



**February
16th, 2022**

The Self-Advocacy
Association of New York
State

(SANYS)

SANYS 2022 Position
Paper

February 16th, 2022



People with developmental disabilities depend on supports and services to be successful and independent



But for many years New York State has not provided enough money for all the people who need supports



The Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (**OPWDD**) has seen some increases, but not enough for everyone who needs support



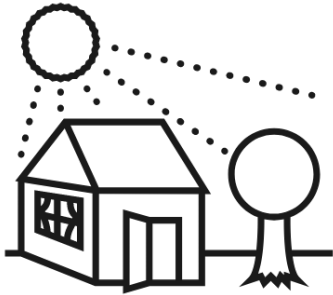
This year, Governor Kathy Hochul has proposed a budget that is very different from other years



There is more money for many programs for people with disabilities



Many self-advocates are very happy that people with developmental disabilities are important to the new Governor



There is some money in this budget for more affordable housing, which is needed by many people



The Governor wants to spend \$20 Billion on making more affordable and supportive housing for everyone



There is also more money for some programs that help people live independently



But there needs to be more options for the many people who are waiting for housing



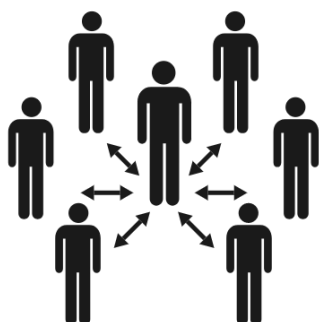
There also needs to be more funding for people who want to live independently in areas where housing is expensive



OPWDD is making some changes to rates to support people living in less-restrictive settings



We want to make sure that with these changes, people should still have a choice about where they live



We want all people to be able to have the option to live in a less restrictive setting as part of a person-centered process



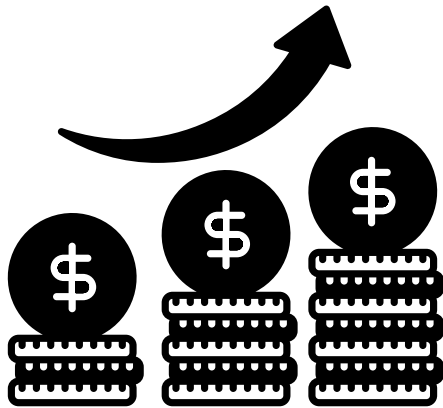
Many people with disabilities have lost jobs because of the health crisis



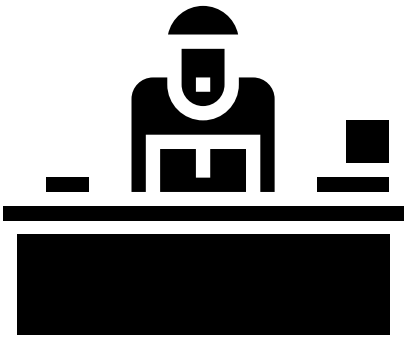
Even before the pandemic there was not enough support for the many people who wanted jobs in their communities



Coming out of the pandemic it will be important to support innovative solutions for people to get jobs



The Governor's budget has money for programs to hire and increase employment for people with disabilities



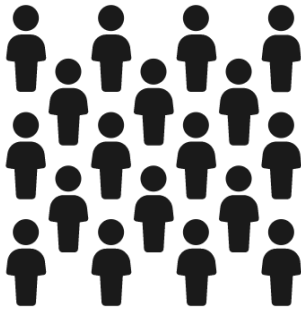
There is also a new office of Chief Disability Officer that we think will help people get jobs



We want the state to keep thinking big about getting jobs for people with disabilities



Some people with disabilities like being able to receive services remotely, and everyone should have the choice to be able to do so, even as programs have reopened in-person



There should also be options and support for people who choose to receive services in the communities of their choice instead of returning to traditional day programs



We believe that having many different options for what people do with their days is the best way to support people with disabilities



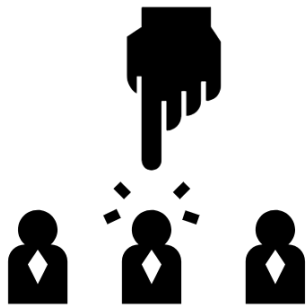
Many people with disabilities have struggled to have access to the internet



We believe access to the internet and the technology to use it are a basic right



Supporting the use of internet technology should be a basic requirement for residential supports and daytime programming



Self-Direction has grown a lot in our system, but we are worried that changes and cuts may make it harder for people to use these programs



We are worried that changes to eligibility and limits on use of services risk sending people back to institutions



We worry that limits on funding in budgets will push people into more restrictive and expensive programs



Many people in self-direction have some staff through the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program, or **CDPA**



Because of low pay, it has been very, very difficult for people to find **CDPA** staff



Many people continue to suffer, live with isolation, and risk their health and safety because it is so hard to find staff



New York must find a way
to increase wages for
CDPA staff



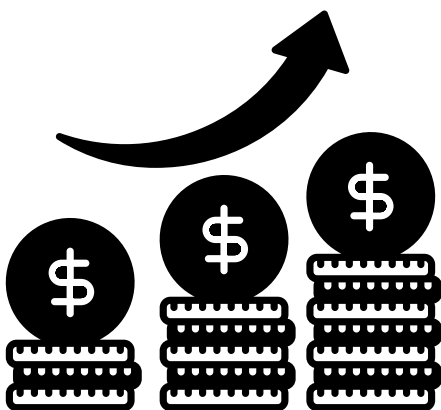
People will continue to
suffer until the staffing crisis
is solved



Our system has also struggled to pay Direct Support Professionals (**DSPs**) fairly, and finding **OPWDD** staff is very difficult



The Governor's budget has many helpful ways to pay **DSPs**, increase funding, and fund programs to train **DSPs**



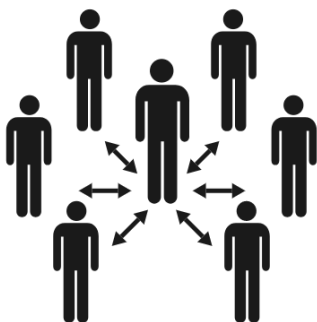
New York State must make the increases in funding for **DSPs** permanent and ongoing, and find more increases to make pay fair



Accessible transportation is important for people with disabilities to be part of their community



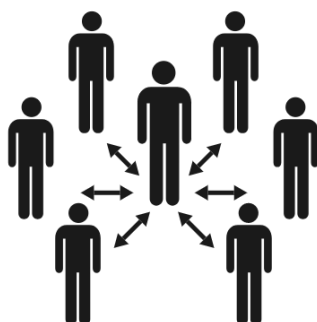
There must be increased funding for transportation and paratransit services for people to avoid isolation



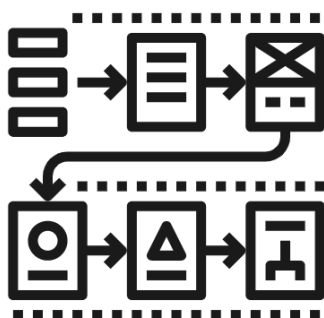
People with disabilities should be included and supported to participate in all transportation planning



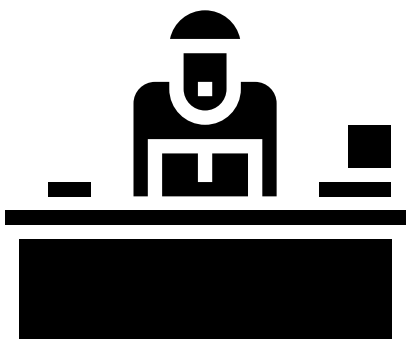
For self-advocates it is not clear that managed care would work, and we worry it would take money away from services



Our system must become more person-centered, less restrictive, and more community based to survive



We need to know what the alternative to managed care will be, or what path **OPWDD** plans going forward



The Governor has proposed creating a Chief Disability Officer, or **CDO** who would speak up for people with disabilities and work with business to employ people with disabilities.



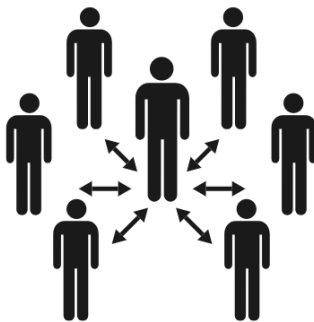
Self-Advocates want a **CDO** and hope that people with developmental disabilities would have a voice in the office



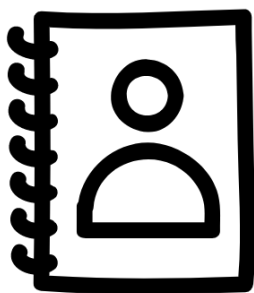
Self-advocates also want an **Ombudsperson** office where someone independent could resolve conflicts for people with disabilities



We believe it is too easy to impose Guardianship on someone who doesn't need it in New York



Self-advocates strongly support Supported Decision Making, where people can maintain their rights



New York State should come up with a plan to certify Supported Decision Making for people who choose this option



We encourage legislators to meet with us, talk with us, and visit us in our programs and communities



SANYS can work with you to support connections with self-advocates to make sure everyone's voice is heard.



You can find information on contacting us in your region at www.sanys.org