



2026 Self-Advocacy Association of New York State (SANYS) Policy Statement

Direct Support Professionals' (DSP) Pay

Staff shortages and turnover have remained a persistent crisis for far too long. DSPs are not getting paid enough. Staff shortages and turnover prevent us from living our lives as we wish and take a toll on our physical and emotional health.

We applaud the proposed OPWDD budget investments that adjust rates for minimum wage increases and provide a targeted 1.7% inflationary increase to address rising costs and boost DSP wages. However, this is just not enough. Families and professional colleagues are urging approval of a 2.7% increase—the bare minimum New York State should authorize this year. However, it is time to start asking what real change will cost.

What we want:

- ◆ Support for the proposed investments to preserve increased voluntary provider rates and cover minimum wage expenses.
- ◆ Increase Governor Hochul's proposed inflationary adjustment to at least 2.7%

Consumer Directed Personal Assistance FI

The 2025 transition to a single Fiscal Intermediary for CDPA services in New York resulted in widespread disruption, with many individuals still experiencing challenges under the new system. The advocacy community raised these concerns in advance, but they went unheeded. This must not happen again, and New York State must do better in delivering these essential services.

What we want:

- ◆ NYS to assess PPL services and collaborate with self-advocates, family members, and PPL to improve service quality, particularly the timeliness of technical assistance.
- ◆ NYS to honor its commitment to meaningful stakeholder engagement in all future decision-making.

Nurse Practice Act

SANYS supports changes to the Nurse Practice Act that would allow support staff to more easily assist with medication administration in our own non-certified homes. We should not be forced into a more restrictive living setting simply because we need help with medications.

What we want:

- ◆ Changes to the laws that would allow OPWDD Community Habilitation staff to assist us with our medications in our own homes.

Durable Medical Equipment

We were deeply disappointed that bills **S1616** and **A2520**, which would have increased Durable Medical Equipment (DME) provider rates to 100% of the Medicaid schedule, were vetoed last year. Far too many of us experience significant delays when we need new equipment or repairs to DME, such as wheelchairs and other mobility devices. When this occurs, it is not merely an inconvenience, but can leave us unable to travel, work, and attend to our most basic needs and wants. It can also lead to harm when delays force us to continue using equipment that no longer works safely, no longer fits our bodies or otherwise fails to meet our needs.

What we want:

- ◆ Support NYS Senate Bill **S8838** and champion legislation in the Assembly once again this year to increase those rates.
- ◆ Governor Hochul to approve that legislation should it pass.

Transportation

There is a significant shortage in accessible public transportation in NYS. This limits our opportunities to live and work where we choose and be a part of our communities.

What we want:

- ◆ Support for Governor Hochul's proposed investments.
- ◆ Improved transportation services so that all parts of our communities are accessible.
- ◆ We ask for your support of Assembly Bill **A00574** and legislation in the NYS Senate which would increase the number of accessible buses required of transit authorities and expand the service range of paratransit buses up to 3 miles. This would provide more accessible transportation to more New Yorkers with disabilities who are currently living or working (or seeking to live or work) beyond current service areas.

CDPA and HHA Pay

We want to live in the community rather than costly institutions, but low pay for CDPA and HHA staff is making that difficult.

What we want:

- ◆ Higher pay for staff in the CDPA and HHA programs so that we can get the quality health and self-care support we need to live in our communities.

Housing

We appreciate the continued investments in affordable and supportive housing and welcome the additional \$15 million in the OPWDD budget for "independent living opportunities for people with IDD," alongside the \$25 million allocated for general affordable housing development. However, it is important to note that most of the existing and new housing stock in NYS is not accessible. We ask NYS to look aggressively at significantly increasing accessible housing development so that we may be able to choose where we live and work as freely as our fellow New Yorkers who do not have the same accessibility needs.

What we want:

- ◆ Approval and strengthening of Governor Hochul's proposed investments.
- ◆ More money for affordable and accessible housing in areas we want to live.
- ◆ More money for accessible transportation, especially in rural areas.
- ◆ Inclusion of stakeholders in planning for accessible and affordable housing and transportation.