



MEMORANDUM

To: Alliance Board of Directors
From: Joshua Rael, JD, MPA
Subject: 2010-20 ANNUAL REPORT (Josh’s 6-Year Update)
Date: July 2020

This report provides a summary of just some of the issues we worked on for our members and the people you serve in 2019-20. This annual report will also give you an idea of the issues we will be working on this coming year.

Although this was going to be one of our most successful years, we were forced to put most of our work on hold due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. In March 2020, Alliance’s efforts shifted from ending the DD Wait List , sustainable system funding, and eliminating subminimum wage employment to fighting to keep the supports and services intact and to help our members comply with the new federal and state emergency regulations to keep people safe and employed. This is a summary of some of that work.

Please feel free to share this document with your board, staff, and other non-member PASAs that would like to learn more about Alliance’s return on your investment. This work could not have been done without your support.

THANK YOU!

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LEGISLATIVE OVERVIEW

COLORADO STATE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Our collective work over many years resulted in the preservation of critical services and supports for people with disabilities, as well as the sustainability of vital community-based agencies who provide these services. Despite a nearly \$4 billion deficit (representing about 25% of discretionary funding), IDD services were largely spared from draconian cuts. [We can't say the same for many other important industries around the state](#), including state employees who received a 5% cut. Below are the critical IDD impacts:

- **FY 2019-20 Budget:** We are happy to report that no IDD reductions were made to the FY2019-20 Budget. We were able to maintain the following:
 - New DD Comprehensive Waiver Resources:
 - 399 new emergency waiver resources
 - 150 new waiver resources
 - Provider Rates:
 - Across-the-board: All IDD services (including services on the DD, Supported Living Services (SLS), and Children’s Extensive Support (CES) waivers, as well as Early Intervention (EI) rates) received a 1% provider rate increase.
 - Certain targeted rate increases were also included, including a 14% individual 15-minute respite increase for SLS/CES, a 12% increase for respite per diem for SLS/CES, and a 1%-23% increase in GRSS rates depending on the SIS level.
 - All HCBS homemaker, homemaker basic, and personal care rates also received an 8.1% rate increase (which must be 100% passed through to employees who provide these services in the same manner as the DSP Rate increase in [HB18-1407](#)).
 - Other Budget Items Protected:
 - CES and SLS waivers were fully funded with no waitlist
 - Elimination of the State SLS waitlist
 - 272 individuals can enroll in Family Support Services Program (FSSP) from the waitlist
- **Emergency COVID-19 Relief Funding**
 - [IDD Retainer Payments issued](#) for Adult Day Services; Day Habilitation; Prevocational Services; and Supported Employment on March 13, 2020 to July 10, 2020
 - Temporary rate increases (4% and 8%) for residential, personal care, and homemaker services issued on April 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020
 - CARES Act Provider Relief Funding for HCBS Providers
 - PPP Loan Funding
- **FY 2020-21 Budget**
 - New DD Waiver Resources:
 - 399 new emergency resources
 - The legislature kept 240 “churn” DD resources in the budget
 - Provider Rates:



- Across-the-board: All IDD services (including services on the DD, SLS, and CES waivers, as well as EI rates) received a 1% provider rate decrease. *The Colorado budget committee was considering a 5% reduction.*
- A \$1.5M total funds increase for behavioral health fee-for-service (mostly impacts RCCFs)
- A \$530k total funds increase for Habilitation in Residential Child Care Facilities
- Early Intervention:
 - The legislature removed the projected 6% caseload increase for 2020-2021. A January 2021 supplemental will be necessary if caseload growth occurs and the funds are unavailable.
- Additional IDD-related decisions included in the Colorado Budget:
 - CES and SLS waivers remains fully funded with no waitlist
 - State SLS remains fully funded with no waitlist
 - FSSP did not receive a cut
 - The remaining funds in the IDD cash fund were moved to the General Fund, about \$6.7M
 - DVR did not receive a cut

ALLIANCE BILL OVERVIEW

Due to COVID-19 and \$3.3 billion in mandated cuts to balance the Colorado budget, the following bills were postponed during the 2020 legislative session:

- [Alliance's END THE WAIT Bill](#): Drafted as a Joint Budget Committee Bill and supported by Colorado Leadership and most of the Colorado General Assembly, this bill would have ended the wait for 3,000 people waiting for residential services on the DD waiver over multiple years and invested in IDD provider rates.
 - END THE WAIT was supported by:
 - The Colorado Joint Budget Committee
 - House and Senate Republican and Democrat Leadership
 - 100+ organizations
 - 1,700+ people signed our petition
 - 400 people attended the Wait List Hearing on January 22nd, all wearing blue to support END THE WAIT.
 - 500 people attended IDD Awareness Day at the Capitol to support END THE WAIT
 - Alliance and our members:
 - Contacted and educated all 100 members of the General Assembly via email, social media and in-person meetings.
 - Collected stories of people waiting and stories of people that just received services to share with each Colorado legislator.
 - Sent daily END THE WAIT updates, hosted webinars, stakeholder meetings, and ran a PR/Social Media Campaign.
 - [Alliance Public Webinar: It's Time to END THE WAIT: 2020 Legislation to End the DD Wait List and Build Community Capacity](#)
 - END THE WAIT Press



- [Colorado vowed to end the waitlist for an adult disability program by 2020. Nearly 3,000 people are still waiting. \(Colorado Sun\)](#)
- [“He wants to live like any other person”: The human cost of Colorado’s budget crisis” \(Denver Post\)](#)
- [HB 20-1263](#) Disability Law Colorado, The Arc of Colorado, and Alliance’s Phase-Out Subminimum Wage Bill (SMW): This bill would have eliminated SMW by 2025, added new and restructured existing employment supports to maximize opportunities for people with IDD, and developed recommendations to streamline bureaucracy and reduce barriers to competitive integrated employment while protecting access to benefits so families are not penalized for income gains. View the Talking Points [HERE](#).

POST COVID-19 BILLS

- [HB 20-1363 Concerning the repeal of the requirement that IDD providers report on the use of money to increase the reimbursement rates for direct support professionals.](#) This bill removes the requirement from [HB 18-1407](#) to report on how 6.5% DSP rate increases were used in the last two years of the three-year requirement (PASSED and signed by the Governor.)

ALLIANCE’S COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE WORK: PRE-COVID-19

- ✓ Human Rights Committee (HRC) Work Group
 - [HRC Committee- submitted recommendations to HCPF Related to psychotropic med reviews and the future of HRCs](#)
 - [HCPF Stakeholder work is expected to begin on these recommendations in the fall of 2020.](#)
- ✓ Phase-out Subminimum Wage Task Force Work
 - The group convened by Alliance, Disability Law Colorado, and The Arc of Colorado met at least monthly between May 2019 and November 2019 to develop the [bill concept](#) and draft language which was introduced as [HB 20-1263](#). The Task Force included representatives from these agencies as well as other stakeholders interested in employment.
- ✓ EI/OEC Task Force
 - [Alliance continued to fight for EI services, funding and improved communications with OEC.](#)
- ✓ Alliance Rural Stabilization Workgroup
 - [Successfully worked with members to create a new statewide DD waiver allocation process to help enhance rural sustainability.](#)
- ✓ Alliance CMA-RFP Committee
 - [Alliance advocated for improvements to the HCPF Provider Search Tool.](#)
 - Advocated for an IDD-specific HCPF webpage: <https://www.colorado.gov/hcpf/individuals-intellectual-developmental-disabilities-services-supports>



ALLIANCE'S STATE AND FEDERAL PUBLIC POLICY WORK: PRE-COVID-19

COLORADO PUBLIC POLICY WORK

- Outside of our committee work, Alliance continued to follow a variety of ongoing stakeholder groups and the implementation of a variety of policies at the state level, including: Waiver Redesign; Electronic Visit Verification; the HCBS Settings Rule; and more.

COLORADO RULEMAKING WORK

Alliance participated in the following rulemakings, including stakeholder meetings to develop rules if applicable:

- ✓ New IRSS rules implementing required Division of Housing inspections (HCPF)
- ✓ Implementing regulations for SB 19-238, requiring that an 8.1% rate increase be passed through to employees providing personal care and homemaker supports (HCPF)
- ✓ Rights Modification rules related to the HCBS Settings rule (HCPF)
- ✓ [Colorado COMPS Order](#) (CDLE), newly applying Colorado wage and hour laws to CCBs and PASAs. Alliance was successful in arguing for narrow exemptions to the Order's overtime and rest period sections.
 - [Alliance's Comments to CDLE regarding the Colorado Minimum Wage Order \(August 2019\)](#)
 - [Alliance Comments on Proposed COMPS Order #36 for CDLE \(Dec 2019\)](#)
 - [Alliance Letter to CDLE Re: Requested Delay of COMPS Order for IDD Providers & Other Impacted Providers \(February 2020\)](#)
 - [CDLE's COMPS Order: News for IDD Providers \(March 2020\)](#)

FEDERAL PUBLIC POLICY WORK

- Alliance staff continued to provide national leadership within ANCOR as active members of the State Association Executives group and the Government Relations Advisory Committee
- Alliance's Ellen Jensby served as a reviewer for the national [Case for Inclusion report](#)
- Alliance staff and members attended ANCOR's policy summit and met with members of Colorado's Congressional delegation in fall 2019
- Federal initiatives included advocacy for: [Isaiah and Margie's Act](#) to allow HCBS providers to be paid when DSPs support a person during a short-term hospital stay (passed as part of COVID legislation); a separate Standard Occupational Classification for DSPs; and the HCBS Infrastructure Act that would have issued grants to states to help them rebalance in favor of HCBS.

ALLIANCE'S WORK ON COVID-19

- ✓ Alliance created a comprehensive and FREE COVID-19 Website for the entire Colorado IDD Community: <https://www.alliancecolorado.org/covid19>
- ✓ Alliance hosted weekly webinars for Colorado CCBs and PASAs to share information and resources, review guidance, problem solve issues, and have community discussions. From March 2020- June 30, 2020, Alliance hosted 16 COVID-19 webinars.
- ✓ Alliance staff attended weekly stakeholder meetings with HCPF, CDPHE, CDHS, ANCOR and reported back to Alliance membership.



- Alliance staff attended over 60 hours of HCPF webinars alone in a little over three months.
- ✓ Alliance worked with HCPF and CDPHE to collect questions, comments, and topics for the state departments' weekly webinars and reviewed the questions and IDD provider issues with HCPF staff on a weekly basis.
- ✓ Alliance published over 70 newsletters, action alerts and COVID-19 updates for the CO IDD Community: <https://www.alliancecolorado.org/covid-member-updates>
- ✓ Alliance reviewed, analyzed, and reported on over 40 pieces of [HCPF guidance](#) and informational memos, as well as a variety of complex CDPHE, CDLE, CDHS and federal guidance and informational memos.
- ✓ Alliance contributed to, reviewed, and reported on [HCPF's COVID FAQs](#)
- ✓ Alliance read and reported back on nearly 100 press releases from Governor Polis and the federal government.
- ✓ Alliance continues to track PPE emergencies and assists members in accessing PPE.
- ✓ Alliance helped coordinate transportation for people in wheelchairs leaving the hospital after recovering from COVID-19.
- ✓ Alliance assisted members in identifying, understanding, and accessing COVID-19 relief funding, such as: Disaster Loans, PPP loans, Federal "CARES Act", State COVID-19 relief funds, and private funding.
- ✓ Alliance staff served as a 24-7 resource for our membership in most anything they needed during this pandemic.
- ✓ Alliance contacted Colorado's congressional delegation on COVID-19 funding and retainer payment issues, including frequent communications on the need for HCBS-specific funding in COVID relief packages.
- ✓ Alliance hosted a Town Hall with Senator Michael Bennet specifically covering the experience and needs of providers during the pandemic. Senator Gardner's office was invited to participate in his own town hall.

ADVANCING ALLIANCE'S BRAND AND MEMBER BENEFITS

- ✓ Alliance voted to expand membership by offering two new associate membership levels: The "Preferred Vendor" and "Strategic Partner" memberships will be launched in September of 2020.
- ✓ 80 of the 100 legislators participated in the "Alliance DSP for a Day" challenge.
- ✓ Alliance strengthened the [Alliance Government Relations \(GR\) Team](#) and successfully implemented Alliance's new [GR decision-making process](#). In 2019, Alliance began to contract with Emma Hudson Consulting and Colorado Legislative Services for government relations and lobbying services, as well as Health Management Associates for data and IDD consulting services.
- ✓ [For the first time ever, Alliance hosted a Virtual Summit. The Alliance Summit was open to the public and was attended by more than 400 people from Colorado and around the country.](#)
- ✓ Alliance hosted public and member-only webinars:
 - [Alliance Public Webinar: It's Time to END THE WAIT: 2020 Legislation to End the DD Wait List and Build Community Capacity](#)
 - [Alliance Public Webinar: Home Modification Tax Credits by DOLA](#)



- [Alliance Member Webinar: CHRP Provider Recruitment](#)
 - [Alliance Member Webinar: How to Increase DSP Job Applications Online](#)
- ✓ Alliance represents over 80 PASAs and all 20 CCBs and has a record 67 Board Members (+9 Board Members from last year).
 - All members have continued with membership into FY2020-21.
- ✓ Alliance published a comprehensive Member Benefits Handbook for its members and a public [Member Benefit Brochure](#).
- ✓ Alliance welcomed nine new PASA and CCB members this last fiscal year:
 - VitalCare
 - Wellspring Community
 - The Child and Family Therapy Center of Denver
 - STRIVE
 - Rocky Mountain Human Services
 - Integrated Life Choices
 - Cheyenne Village
 - Alpine Homecare, LLC & Alpine Adult Day Care, LLC
 - The Resource Exchange
- ✓ Alliance has grown our public newsletter email list to nearly 4,000 people (+3,000 from last year).
- ✓ [Alliance increased our social media presence:](#)
 - [Facebook](#): 818 followers, thousands of likes and hundreds of shares (+104 from last year).
 - [Twitter](#): @Alliance_CO has 384 (+54 from last year) followers and 1,411 tweets (+165 from last year).
 - [NEW: Alliance You Tube Page](#).
 - New: Alliance is now on Instagram @alliance_coidd.
- ✓ [Alliance hosted the IDD Focused Behavioral Health Task Force Public Testimony Session with JFK Partners, The Arc, DD Council and Disability Law Colorado. Our Special Guest was Lt. Governor Dianne Primavera.](#)
- ✓ Alliance maintained and grew our partnership with the Colorado Rockies for [IDD Community Awareness Day at the Rockies](#) and a new partnership with the [Colorado Rapids](#).
- ✓ Alliance continued to participate and sponsor national events and conferences: Coleman Institute Conference, ANCOR National Conference, Families at the Forefront of Technology, IDD Nurses Conference, and The Arc Film Festival.
- ✓ Alliance added NEW [Member Only Discounts and Preferred Vendor Benefits](#).
- ✓ [Alliance's Josh Rael Honored with Denver Business Journal's 40-Under-40 Award for 2020](#) for his work with Alliance and the IDD community.
- ✓ [Alliance continues to maintain the very popular CO IDD Jobs Page](#) (free job postings for members).

LOOKING AHEAD...

In FY2020-21, Alliance will be engaged on a variety of bills, rules, and issues. Here are just some of the things we will be working on:

- [Alliance published, and is lobbying for, COVID Public Policy Priorities](#)
- 2020-21 Anticipated Policy Work:



- Protecting provider rates and enrollments from decreases
- Advocating for federal COVID emergency funding for HCBS
- EI budget issues: caseload, evaluations, eligibility changes, and other cost containment strategies we may need to support or oppose
- Phasing-out subminimum wage
- END THE WAIT - TBD
- State & local minimum wage changes
- Human Rights Committee Changes (Fall of 2020)
- Settings Rule
- Alliance's PLAN Committee priorities
- Rule Making and the Implementation Process:
 - APS Rulemaking
 - [COMPS Order Rulemaking for 2021](#)
 - [Early Intervention Rulemaking](#)
- New Committees, Workgroups and Shock Teams
 - The Alliance 2020-2025 [PLAN Committees](#):
 - [Employment Committee](#): Jodi Walters from Parker Personal Care Homes
 - [Emergency Response in Communities \(ERIC\) Work Group](#): Tara Kiene, Community Connections, Inc
 - [2020 IDD Housing Work Group](#): Cindy Opheim, Cottonwood Community Alternatives
 - [Data Collection Work Group](#): Kevin Harding, Imagine!
 - [Individualized Budgets Work Group](#): Kristie Braaten, DDRC
 - [Technology Work Group: TBA](#)
- Other IDD Work to Expect in 2020-21
 - Launch Alliance Associate Memberships: "Strategic Partners" and "Preferred Vendors" (September 2020)
 - interChange/Billing/Revalidation
 - Electronic Visit Verification
 - Individualized budgets for people with IDD
 - CHRP
 - Early Intervention/Child Find
 - IDD Provider Training opportunities
 - And much more...

PRESS COVERAGE AND ALLIANCE PUBLICATIONS FROM JULY 19-JUNE 2020:

- [We will need to wait a bit longer: An Update on END THE WAIT from Alliance \(6.29.20\)](#)
- ["He wants to live like any other person": The human cost of Colorado's budget crisis \(Denver Post 6.28.20\)](#)
- [Colorado Leads the Way; Tom Turner, Community Options - published by Montrose Daily Press \(6.9.20\)](#)



- [Babies Can't Wait; Tom Turner, Community Options - published by Montrose Daily Press \(5.16.20\)](#)
- [Colorado leading in support of people with disabilities \(5.20.20\)](#)
- [GUEST COLUMN: Colorado leading in support of people with disabilities, Cheryl Wicks \(5.18.20\)](#)
- [Colorado leads for people with developmental disabilities during crisis; Tara Kiene, Community Connections - published by the Durango Herald \(5.12.20\)](#)
- [May 26: Behavioral Health Task Force Public Meeting with Intellectual and Developmental Disability \(IDD\) Community Partners \(5.5.20\)](#)
- [Action Alert: New Interim COVID Bill Must Include Disability Supports \(4.20.20\)](#)
- [Action Alert: COVID Cost Survey for CCBs & PASAs](#)
- [Alliance Announces New COVID-19 Website and Questions Form- www.COIDD.com \(3.27.20\)](#)
- [Alliance Action Alert: Call Senator Gardner NOW! \(3.20.20\)](#)
- [Alliance Action Alert: Ask Congress to Address Need for Stable Disability Supports During COVID-19 Outbreak \(3.18.20\)](#)
- [Colorado Department of Labor and Employment Announces Delay in new Overtime Requirements for DSPs \(3.11.20\)](#)
- [Disabled Coloradans ensnared in the system await a response](#)
- [2020 DSP of the Year Finalists and Nominees](#)
- [Alliance's Josh Rael Honored with Denver Business Journal's 40-Under-40 Award for 2020 \(2.13.20\)](#)
- [NEW! TWO Alliance 2020 Community Awareness Events with the Colorado Avalanche!](#)
- [Alliance Letter to CDLE Re: Requested Delay of COMPS Order for IDD Providers & Other Impacted Providers](#)
- [Alliance Comments on Proposed COMPS Order #36 for CDLE](#)
- [END THE WAIT: We Are Being Heard!!!](#)
- [Colorado vowed to end the waitlist for an adult disability program by 2020. Nearly 3,000 people are still waiting. \(Source: Moe Clark & Jennifer Brown, The Colorado Sun\)](#)
- [END THE WAIT: Colorado IDD Wait List Successes](#)
- [Show your support with our END THE WAIT Facebook Frame!](#)
- [Happy New Year from Alliance!!!](#)
- [END THE WAIT: Wait List Hearing on January 22 at 10:00am](#)

- [Colorado Gives Day: Support a CO IDD Organization 2019](#)
- [END THE WAIT: Endorse the Proposed Legislation!](#)
- [END THE WAIT: Help Reduce Turnover!](#)
- [END THE WAIT: Sign the Petition to End the DD Wait List and Build Community Capacity](#)
- [It's Time to END THE WAIT! \(Public Newsletter sent 11.06.19\)](#)
- [Alliance's 2018 Direct Support Professional of the Year Gives Moving Speech](#)
- [Alliance's 2019 Direct Support Professional of the Year](#)
- [How Members are Celebrating DSP Appreciation Week 2019](#)
- [Press Release: Governor Polis Releases Proclamation For Direct Support Professionals](#)

PRIOR ALLIANCE ANNUAL REPORTS

- [Josh's 2015-16 Update](#)
- [Josh's 2016-17 Update](#)



- [Josh's 2017-18 Update](#)
- [Josh's 2018-19 Update](#)
- [Josh's 2019-20 Update](#)

