

Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Legislative & Budget Subcommittee Meeting

Date of Meeting: Monday, April 8, 2024

Time: 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Virtual: [Zoom Link](#)

This is a meeting of the **Legislative and Budget Subcommittee** of the permanent Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. This subcommittee will serve as a clearing house of legislative and budget priorities for the commission, track those priorities and provide regular updates to the full Commission on legislative and budget activity.

Agenda

1. Welcome, Roll Call, Approval of February Minutes
 - No quorum, will vote on it at the May meeting.
2. Guest Speaker from The Arc of MA Deputy Executive Director Maura Sullivan
 - Q&A
 - Vacancies in Day Program:
 - Currently, there is a 26% vacancy rate in the day program, which is considerably high. We need to identify individuals who are not receiving services so that we can extend our support to them.
 - Collaboration with Disability Community
 - Charlie shared his extensive experience, noting that the Disability community has historically been insular. There has been minimal collaboration with organizations like the Disability Policy Consortium (DPC), The Arc, and Independent Living Centers. However, this is beginning to change, particularly with a focus on integrating services for individuals primarily on the autism spectrum. Emphasizing the importance of intersectionality with The Arc can address current service gaps.
 - Personal Care Assistant (PCA) Program Challenges:
 - There are currently 6,000 individuals affected by the PCA program cuts. MassHealth intends to transition

these individuals to home health aide agencies and adult supported living services. However, these entities are currently unable to accommodate additional clients. Moreover, transitioning to these services would mean that individuals would lose some control over their lives compared to the autonomy they have under the current PCA system.

- Proposed Legislative Changes:
 - Discussion around the legislation drafting language for the supplemental budget that would prevent MassHealth from outsourcing PCA evaluations and re-evaluations to a single for-profit entity. This move would strip the Independent Living Centers of a crucial function and could lead to a disconnect from the community's needs and potential service reductions.

3. Actions Items for next meeting

- Invited Senator Robyn Kennedy and Representative Jay Livingstone
- Discuss possibility of re-starting disability caucus

4. Adjournment

Next Meeting Dates

- 5/13/24 at 12pm
- 7/8/24 at 12pm
- 8/26/24 at 10am
- 11/18/24 at 10am

Meeting Materials

- [February 12, 2024 meeting minutes](#)
- The Arc of MA Presentation

Meeting information:

- Meeting will be held virtually via Zoom webinar and live streamed for the public at <https://malegislature.gov/Commissions/Detail/567/Hearings>
- Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87184548145>
- CART service will be available embedded in Zoom with captions and through a separate URL:
<https://www.streamtext.net/player?event=StatehouseADA>

- ASL interpreters will be provided
- For accessibility requests and other questions, contact Imene Bouziane Saidi at imene.bouzianesaidi@mass.gov

Stay Updated and Upcoming Events:

- To receive updates from the Commission, members of the public can sign up here: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/WWIIUNL>
- To view details from previous meetings, visit:
<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/permanent-commission-on-the-status-of-persons-with-disabilities>