



Mental Health Association
in Michigan



MICHIGAN ASSISTED LIVING ASSOCIATION



Michigan Developmental
Disabilities Institute



WITH LIBERTY AND ACCESS FOR ALL



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Time is running out! Urgent state action needed to protect Michigan’s most vulnerable residents this week

Michigan Direct Care Workers will see a drastic wage cut March 1 without action

Without urgent action by the Michigan Legislature, the state’s Direct Care Workers, who take care of the Michigan’s most vulnerable residents, will endure a significant pay cut next week.

That cut will cause a mass exodus from the profession and unprecedented consequences for Michigan families who rely on this care for loved ones.

“Without action this week, Michigan’s most vulnerable residents will be left unsupported and that would have drastic consequences, especially during this global pandemic,” said Sherri Boyd, executive director of The Arc Michigan. “Direct Care Workers provide essential services and their work is more important than ever. The clock is ticking, and we urge the Michigan Legislature to avoid this massive pay cut and support our most vulnerable.”

Michigan’s Direct Care Workers provide essential personal care, training, emotional support and respite to an estimated 100,000 Michigan residents with mental illnesses or developmental disabilities. Direct Care Workers are severely underpaid, with the average starting wage being less than that of retail companies or fast-food restaurants.

“We are facing a dangerous cliff this weekend and families of those with mental illnesses and developmental disabilities are the ones who will suffer if action isn’t taken by the Legislature,” said Scott Schrum, CEO of Residential Opportunities Incorporated. “Michigan’s Direct Care Workers provide a lifeline for our most vulnerable and deserve to sustain their wages so they can keep providing care to those in-need.”

Last year, Governor Whitmer enacted the temporary \$2/hour wage increase for Direct Care Workers who are on the front lines of the pandemic. That wage increase had previously been extended but will end on Feb. 28, 2021 without swift action by the Michigan Legislature.

“Michigan families are relying on the Legislature to do the right thing and sustain this funding so that essential care for their loved ones can continue,” said parent advocate

Bob White. “There is no time to waste and the clock is literally ticking. Let’s support our most vulnerable and those that provide them with care, it’s the least we can do.”

With an average starting wage of \$11.44 per hour—and no benefits—Direct Care Workers have urgently needed the state’s temporary increase. In her Fiscal Year 2022 budget, Governor Whitmer called for the \$2/hour wage increase to become permanent, which would critically help this essential industry.

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