



POLICY AND ADVOCACY PRIORITIES THE ARC OF ILLINOIS

Since 1950, The Arc of Illinois has been committed to empowering persons with disabilities to achieve full participation in community life.

Our 2018 policy and advocacy priorities include supporting legislation, policy and systems change and advocating for:

❖ Fair Budget & Balanced Approach

The Arc of Illinois supports a balanced approach to addressing the state budget. We believe Illinois must increase investment in I/DD home and community based supports through increased wages and rates as well as continued investment in DD grants including Life Span, The Autism Program, Epilepsy, Best Buddies and Respite. The Arc will continue advocate for increasing the wages and benefits of Direct Support Professionals with the They Deserve More Campaign.

❖ Waiting for Services

The Arc believes that no one should wait for services and supports that provide the opportunity for community living. The PUNS list should be eliminated by the timely provision of services and supports for persons with I/DD in the most integrated setting under a person-centered plan.

❖ Rebalancing

The Arc believes that state funding for persons with I/DD must follow the needs and desires of the people it serves. A funding model that recognizes community supports as the preferred model must be implemented statewide and develops a short-term transition plan for shifting funding from state developmental centers to community living is crucial in making this goal a reality.

❖ Employment First

- We will be working with the Governor's Employment Task Force to implement Employment First. We are also considering the new requirements of the Workforce Innovations law recently signed by President Obama. We may consider a bill that incorporates some of its requirements into Illinois law, especially with respect to preparation of youth for integrated competitive employment.

❖ **Accessing Services**

We continue to advocate for a more transparent and easier system for individuals and families to navigate. This includes improving the administration, tracking and engagement of those currently on the PUNS waiting list or eligible but not aware of the list. This also includes improving the Medicaid eligibility system to work better for people with I/DD.

❖ **Health Care**

We will continue to oppose Phase III Integrated Care Program, the managed care of developmental disability services and have significant concerns about the consolidation of the Medicaid managed care. We will work with Healthcare and Family Services to advocate for network adequacy and an increased understanding by the Department and MCOs about working with people with I/DD. In addition, we will look into people with I/DD, especially those with a dual diagnosis, not be accepted to local psychiatric programs in community hospitals and being shipped to substandard options

❖ **Assistive Technology**

We will work with the Illinois Assistive Technology Project and the Coleman Institute on a legislative resolution on the rights of people with cognitive disabilities to technology and information access. We will advocate to ensure that individuals on the waiver can access assistive technology that encourages independent and further flexibility in supports.

In addition, we will work on national disability advocacy issues with The Arc of the United States including:

- Protecting the Medicaid guarantee
- Supporting a federal budget that includes programs and funding for the Councils on Developmental Disabilities, family support funding, protection and advocacy organizations, transportation and special education
- Opposing any removal of rights and any limiting of access for people with disabilities
- Rebalancing efforts

2018 STATE LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE PRIORITIES

2018 Priorities for State Legislation and Appropriations

- Increase access to services and supports by funding a **wage increase** for frontline staff/DSPs to \$15 per hour.
- Ensure support for the restoration of funding levels for the **DD grants** including Life Span, the Autism Program, Epilepsy, Best Buddies and Respite.
- Build **capacity in the community** to support people who are dually diagnosed with I/DD and behavioral health issues and avoid institutionalization (Arc lead).
- **Extend the Criminal Justice and I/DD Task Force** to June 2019.
- Create a **supported employment program for state agencies**.
- Provide for **OIG due process hearing for community agencies**.
- Address access to dental care for adults with ID/DD under Medicaid.
- Support expanded **ABLE improvements** and protections.
- Improve IEPs regarding student's need for **assistive technology**.
- Ensure that students with disabilities of transition age and their parents/guardian are fully informed about the PUNS and given the opportunity to enroll in the PUNS.

Additional Efforts

- Increase to address access to nurses for people living in community living.
- Require annual communications with PUNS list members.

Administrative Advocacy

- Medicaid Managed Care
- OIG Appeal Issues
- CILA/SODC Scorecards
- Person Centered Planning Implementation
- BALC Requirements around Individual Homes vs Organization Homes
- HCBS Task Force
- Assistive Technology Task Force