



May 2, 2023

My name is Tiffani Olsen, Director of IDD/APD Residential Services for Shangri-La. We are a nonprofit organization that serves individuals with disabilities and disadvantages to recognize and achieve their own potential. Specifically, in the department that I lead we serve adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in 24-hour homes, supported living in the community (in apartments, their own home or with family) and some in-home, private pay, and specialized contracts with APD. We are currently serving 100 people with 7 vacancies or spaces to serve additional people when additional Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are onboarded. Unfortunately, due to crisis level staffing, the number of people we support is less than what it was pre-pandemic as we have had to make the difficult decision to close six programs over the course of the pandemic. When fully staffed there would be approximately 180 people, mostly DSPs working in this department. Our current DSP vacancy rate is running around 20% and in some of our homes with the most vulnerable people we support, there have been 4 of 7 positions open at one time. This causes huge concerns for the quality of care and staff and management burnout.

I am writing in support of POP 132 which would provide funding to increase the wages of DSPs. ODDS, with support from provider organizations, developed this POP to help with the ongoing workforce crisis. Turnover in this field seems to always have been high but getting through the last three years was the worst that I have seen in my 24 years in the developmental disability community. The PHE is ending but we have not recovered. DSP turnover has remained between 45-50%, which has also caused turnover in our management positions to be about 50% for the last two years. We truly feel thankful for the investments made in the DD system last session and have continued to pass everything possible through to our DSPs toward wages and benefits but unfortunately, we have not experienced a great relief just yet which means that our work is not done.

Please continue to **Value the Work and Raise the Wage** by including POP 132 in the budget. Some of Oregon's most vulnerable citizens are counting on your support.

Sincerely,

Tiffani Olsen

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Value the Work. Raise the Wage.

We must continue to move the Direct Support Professional (DSP) workforce out of crisis.

The 2021 Legislature made a historic investment in services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and for the first time the I/DD system was FULLY FUNDED. Even though this investment allowed us to increase wages for DSPs by \$1.25 an hour (current average reimbursement wage for DSPs at \$17.81), providers still report an average DSP vacancy rate of 23%.

Additional increases in wages are needed to address the current workforce shortage. Per a recent ORA survey, 85% of providers are no longer accepting referrals to serve new people and 86% have reduced capacity or closed services and anticipate closing additional services.



ABOUT DSPs: Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) provide crucial supports to adults and children experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities. Their work includes managing medical needs, challenging behaviors, personal hygiene, and support to maintain employment and make real connections in the community. These incredibly dedicated individuals are not state employees, rather they work for small and medium non-profits and entities that provide community based services across Oregon. While not state employees, their wages (via I/DD rates) are funded almost entirely by state and federally matched funds.



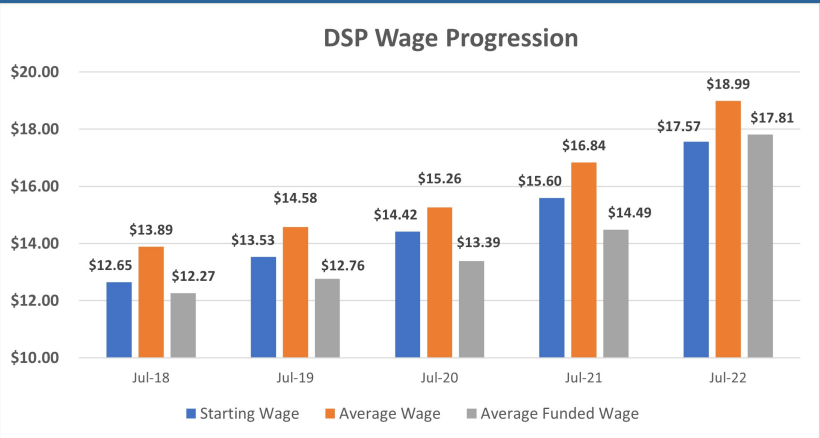
Protect your investment and continue fully funding I/DD rates while prioritizing DSPs!

In 2023 we must continue to increase DSP wages!

ODDS Pop 132 makes two critical long-term investments in Direct Support Professionals:

- Includes wage inflation and rate increases that bring DSP wages in payment category 1 to \$19.36, payment category 2 and 3 to \$20.38, and to \$22.42 in payment category 4 in the first year of the biennium.
- Increases the health insurance assumption to \$628.45 (currently \$525) per employee per month and adds the 0.4% employer Paid Leave Oregon payroll tax pick-up.

Average Wage Providers Pay Versus Wage That Is Funded:



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Value the Work. Raise the Wage.

\$188M

ODDS POP 132 - Targeted Rate Increase

Includes wage inflation and rate increases that bring DSP wages in payment category 1 to \$19.36, payment category 2 and 3 to \$20.38, and to \$22.42 in payment category 4 in the first year of the biennium. Increases the health insurance assumption to \$628.45 (currently \$525) per employee per month and adds the 0.4% employer Paid Leave Oregon payroll tax pick-up.

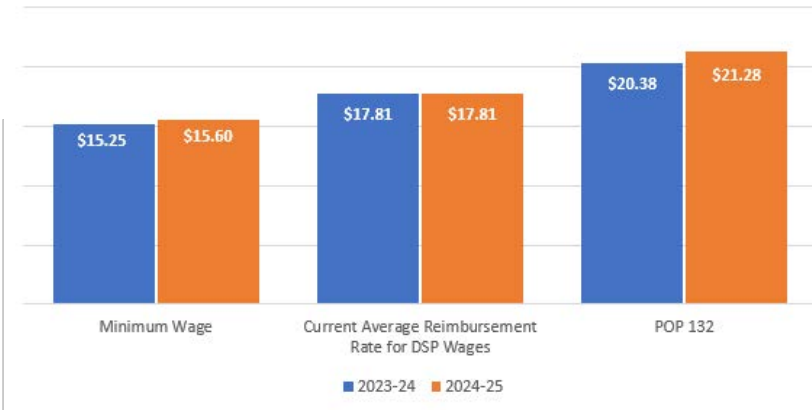
The Math:

General Fund:	\$188,140,231
Federal Funds:	\$342,515,679
Total Funds:	\$530,655,910

What do these investments mean for DSP wages?

Total GF Investment: \$188M

DSP Hourly Wage



Value the Work. Raise the Wage.