

The Best Life Alliance (BLA) legislation will make long-term, sustainable adjustments to the Disability Waiver Rate System. These changes will update the way disability waiver rates are set to reflect current economic conditions and support providers in raising the wages of their Direct Support and Supervisor staff in an effort to stand up and stabilize disability support services.

DWRS Sustainability



Change the date of data used for current DWRS adjustments

Current law determines DWRS adjustments based on data that is 30 month and 1-day old. This results in adjustments that are based on economic conditions from 3 years ago. The BLA proposes using the most currently available data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics when adjusting the DWRS.



Adjust DWRS to ensure that the Supervisor Wage does not fall below the Direct Support Professional Wage

The Best Life Alliance proposes setting a floor for Supervisor Wages, ensuring that the wage in the DWRS for Supervisors does not fall below the wage for Direct Support Professionals.



Remove Unit-Based Respite from DWRS

Currently, Respite provided under 10 hours a day is billed in 15-minute increments and is subject to the DWRS framework rate versus the daily option, which is a market rate service. The BLA is proposing making Unit-Based Respite a market rate service, in alignment with how Daily Respite is currently operating. This will:

- eliminate unnecessary inconsistency
- allow providers to design programs that meet the unique needs of their community
- work with counties on a payment rate that reflects the service
- provide greater access to respite



Raise Employment Exploration SOC codes to align with Employment Development

The Best Life Alliance is proposing aligning the Standard Occupation Codes used to form the base wage for the Employment Exploration service with that of Employment Development, the subsequent service that an individual accesses when they are ready to move from exploring to securing a competitive, community-based job.



Fully fund the Competitive Workforce Factor, Move Up Scheduled Increase and Provide for Automatic Adjustments

The legislature created the Competitive Workforce Factor (CWF) in 2019 to support higher wages for Direct Support Professionals, but it hasn't been adjusted since its creation. The next scheduled rate adjustment for the DWRS isn't until November 2024 and is implemented on a rolling basis, as individuals' Service Authorizations are renewed. This means that most will not see rate adjustments until 2025. Providers cannot wait this long for adjusted reimbursement rates to support increasing wages for Direct Support Professionals. The BLA proposes moving the next adjustment up to January 2024 and allowing for an additional adjustment in 2025 and every two years after that.