

News

Commissioner Macy posted an explanation of the **FY2013 budget rescissions** at DDS. Most of the cuts are in funding for private agencies - so ask your agency for more details. Other cuts are in non-waivered self-directed services such as community activity fees. Read DDS budget updates : <http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=433828>

The **Governor unveiled his budget proposal for** FY 2014 and FY 2015. DDS Employment and Day Services for adults are **funded about 1.6% BELOW the projected costs** of current service levels. Residential Services are **funded about 2.7% BELOW the projected costs of** current services. Funding is reduced for residential placements to encourage an increased use of various in-home supports such as family support grants and respite programs for new and existing DDS clients. Other savings will be realized through a review of group home and residential center placements for consolidation opportunities. Additionally, family grants and/or individual budgets will be analyzed to ensure payment amounts are appropriate. The reduction also reflects the transfer of Supportive Housing Funding to the Department of Housing to fund Rental Assistance Program certificates that will be used to develop an appropriate supportive housing model for individuals with intellectual disabilities served by DDS. Read more at: <http://www.ct.gov/opm/cwp/view.asp?a=2958&Q=518400&PM=1>

The Governor also proposed a new **\$20 million** state bond pool **to help nonprofit service providers** pay for infrastructure improvements.

HB 5171 AN **ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR GROUP HOMES**, which is in the Planning and Development Committee, would subject individuals who live with intellectual disabilities to public hearings if they create a community living arrangement with support from DDS.

HB 6001 AN ACT CONCERNING RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES would create segregated residential facilities for young adults.

Several other bills propose to interfere with DDS operations:
HB 6005 AN ACT CONCERNING A MORATORIUM ON THE CLOSURE OF GROUP HOMES.
SB 129 AN ACT CONCERNING THE HARTFORD REGIONAL CENTER OPERATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES.
HB 5267 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REGIONAL DELIVERY OF SOCIAL SERVICES.
SB 593 AN ACT CONCERNING LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF SOCIAL SERVICES.

DDS is moving to **new individual budgets and service rates for residential services at private providers** based on a person's level of need. Stand by for the announcement of the time line for this transition. Watch for more information at: <http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=3166&Q=500400>

Upcoming Events

The **Public Hearing on the budget for** the Department of Developmental Services is scheduled for 5:00 PM on Friday, February 15, in Room 2C at the Legislative Office Building.

Public hearings on other bills of concern to our families will be announced four days before the date of each hearing.

Guidelines for Testifying at a Public Hearing:

Keep it short! No more than three (3) minutes.

Speak from your own personal experience.

Identify yourself.

Identify the bill that you are addressing.

Clearly state your position "for" or "against" the bill.

Summarize.

Bring copies.

Remember that ordinary citizens brighten legislators' days!

The FETF will be scheduling events where families can voice their concerns to the Governor and to the legislature. Stay tuned for announcements. You may request an informational meeting near to you by sending an email to **family-empowerment@comcast.net**.

For more information about upcoming events, check our groups on Yahoo or Facebook – or send an email to **family-empowerment@comcast.net**

Join us on the Internet

Website: <http://family-empowerment.weebly.com>

Facebook: CT DDS Family Empowerment Task Force

Yahoo: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/family-empowerment/>

Email: family-empowerment@comcast.net

Support the FETF

You may support the FETF with a donation to our fiscal agent, Raising Voices for Action, Inc. Make your check payable to Raising Voices for Action, Inc. and please note on the check that it is for the FETF. Mail your donations to the FETF, 17 C Woodland Street, Vernon, CT 06066.

About the FETF

The Family Empowerment Task Force (FETF) is an informal, unincorporated, organization of parents, siblings, guardians, caregivers and self-advocates that works to sustain, enhance and grow the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) that are offered by DDS through its private provider network by: 1) Developing a supportive network of families and individuals who receive services; 2) Educating families about DDS services; and 3) Educating legislators and public officials about the needs of families.