

DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS



DESERVE A LIVING WAGE



Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) with activities of daily living, emotional support, and community engagement. An estimated 20,000 Georgians are employed as DSPs.



Demand for this critical workforce is growing, but the supply of DSPs is nowhere near enough to meet it. I/DD service providers are struggling with turnover rates of 40-50%. **Low wages are a major contributing factor to this instability.**



Addressing this crisis is critical because **people with I/DD and their families continue to lose access to needed resources** as providers fold due to the DSP staffing crisis. This catastrophe can be stopped by fully funding I/DD services. This will allow providers to increase DSP wages, stabilize services, and serve more Georgians with I/DD. As the workforce is stabilized, it is vital that 2400 individuals are awarded waivers to reduce the current waiting list in a meaningful way. **If significant progress is not made now, the waiting list for services will always exist.**



I/DD services are provided throughout Georgia. **This workforce crisis is not singularly an urban, suburban, or rural issue.** DSPs, the people they support, and their families are constituents in every district of the state.



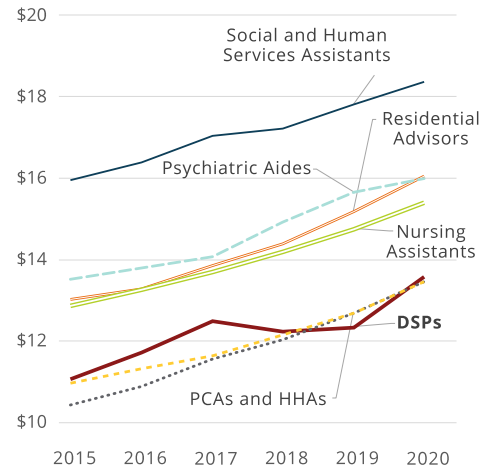
The time is now. History has shown time and again that any I/DD rate adjustment takes 12-18 months to get distributed to providers. The sooner funding is appropriated, the sooner the state can begin the long process of operationalizing and administering funds. The sooner **providers can access these funds to increase DSP wages**, the sooner Georgians with I/DD and their families can access a wider array of critical services.



SPADD is asking for full funding based on DBHDD's most recent I/DD rate study (\$107M). It is time we make the commitment to fund the *actual costs* of supporting this population.

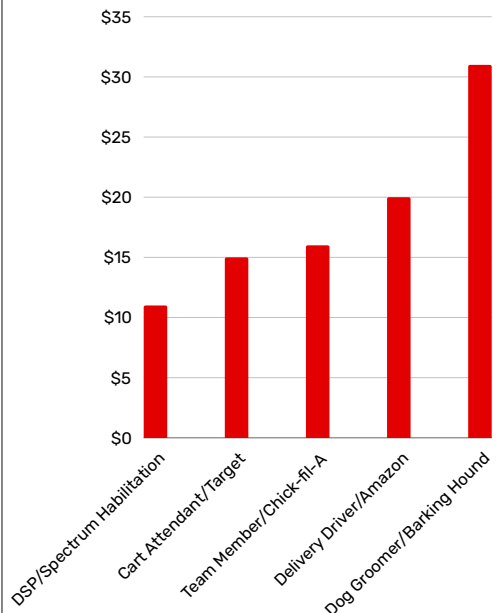
Comparing Hourly DSP Wages to Other Professions with Similar Responsibilities

Similar professions outside of IDD field have consistently earned higher wages.



Source: Bershadsky, J., & Burkhardt, C. (2022, March 1). *Policy Research Brief: How Much Do Direct Support Professionals Make? Putting Wages In Context.* University of Minnesota Institute on Community Integration. <https://publications.ici.umn.edu/community-living/prb/29-1/main>

Comparing Hourly DSP Wages in Georgia to Others in the Same Hiring Pool



Source: (n.d.). *Indeed Georgia Job Search.* Indeed. Retrieved January 3, 2024, from <https://www.indeed.com>

