

## 2016-17 New York State Enacted OPWDD Budget

The SFY 2016-17 New York State budget grows spending on OPWDD supports and services to over \$4.2 billion dollars – an increase of 4.3% from SFY 2015-16. Notable highlights include the provision of funding to support costs of regionally-based minimum wage increases and the establishment of a Paid Family Leave benefit beginning in 2018.

Specifically, the budget:

**Invests \$120 Million for New OPWDD Service Opportunities.** The Budget includes State resources that will leverage the annual equivalent of \$120 million on an all shares basis to assist in meeting the needs of individuals living at-home with caregivers and those who are aging out of the school system. The majority of these new funds will be allocated specifically to meet the needs of those currently living at-home. Further, up to \$10 million of these new resources will be made available to the Regional Offices to develop residential opportunities for people with priority two and three status.

**Includes \$15 Million in Expanded Affordable Housing.** OPWDD will receive an additional \$10 million in capital funding (\$15 million in total) to support the development of affordable housing. These resources will ensure the availability of safe and accessible residential opportunities for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

**Makes \$15 Million Available to Expand Crisis Services.** In 2014, OPWDD implemented START (Systemic Therapeutic Assessment, Respite and Treatment) programs in two regions. START is a crisis and prevention response model focused on ensuring effective treatment and reducing dependency on higher levels of service. The additional funds will be used to expand START to two new geographic regions – New York City and Long Island.

**Dedicates \$24 Million to Transition Individuals to More Appropriate Community-Based Settings.** Consistent with the Olmstead Cabinet report and the Federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requirements, the Budget continues to transition individuals from developmental centers (52 individuals) and intermediate care facilities (100 individuals) to more integrated, community-based support systems. As part of this effort, OPWDD will utilize a combination of not-for-profit and State-operated services to deliver appropriate community-based services specific to individualized needs.

**Funds Minimum Wage Increases for Non-Profit Employees.** Includes \$7.5 million in state and federal funds to support costs associated with increasing wages to staff who currently earn less than the proscribed minimum wage levels. These resources will support both direct personal service and related fringe benefit costs during the 2016-17 State Fiscal Year. The enacted Financial Plan includes additional State resources associated with the approved minimum wage

phase-in schedule that, with the federal share, equate to some \$44 million in 2017-18 and over \$117 million in 2018-19.

**Provides Resources for Inflationary Increases.** Includes funding to support the provision of a cost-of-living adjustment and Medicaid trend to increase reimbursement levels of non-profit providers. Consistent with the statutorily proscribed methodology, the value of the increase is 0.2% which is based on the Consumer Price Index. This equates to additional funding of approximately \$10 million all shares.

**Sets Aside up to \$10 Million in BIP Funds to Assist Providers.** Makes up to \$10 million of BIP funding available, consistent with the approved BIP plan, to assist non-profit providers to transform pre-vocational, respite, supportive employment, and family care programs by reducing the use of segregated services and providing more integrated community-based supports.

### **Mental Hygiene Article VII Budget Bill (S.6407d/A.9007d)**

#### **Social Worker/Psychology Licensure**

The budget agreement extends the long-time exemption from licensure for individuals working in the OPWDD system for two additional years.

#### **Temporary Operator**

Grants OPWDD the authority for five years to appoint a temporary operator for the continued operation of programs and services under specific, outlined conditions.

#### **Extends reporting requirements**

Requires OPWDD to issue a report to the legislature on or before October 1, 2016 outlining the progress made in meeting housing needs and in implementing the recommendations of the Transformation Panel.

#### **Sheltered Workshop Transition**

Requires OPWDD, to the extent practicable and according to person centered planning, to provide employees of sheltered workshops who are not interested or able to work in a provider-owned business the option of receiving other services.

#### **Notification for State Operated IRA changes**

Requires OPWDD for two years to notify the legislature and relevant bargaining units as soon as practicable but no less than employees 45 days before a state-operated IRA can be closed or auspice changed unless exigent circumstances prohibit advance notification.