



A Step to Address the Disability Services Workforce Shortage: Raise the Limit on Hours for Parents of Minors and Spouses

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The Covid-19 pandemic has amplified the already existing disability services workforce shortage crisis. Many people who worked in the caring professions have left the workforce for various reasons. This lack of access to consistent staff supports has placed people with disabilities and older adults at risk, jeopardizing their health and safety or forcing them to move to more costly or congregate care settings. Many parents or spouses have ended up bearing the brunt of this caregiver shortage, often jeopardizing their ability to maintain employment outside of the home.

Currently, there is a 40-hour limit on the number of hours a parent of a minor, or spouse, can be reimbursed for providing disability related care to their minor child or spouse. The 40-hour limit also applies to the household, which means that no more than 40-hours per week can be paid to one *or both* parents regardless of the number of parents in the household able to provide care or the number of children in the household receiving services. The limit also doesn't consider the number of hours the person receiving services has been assessed as being eligible for.

This current limit is for the Consumer Direct Community Support (CDCS) program and will be the limit for Community First Services and Supports (CFSS), a program that the state plans to roll out in 2023 to replace the current Personal Care Assistance (PCA) program.

To help address the disability services workforce crisis, and support person-centered programs, we must maximize the current workers who are stepping up to do this valuable work – including parents and spouses.

This bill will:

- Allow each parent in a two-parent household to provide up to 40 hours of caregiving per week
- Allow a single parent, or one parent in a household where only one parent can provide care, to provide up to 60 hours of caregiving per week
- Allow spouses to provide up to 60 hours of caregiving per week
- Provide flexibility and better support for families with medically fragile children or spouse to care for their loved one with a disability at home, and to better control who comes in and out of their house, as we continue to navigate COVID and other contagious diseases.

This bill does not change the number of hours of care an individual is assessed as being eligible for, it instead changes who and how much care certain individuals can provide.