

This issue of continued access to direct care professionals for children or adults with intense behavioral or medical needs is significant. Lack of access to these providers could increase need for police response, visits to emergency room, or permanent family disruption. There are many human service and family issues at play here, and I hope we can have a presentation from Lilia Teninty and the ID/DD care workforce as well as Child Welfare. These are intense, high face to face contact services that present unique challenges during this pandemic.

Thank you,
Sara

Senator Sara Gelsler
Chair, Senate Human Services Committee
Sen.saragelsler@oregonlegislature.gov
(503) 986-1708* 900 Court Street NE, Salem, OR 97301
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Please note that this is not a private email. Staff have access to this account and all email to and from this address may be considered a public record.

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:13 PM

To: FRANCES.S.PURDY@dhsosha.state.or.us; Senator James Manning <sen.jamesmanning@public.govdelivery.com>; Rep Bynum <Rep.janellebynum@oregonlegislature.gov>; Rep KenyGuyer <rep.alissakenyguyer@oregonlegislature.gov>; Rep Alonso Leon <Rep.TeresaAlonsoLeon@oregonlegislature.gov>; Barbara Smith Warren <rep.barbarasmithwarner@state.or.us>; Rep.NancyNathanson@oregonlegislature.gov; Jo Ann Hardesty <joann.hardesty@portlandoregon.gov>; Se-ah-dom Edmo <seahdom@mrgf.org>; Leslie Gregory <leslie@right2healthus.org>; Zeenia Junkeer <zeenia@oregonhealthequity.org>; lilia.teninty@state.or.us; OTTER Susan <Susan.OTTER@dhsosha.state.or.us>; Johnson Leann R <leann.r.johnson@dhsosha.state.or.us>; Patrick.Allen@oregon.gov; Representative Julie Fahey <rep.juliefahey@public.govdelivery.com>; Jody Emert <jody.emert@lanecountyor.gov>; Sierra Beckett <sbeckett@rgoregon.com>; Chris Peck <chris.peck@co.lane.or.us>; rep.saragelsler@state.or.us; Lynne Terry <lynne@thelundreport.org>; mult.chair@multco.us; HCAO <president@hcao.org>; John Kitzhaber <hdk.lvs27@gmail.com>; Rep.DiegoHernandez@oregonlegislature.gov; Laura Dahill <laura.dahill@arclane.org>; Pam Ring <pam.ring@arclane.org>; jeff@jeffmerkley.com; Congressman.EarlBlumenauer@mail.house.gov; or04ima@mail.house.gov; rep.martywilde@oregonlegislature.gov; Rep.MartyWilde@oregonlegislature.gov; district1@multco.us; district2@multco.us; district3@multco.us; district4@multco.us; mayorwheeler@portlandoregon.gov; Amanda@portlandoregon.gov; chloe@portlandoregon.gov; lvinis@eugene-or.gov; Jay.Bozievich@lanecountyor.gov; Pat.FARR@lanecountyor.gov; Joe.Berney@lanecountyor.gov; pete.sorenson@co.lane.or.us; Heather.Buch@lanecountyor.gov; lcbcccom@lanecountyor.gov; Dawn.A.Jagger@oregon.gov; rosa.klein@oregon.gov

Cc: Jeni Canaday <jenicanaday@live.com>; Travis Stovall <Travis@erep.com>; Helen Ying <discover2010@gmail.com>; Kimmy Schenter <kimmy.schenter@gmail.com>; Edna Nyamu <Glenaedna@gmail.com>; Laura Raymond <laura@lauraraymondconsulting.com>; azaneylife123@gmail.com

Subject: Supporting Developmentally Disabled children and their families, PSW/DSPs and COVID-19

Oregon leaders in health and human services -

We are parents of children with disabilities whom experience high support needs, and are advocates for families in our community.

As the City of Portland drafts a shelter in place plan that likely the rest of the state will end up following, we are very concerned about families with Developmental Disability(DD)/Intellectual Disability (ID) children getting enough support.

If there is a shelter in place order, will Personal Support Worker (PSW)/Direct Support Providers (DPS) be considered essential staff to continue to work in families homes as they are able?

We are thankful to hear that Developmental Disability Services will be allowing summer time level of support hours during this crisis period but are concerned that people already struggle to find supports to fill these hours.

In the Lane County family support forum we are a part of we are already seeing instances of violent behaviors and police being called from just one week of kids being home during this stressful time.

We know there aren't enough beds as it is for our families when in crisis which adds to the importance of giving all the support we can in the homes.

Many people report their PSW/DSP are not coming to work because of their health or a family member being elderly/immunocompromised.

If PSW/DSPs are unable to come or the shelter in place order doesn't consider them essential, could families with children under 18 with DDS services be considered support workers as families with adult DD/ID are?

This would give families income which eases stress and the likelihood of family collapse.

Approving parents as providers will limit exposure if they are able to stay home from work and aren't able to have healthy support providers in the home.

A Lane County DDS case managers response as of this morning was:

"To be honest we are not sure but after talking with my supervisor he said it would be unlikely they would be considered essential staff because a parent or guardian would be available to provide care and they want to limit exposure for everyone. We will filter information as it comes in since everyone is trying to figure out how to get through this crisis. It's minute by minute right now. Our office is closed to the public and I will be working from home starting next week but will be in the office on Tuesdays to process paperwork. I understand the stress this causes for all of us. Unfortunately, ODDS doesn't consider parents PSWs/DSPs. Family members can be certified to be PSWs/DSPs if they are 18 and can pass a background check but the certification process is the same and can take time. If you have a family member you would like to get certified I would encourage them to contact Rever Grand to see if they can get them certified faster than the county could. If you would like them to be certified through the county they would need to contact Drew to set up an appointment for a background check to be completed. He can be reached at 541-682-2638."

And a Rever Grand agency coordinator responded this morning with this:

"I talked with my supervisor. They found out that PSW/DSP are considered essential staff. As a lot of families truly rely on their DSPs for day to day life. If you have any other questions please let me know."

It will be important to have consistent messaging on this across agencies to minimize stress and confusion.

Since it is often grandparents or other older family members who serve as the non-parent support workers, that is not an option when they are at high risk for death from COVID-19.

We feel strongly that the needs of families and vulnerable children be considered thoughtfully so that safety and health can be balanced.

Doing what we can to mitigate the added stress on vulnerable families will be important during this time. Many of these families have been living in crisis for years already and the fragility of their circumstances were already dyer before this added COVID-19 crisis.

Would you be willing to help us work on a proposed plan for family relief that includes:

- Ensuring PSW/DSP are considered essential workers
- Temporarily allow parents/family members to be paid as PSW/DSP workers (this already exists for the Adult DD population).
 - By passing lengthy background check for parents/legal guardians.

Sincerely,

Amy Fellows 503-887-9395 amy@wecandobetter.org

We Can Do Better

Jeni Canaday 541-232-6583 azaneylife123@gmail.com

A Zaney Life

Eugene, OR

We Can Do Better Board of Directors

Travis Stovall, board chair

Helen Ying

Edna Nyamu

Laura Raymond

Kimmy Schenter

=====

Amy Fellows, MPH (she/her)
Executive Director
503-609-0304

503-887-9395 cell

All great movements have come up from the people! Join today.

www.WeCanDoBetter.org

11th Annual We Can Do Better Conference - Date TBD

<https://www.wecandobetter.org/events/we-can-do-better-2020-conference-2/>

=====

If you have received this e-mail in error:

- 1) Please immediately advise the sender by reply e-mail and then delete this e-mail; and
- 2) Any use, dissemination, forwarding, printing or copying of this e-mail is strictly prohibited.

--



Beth Kessler
She/Her/Hers
beth.kessler@ocdd.org
(971) 304-4191
www.ocdd.org

--

Error! Filename not specified.Error! Filename not specified.

LESLIE SUTTON
Policy Director
leslie.sutton@ocdd.org
(503) 780-7937

2475 SE Ladd Ave. Ste. 231, Portland, OR 97214
www.ocdd.org