above \$12.00 are projected to receive additional funding for a net cost of \$10.7 million to the Department of Human Services (DHS). DHS would receive \$5.1 million for additional staff

to inspect facilities and monitor corrective action plans of providers.

FEDERAL FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION

The Governor's budget includes funds to provide additional state money for Medicaid programs due to the small decrease in Federal matching funds to Pennsylvania from 52.25% to 52.18%. Department-wide this will require \$18.6 million in FY 20-21.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

- **Early Intervention Services** would receive an increase of \$14,318,000 (8.1%) that

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includes funding to serve 2000 additional children in the program and a \$2.5 million initiative to increase county administration by 3%. A supplemental appropriation of \$16,039,000 is needed for the increased enrollment in FY 2019-2020.

Intellectual Disabilities Community Waivers would receive an increase of \$212,088,000 (12.3%) that includes two initiatives, but no rate increases for direct support professionals:

- \$15 million to move 732 individuals with an intellectual disability and/or autism from the emergency waitlist into the Community Living Waiver and 100 individuals into the Consolidated Waiver. As recommended by Governor Wolf's Council on Reform, this initiative will include moving up to 40 children with complex medical needs into community services to support their transition from congregate care settings so that they have an opportunity to live and grow up with their families in their own home. The proposed budget continues to assume that high school graduates can be served in the Person/Family Directed Services waiver through attrition.
- \$10.5 million to provide services to individuals transitioning from Polk and White Haven State Centers, including start-up funding for property acquisition and/or modification necessary for transition to the community.
- **Intellectual Disabilities State Centers** would receive an increase of \$4,406,000 (3.8%) including \$8.7 million needed for federal funding changes/adjustments and projected program/service savings of \$4,243,000. The census of the remaining four state centers is projected to be 651 individuals on July 1, 2020.
- **Intellectual Disabilities Community Base Program** would receive a net increase of \$281,000 (.2%) which reflects

\$149,000 to continue the program, a \$4 million initiative to enhance risk management and incident investigations for people with intellectual disabilities and autism, and the transfer of \$3.9 million to the ID Community Waiver Program.

- **Intellectual Disabilities Intermediate Care Facilities** would receive an increase of \$1,250,000 (.8%) that includes an initiative of \$594,000 to provide services to individuals transitioning from Polk and White Haven Centers. A supplemental appropriation of \$10,437,000 is needed for the increased costs in FY 2019-2020.
- **Autism Intervention and Services** would receive a net decrease of \$750,000 (2.6%) that reflects \$1.42 million to continue the program, including annualization of prior year expansion and a reduction of \$2.2 million for ASERT centers which legislature typically restores. A supplemental appropriation of \$2.5 million less is reflected in the revised costs in FY 2019-2020.
- **Mental Health Services** would receive an increase of \$45,240,000 (5.6%) including an initiative of \$1.25 million to provide home and community based services for 20 individuals currently residing in state hospitals through the Community Hospital Integration Projects Program (CHIPP).
- **Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities (MAWD)** would receive an increase of \$17,389,000 (27%) that includes increased utilization and replacing Tobacco Settlement Funds. A supplemental appropriation of \$12,156,000 is needed for the increased costs in FY 2019-2020.
- **Medical Assistance Transportation (MATP)** would receive an increase of \$294,000 (.5%) that includes increased utilization and adjustments for changes in federal matching rates. A supplemental appropriation of \$6 million less is reflected

in the revised costs in FY 2019-2020. The proposed budget does not reflect movement to a state-wide broker for MATP.

additional 430 individuals. A supplemental appropriation of \$47.9 million is needed for the increased costs in FY 2019-2020.

- **Medical Assistance Community HealthChoices** would receive an increase of \$910,101,000 (35.7%) including funds to annualize the third phase that began 1/1/20 and replacement of Tobacco Settlement Funds. Initiatives include \$25.5 million to provide an increase in the minimum wage to \$12.00/hour, \$1.2 million to provide training to direct care workers of individuals who use the participant-directed program, and \$1.4 million to expand access to services for individuals who are ventilator dependent. The program would receive \$14,953,000 in Lottery Funds to serve older Pennsylvanians. A supplemental appropriation of \$208 million is needed for the increased costs in FY 2019-2020.
- **Medical Assistance Long-Term Living** (formerly named Long-Term Care) would receive a funding decrease of \$413,554,000 (76.9%) that reflects the addition of the OBRA waiver and Attendant Care Act 150 into the line item and the transfer out of nursing facility costs to Community HealthChoices. A supplemental appropriation of \$46.4 million is needed for the increased costs in FY 2019-2020.
- **Home and Community Based Services, Services to Persons with Disabilities, and Attendant Care** are reduced 100% and the costs to serve individuals in the OBRA and Act 150 programs are merged into Medical Assistance Long-Term Living. The three line items are projected to receive supplemental appropriations for FY 2019-2020 of \$32 million more, \$12.75 million more, and \$5.79 million less, respectively.
- **Long-Term Care Managed Care (LIFE program)** would receive an increase of \$9.6 million that includes services to an

DEPARTMENT OF AGING

The Lottery funded **PENNCARE** program reflects an initiative of \$8.1 million to serve an additional 1,700 seniors on the OPTIONS waiting list.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY

The following line items in this Department are level funded:

- **Transfer to Rehabilitation Fund:** \$47,942,000
- **Supported Employment:** \$397,000
- **Centers for Independent Living:** \$1,950,000
- **Assistive Technology Financing:** \$475,000
- **Assistive Technology Demonstration & Training:** \$450,000

Programs that serve individuals with sensory disabilities in the **Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services** or **Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing** are also level funded.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Epilepsy Support Services, Sickle Cell, Cystic Fibrosis, Lupus, ALS, Tourette's syndrome and most of the other specialized health programs would be defunded. Each year, the Governor defunds these programs and the General Assembly restores their funding.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

State funding for **Special Education** would increase by \$25 million and **Pre-school Early Intervention** would increase by \$11 million. Funding for **chartered schools for children who are deaf and blind** would increase

\$2,473,000 and **Approved Private Schools** would receive an increase of \$7.9 million to continue the program.

TREASURY

The **ABLE program** would receive a decrease of \$230,000 based on most recent projections of program requirements.

DEPARTMENT OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROGRAMS (DDAP)

Assistance to **Drug and Alcohol Programs** would receive \$44,732,000 which is level funded and **General Government Operations** would receive \$2,932,000, which is an increase of \$275,000 (.58%). The majority of funds that support DDAP are federal funds.

PRIMARY ELECTION DAY – REGISTER TO VOTE

The Pennsylvania Primary Election will be held on **Tuesday, April 28th**. This election will determine who will run in the General Election for each party from local, state, and federal levels. To vote in the Primary Election you must be registered to vote by April 13th. You can register to vote online, by mail, or at a number of government agencies, including PA Department of Transportation (PennDOT). For more information on how to register to vote, visit: <https://www.votspa.com/Register-to-Vote/Pages/default.aspx>.

New rules for absentee voting will be in effect. In Pennsylvania, you now have two options for mail ballots. You may either choose a mail-in ballot or an absentee ballot to request, complete, and return to your county election office.

- Absentee ballot – If you plan to be out of the municipality on election day or if you have a disability or illness, you should request this ballot type, which still requires you to list a reason for your ballot.

- Mail-in ballot – If you aren't an absentee voter, you may apply for a mail-in ballot. Anyone can request this ballot, and you do not need a reason to request it.

To register for a mail-in ballot or absentee ballot, you fill out a request form and return it to your county election office. You can fill out the ballot at your County Election Office. To register online, visit: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/OnlineAbsenteeApplication/#/OnlineAbsenteeBegin>.

GOVERNOR LAUNCHES MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE – “REACH OUT PA”

Governor Wolf announced on January 2, 2020 a focused multi-agency effort campaign, ‘**Reach Out PA: Your Mental Health Matters**’, to expand resources and the state’s support of mental health and related health care priorities in Pennsylvania. This campaign aims to de-stigmatize issues of mental health and provide an organized response to the increasing numbers of individuals who have mental health issues. The administration will expand training of constituent affairs personnel on suicide prevention and mental health intervention. To read more on this initiative, go to: <https://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/pennsylvania-launches-reach-out-pa-your-mental-health-matters/>.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

The Office of Developmental Programs has issued one new Bulletin:

Individual Eligibility for the Consolidated, P/ FDS and Community Living Waivers (00-19-04) was issued on November 26, 2019 and was effective on that date. The Bulletin communicates the requirements and procedures for evaluating and re-evaluating an individual’s eligibility for services and

supports provided under the Consolidated, Person/Family Directed Support (P/FDS) and Community Living Waivers.

OFFICE OF LONG-TERM LIVING (OLTL)

Community HealthChoices has now been implemented in all of Pennsylvania following the launch of the program in the Northeast, Northwest, and Lehigh/Capital Regions. The Managed Long-Term Services and Supports subcommittee of the Medical Assistance Advisory Committee meets monthly and reviews quality data provided by the three managed care organizations to the Office of Long-Term Living. The reports for 2019 through the third quarter as presented at the February 5, 2020 meeting are available here: <http://listserv.dpw.state.pa.us/Scripts/wa.exe?A2=ind20&L=mltss-meeting-minutes&F=&S=&P=1027>.

The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services has issued three new Bulletins:

- Peer Support Services – Revised (OMHSAS 19-05) was issued on December 10, 2019 and was effective on November 15, 2019. The Bulletin announces that the PA Certification Board is now responsible for certifying individuals as qualified to provide Peer Support Services (PSS), and issues revised provider handbook pages that contain information necessary for the provision of and payment for PSS.
- Procedure Codes for Intensive Behavioral Health Services Agencies (OMHSAS-20-01) was issued on January 31, 2020 and was effective on January 17, 2020. The Bulletin announces the Procedure Codes that are on the MA Program Fee Schedule for Intensive Behavior Health Services agencies and the use of these Procedure Codes by Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (BHRS) agencies providing IBHS.

- Guidelines for the Use of Telehealth Technology in the Delivery of Behavioral Health Services (OMHSAS-20-02) was issued on February 20, 2020 and was effective on that date. The Bulletin updates the guidelines for delivering behavioral health services using telehealth technology previously issued in OMHSAS Bulletin 14-01.

DHS Program Bulletins are available at a new location at <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/docs/For-Providers/Pages/Bulletin-Search.aspx#>. At this time the bulletin search is not a complete list and is in the process of being updated.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

COVID-19/CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

The Pennsylvania Department of Health continues to monitor the ongoing situation with Coronavirus (COVID-19) in tandem with the work of the federal government and the Center for Disease Control (CDC). The virus causes respiratory illness in people and can spread from person-to-person. It is recommended that Pennsylvanians take time to prepare – to view the PA Emergency Preparedness Guide, visit: <https://www.ready.pa.gov/BeInformed/EmergencyPreparednessGuide/Pages/default.aspx>.

To get the most accurate and up-to-date information on this, visit: the Department of Health's website at: <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>.

BILLS OF INTEREST

Below we summarize some bills of interest to the disability community from the 2019-2020 Session. For more information about these bills or any other state legislative activity, go to <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/>.

SB 906. Introduced by Senator John T. Yudichak (D-Carbon). This bill would provide for White Haven and Polk **State center closure moratorium**. Referred to Health

and Human Services, Oct. 18, 2019. Final passage, Nov. 18, 2019. Referred to House Health Nov. 19, 2019, final passage, Jan. 15, 2020. Signed in Senate, Jan. 27, 2020. **Veto No. 1** of 2020.

Impact: This legislation would halt any closure of a state institution for individuals with disabilities for a period of 5 years. It would convene a taskforce which would be responsible for laying out a proposed closure plan once the 5 year moratorium has concluded.

SB 924. Introduced by Senator Lawrence M. Farnese Jr. (D-Philadelphia). This bill would provide for a streamlined process to acquire **guardianship for medically disabled adult children**. Referred to Judiciary, Oct. 24, 2019. First consideration, Oct. 29, 2019. Laid on the table (Pursuant to Senate Rule 9), Feb. 4, 2020.

Impact: Would alter the process of attaining and retaining guardianship in certain cases for individuals who are medically disabled adult children by not requiring going through the judicial process if in the possession of a note from the doctor.

HB 1895. Introduced by Representative David H. Rowe (R-Union). This bill would amend the Mental Health Procedures Act to protect the rights of Pennsylvanians receiving **mental health care**. This Bill will state that persons in treatment have a right to be free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Referred to Human Services, Sept. 30, 2019. Reported as committed, Jan. 21, 2020. Re-committed to Appropriations, Feb. 4, 2020.

Impact: Grants individuals in treatment the right to be free from abuse, neglect, or exploitation. It also includes the right to challenge the legality of detention or degree of restraint that is used in order to be afforded the rights listed above.

HB1918. Introduced by Representative Gerald J. Mullery (D-Luzerne). This bill would provide for White Haven and Polk **State center closure moratorium**. Referred to

Health, Oct. 15, 2019. Laid on the table, Jan. 13, 2020.

Impact: Would prohibit the closure of any state institution until the Waiting List for Home and Community Based Services is empty.

NEW BILLS

HB 2083. Introduced by Representative Joseph C. Hohenstein (D-Philadelphia). This bill would provide for **rights of deaf students**, for duties of school entities and for duties of Department of Education. Referred to Education, Nov. 22, 2019.

Impact: Would require schools provide deaf students with key supports to guarantee they have access to high-quality education, which is given to their non deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind peers. It provides opportunities for parent or legal guardians of the student to fully participate in the development of their educational plans.

HB 2084. Introduced by Representative Joseph C. Hohenstein (D-Philadelphia). This bill would provide for **Deaf Education Commission**. Referred to Education, Nov. 22, 2019.

Impact: Would establish a Commission on Deaf Education, which will be tasked with producing a parent resource guide, identify potential improvement to early intervention programs for deaf children, and develop methods to collect data on the progress of deaf and hard of hearing children from birth to age five.

HB 2120. Introduced by Representative Tim Hennessey (R-Chester). This bill would provide for **nonemergency medical transportation** services. Referred to Transportation, Dec. 12, 2019.

Impact: Would provide nonemergency medical transportation services to eligible and enrolled medical assistance recipients who use a

Statewide or regional transportation system. It would also require the Department to produce analysis on the effectiveness and efficiency of the state's current use of nonemergency transportation services as well as the impact of the current model on consumers.

HB 2139. Introduced by Representative Dan L. Miller (D-Allegheny). This bill would update guidance on **Pennsylvania Statewide Independent Living Council** (PA SILC) board composition, the role of the Designated State Entity with PA SILC and CILs, addition of the 5th core services for CILS of transition (youth, institutional settings), federally funded CILs already are required to do this service, and provide a new base level for funding of \$350,000. Referred to Human Services, Dec. 17, 2019.

Impact: Would amend Act 139 of 1994 to bring the state into step with the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and raise funding to reflect that Pennsylvania's disability population has doubled since the original legislation passed.

HB 2187. Introduced by Representative John T. Galloway (D-Bucks). This bill would provide for Statewide **children's mental health ombudsman**. Referred to Human Services, Jan. 10, 2020.

Impact: This legislation would designate an official be tasked with the following responsibilities: will have the authority to advocate on behalf of children with mental disorders; identify barriers to effective mental health treatment; monitor compliance with laws pertaining to children's behavioral health services; and investigate and attempt to resolve complaints regarding violations by an entity regulated by the State which have an adverse effect upon children.

HB 2188. Introduced by Representative Dan L. Miller (D-Allegheny). This bill would provide for **deaf and blind** Pennsylvanians by

providing access to support service providers who facilitate communication and provide sighted guidance. Referred to Labor and Industry, Jan. 10, 2020.

Impact: This legislation would permanently establish a grant program to support services providers who provide trainings and services to individuals who are deafblind.

HB 2189. Introduced by Representative Dan L. Miller (D-Allegheny). This bill would replace the word "handicapped" with "accessible" for **parking placards**. Referred to Transportation, Jan. 10, 2020.

Impact: This legislation would replace the word "handicapped" with "accessible" on parking placards to steer away from any negative stigmatization. It would also remove the word "handicapped" and replace it with "accessible" throughout Title 75.

HB 2194. Introduced by Representative John T. Galloway (D-Bucks). This bill would establish the **School Student Mental Health Assistance** Augmentation Account and provide grants to support school-linked mental health services. Referred to Education, Jan. 10, 2020.

Impact: This legislation would provide for grants to be established to support school-aligned mental health services. These grants can be used by school entities to identify and diagnose mental health conditions among students, fund transportation for children receiving school-linked mental health services when school is out of session, and cover costs associated with delivering telemedicine to school children.

HB 2202. Introduced by Representative Kate A. Klunk (R-York). This bill would allow individuals to earn more money under a new category under **Medical Assistance for Workers (MAWD)**, called Workers with Job Success (WJS). Referred to Health, Jan. 10, 2020.

Impact: This legislation would create a new category under the Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities (MAWD). Currently, MAWD services are only available to individuals with disabilities as long as they earn less than \$61,000 annually. In this new category, workers will pay 7.5% of their income to the MAWD program to cover their health care, which is a 2.5% increase from the current 5%. This means, when a worker earns \$75,000 annually they will pay 100% of the average cost of the MAWD program.

HB 2203. Introduced by Representative Morgan Cephas (D-Philadelphia). This bill would establish the **Assisted Living & Long-Term Care Resident Bill of Rights**. Referred to Health, Jan. 10, 2020.

Impact: This legislation would establish a Bill of Rights for assisted living and long-term care residents to ensure the health and safety of each individual and that they are free from abuse and neglect.

HB 2204. Introduced by Representative Morgan Cephas (D-Philadelphia). This bill would establish the **Assisted Living & Long-Term Care Resident Bill of Rights** so that they may be protected from discrimination regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, age, or ethnicity. Referred to Health, Jan. 10, 2020.

Impact: This legislation would prohibit any use of discrimination based upon race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, or sex.

HB 2236. Introduced by Representative Seth M. Grove (R-York). This bill would amend current law as requested by the **Centers for Independent Living**, to change the agency charged with overseeing the center from the Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) to the Department of Human Services (DHS). Referred to Health, Jan. 21, 2020.

Impact: This legislation would alter the Department tasked with overseeing the work of the Centers for Independent Living from the Department of Labor & Industry to the Department of Human Services. This would align the work of the Centers with a state agency better prepared to address the issues and concerns of the centers and those they service.

SB 30. Introduced by Senator Thomas H. Killion (R-Chester). This bill would create a state housing tax credit to incentivize private investment to create new and preserve existing **affordable rental housing** which will increase economic opportunity for senior citizens, and individuals with disabilities. Referred to Urban Affairs and Housing, March 21, 2019, Third consideration and final passage in the Senate, Jan. 28, 2020. Referred to House Urban Affairs, Jan. 30, 2020.

Impact: This legislation would create a housing tax credit to incentivize a private investment into creating new and preserve affordable rental housing. It would increase economic opportunity for senior citizens, individuals with disabilities, and families who are seeking affordable residential options.

SB 970. Introduced by Senator Patrick Browne (R-Lehigh). This bill would merge the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services into a new **Department of Health and Human Services**. Referred to Health and Human Services, Jan. 24, 2020.

Impact: This legislation would merge the Department of Health and Department of Human Services into one agency. The proposal would streamline services and produce better coordination of programs and services for those who need to access imperative services.

RESOLUTIONS

HR 543. Introduced by Representative Dan L. Miller (D-Allegheny). A Resolution recognizing and honoring the 30th anniversary of the date of enactment of the **Americans with Disabilities Act** of 1990. Adopted, Feb. 4, 2020.

HR 789. Introduced by Representative Tarah Toohill (R-Luzerne). A Resolution recognizing the month of March 2020 as **Intellectual Disabilities Awareness** Month. Referred to House Human Services, Feb. 28, 2020.

SR 302. Introduced by Senator Christine M. Tartaglione (D-Philadelphia). A Resolution declaring the month of March 2020 as **Disabilities Awareness** Month. Adopted, Feb. 5, 2020.

NATIONAL NEWS

FEDERAL BUDGET 2021

On February 10, 2020, President Trump released his proposed budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 that begins on October 1, 2020. The proposal includes deep cuts to Medicare and Medicaid, two core programs providing access to healthcare for people with disabilities and seniors. Typically, Congress does not adopt the President's budget but develops its own proposals. The President's budget is available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/>.

CENSUS 2020

The centennial census is underway throughout the country. Every 10 years the government counts everyone across the country to gather information to make decisions about funding for services and program. The census is also used to determine the number of members of Congress in the House of Representatives for each state. Each state is given a specific number of Congressman based upon the number of people who live in each state. It is important to participate in the 2020 Census so that the government can get an accurate count on the population. One person in each household will need to fill out the form.

The form can be filled out online, by phone, or by mail. There are guides to help people with disabilities fill out the census. If you have questions, you can call **1-800-923-8282** or go to www.2020census.gov. April 1st is Census Day.

FDA ISSUES FINAL RULE BANNING ELECTRIC SHOCK DEVICES

On March 6, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published a final rule prohibiting electrical stimulation devices (ESDs). These devices have inflicted painful abuse on residents of the Judge Rotenberg Educational Center in Canton, Massachusetts for decades. The rule takes effect on April 6, and all individuals currently subject to the devices must be transitioned off by September 2. To read the final rule, visit: <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=FDA-2016-N-1111-1743>.

FAMILY SUPPORT: SENATE APPROVES REAUTHORIZATION OF OLDER AMERICANS ACT

On March 6, the Senate passed the Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020 ([H.R.4334](https://www.congress.gov/bills/116/4334)). This bill reauthorizes the Older Americans Act, including the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP). The NFCSP provides information to caregivers about available services, assistance in accessing services, individual counseling, support groups, caregiver training, respite care, and supplemental services. This bill removes a 10% cap on funding for services for "older relative caregivers," a term that includes family caregivers of adults with disabilities ages 18-59.

CMS RELEASES NEW BLOCK GRANT GUIDANCE

On January 30, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released new guidance allowing states to cap their federal Medicaid funding for the low-income adult population in exchange for greater flexibility to limit coverage. States would be allowed to restrict eligibility,

provide limited health care benefits, reduce access to prescription drugs, impose burdensome work requirements, and make other changes that are detrimental to Medicaid beneficiaries. This guidance does not appear to directly impact the portion of the Medicaid program that funds home and community-based services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

RESOURCES

2020 BENEFITS AND RIGHTS FOR OLDER PENNSYLVANIANS

Pennsylvania Department of Aging Secretary Robert Torres announced the release of the 2020 Benefits and Rights for Older Pennsylvanians, the commonwealth's premier guide for information and resources at the state and local levels. The book covers a multitude of topics including housing, insurance, legal services, the long-term care ombudsman program, and protective services. This year's book also features a message regarding the upcoming 2020 Census and the importance for older adults to make sure they are counted. Older Pennsylvanians can obtain the 2020 Benefits and Rights book at their county Area Agency on Aging and the office of their state senator and representative.

AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION AND EMPOWERMENT SUPPORTS – ACES 2020

ACES is a 2-week intensive training and on-campus experience program July 25 – August 7, 2020 for young adults who use Augmentative and Alternative Communication. Enhance your communication, computer access, self-empowerment, and independence. Get support in the transition to college, community living, employment. Contact, ACES@temple.edu for more information. To learn more, visit: www.TechOWLpa.org.

PHI RELEASES FIRST YEAR IN YEAR-LONG SERIES OF REPORTS ON DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE

PHI (Quality Care Through Quality Jobs) released the first of a year-long series of reports on the direct care workforce. This report, titled "It's Time to Care: a Detailed Profile of America's Direct Care Workforce," covers the basic terminology in the field of direct care, explores the evolving nature of direct care and growing need for it, and offers policy solutions to address the workforce shortage. The report recommends increasing compensation and creating a workforce pipeline. To access the information, visit: <https://phinational.org/caringforthefuture/itstimetocare/>.

EARLY INTERVENTION FAMILY SURVEY NOW AVAILABLE

Pennsylvania's Early Intervention Program (Infant/Toddler and Preschool) wants to hear from families about their experience with Early Intervention. Families whose children are receiving Early Intervention Services can respond to the survey now through June 30, 2020. To participate in the survey, visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PAEI2020>.

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR INITIAL CERTIFIED INVESTIGATOR COURSE SESSIONS

Current course offerings for the Initial Certified Investigator Courses are available on MyODP.org. To review the guide for instructions on how to register, visit: https://palms-awss3-repository.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/Communications/ODP/2020/Certified_Investigateregistration+sessions+through+August+2020.pdf.

COMMUNITY FORUMS ON PARTICIPANT DIRECTED SERVICES (PDS)

A new resource, Pennsylvania Community

Inclusion for All, highlights the importance of and provides resources for meaningful Community Inclusion, geared towards Pennsylvania children, ages birth to grade 6, and their families. The materials can be used to increase opportunities of meaningful interaction between families and children with and without disabilities. It also provides professionals the resources for Community Inclusion to share with the families they serve and use the resources when practicing coaching in the community with families. To access the resources, go to: <https://papromiseforchildren.com/community-inclusion/>.

PDS are home and community-based services that can help people of all ages, and all disabilities maintain independence and choose the supports they need to live their best life.

SPRING 2020 — DATES/TIMES/LOCATIONS

March 30 — Online Zoom Meeting 1–4 p.m.

April 28 — Check for updated information.
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

CONTACT PIE

Contact the PIE Team with any questions, comments, suggestions, or information to share at PIE, c/o The Arc of Pennsylvania, 1007 Mumma Road, Suite 100, Lemoyne, PA 17043, by email at pie@thearc-pa.org or by phone at 800-692-7258.

- o **A Slice of Pie** is available by email and contains hyperlinks for ease of accessing websites and internet documents and resources.
- o PIE Alerts, PIE Information, and PIE Job Postings are available by email to keep people informed about disability issues between newsletters.
- o Sign up for A Slice of Pie or PIE electronic messages by phone at 800-692-7258 or by emailing pie@thearc-pa.org.
- o Individuals who already get A Slice of Pie and/or PIE electronic messages can make changes at any time by clicking “Update Profile/Email Address” at the end of any PIE email message.
- o A Slice of Pie is available at the Developmental Disabilities Council website www.paddc.org, by clicking on “Publications” and “Slice of Pie”. Archived editions can also be found there.
- o **A Slice of Pie** is available in alternate format upon request.
- o The PIE office will download, copy, and mail information mentioned in A Slice of Pie upon request.

To register, visit: <https://disabilities.temple.edu/programs/pds/>. If you register for a PDS forum, you will receive Zoom information upon registration. If you registered previously, **NO NEED TO REGISTER AGAIN**, you will get an email with connection information.

PENNSYLVANIA DEAF-BLIND PROJECT’S FAMILY LEARNING CONFERENCE

The Pennsylvania Deaf-Blind Project’s Family Learning Conference will be held June 26-27, 2020 at the Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center in State College, PA. For more information, visit: <https://www.pattan.net/Training/Conferences/Pennsylvania-Department-of-Education-Conferenc-1>.

NATIONAL AUTISM CONFERENCE

The National Autism Conference will be held August 3-6, 2020 at the Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center in State College, PA. For more information, visit: <https://autism.outreach.psu.edu/>.

A Slice of Pie

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Change of Information?

We want to be certain that you do not miss an issue of *A Slice of Pie*, so please send name or address changes either by phone 800-692-7258 or by email to pie@thearcpa.org. Thank you.

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