



COVID-19 Package 3: Brief Update

Unfortunately, we will have more to do to make sure that Congress and the Administration understand that as a disability community #WeAreEssential. The latest COVID-19 response package included some crucial issues for people with I/DD and their families. It also did not include some of the provisions we opposed. . We've definitely made progress, but we have MUCH more to do!

Accomplishments/What is IN the Bill:

- The exemption of non-profits who receive Medicaid has been removed. Including non-profit organizations that receive Medicaid funds is a big win and important for our chapters and non-profits who are providing vital and life-saving services.
- Tax credits to cover the cost of paying for paid sick days and expanded FMLA are made refundable. IRS will be issuing forms and guidance for businesses to use.
- Money Follows the Person (MFP) and spousal impoverishment protections are extended through Nov. 30, 2020. This is an important extension, but we want these to be made permanent.
- Allows people receiving home and community-based services (HCBS) under 1915 (C) waivers to have their direct support professional assist them during a short-term hospital stay. This was already allowed under other HCBS authorities. This will assist in individuals transitioning home from the hospital.
- Includes new stimulus payments for low-income people. Unfortunately, people on SSI will have to have filed 2018 taxes or file 2019 taxes in order to receive the payment. That will be a problem for a lot of people with disabilities on SSI. On the plus side, these payments are not counted as income and are not counted as assets for 12 months, which was one of our asks.
- Mandated access to a 3-month supply of medications for people on Medicare who need to isolate because of their pre-existing condition. This does not include controlled substances (one of our asks) which can include medications used to treat seizures and other conditions, and Medicaid and private insurance coverage are not included.
- Additional education funds that can be used for various education programs, including IDEA.
- A directive for the Secretary of Education to make recommendations for waivers for education laws, including IDE which we oppose.
- Funding for HUD programs, including \$4 billion for Emergency Solutions Grants for homelessness assistance, \$5 billion in Community Development Block Grants, \$1.25 billion for the Housing Choice Voucher program, \$1 billion for project based rental assistance, and \$15 million for Section 811 Housing for Persons with Disabilities, along with many other important programs.
- It includes time-limited foreclosure protection for homeowners with federally-backed mortgages. If owners request forbearance (for a reduced or suspended mortgage payment), they must commit to not evicting tenants. This applies to both multifamily and single family units.
- There's a broad moratorium on eviction for tenants with subsidized rent.

What is NOT in the Bill:

- Adequate Medicaid funding to ensure states can provide care to everyone who needs it.
- HCBS grants to support Direct Support Professional (DSP) and Home Health Workforce and to support aging adults and people with disabilities in their homes and communities. This was a priority for us, but was not in the final version.
- Any language acknowledging the need of DSPs/Providers for personal protective equipment (PPE) or other medical supplies. That puts this irreplaceable workforce at risk.
- Permanent extension of Money Follows the Person (at a time with high risk for re-institutionalization). This program has already received short term extensions FIVE times at this point, which creates ongoing uncertainty. This was a missed opportunity to make it permanent, so that states can fully use the program and deinstitutionalize as many people as possible.
- As mentioned above, there's no way for people on SSI to easily get their rebates. This is an easy fix that SSA could do in a few days with a new form they send to Treasury and we are asking both the Administration and Congress to fix this problem.
- No boost to Social Security or SSI and no new SNAP funding. There was a \$15 billion boost to SNAP that is appropriated in this bill, but it's providing money for a commitment made in the last bill, not "new" money. There will be unmet needs in a time of crisis for people who already face tremendous financial challenges.
- No 3-month supply of medications for people on Medicaid or other health coverage, and the Medicare provisions do not cover controlled substances (such as some epilepsy medications)—leaving out huge numbers of people with disabilities.
- A moratorium on all residential evictions. Some renters and homeowners are not still protected unless there's a moratorium at the state or local level.

We will be activating our grassroots to ensure that what was missing is included in package 4. Thank you for all you've done to accomplish the wins that are in the package! Together, we'll continue our work to be sure the needs of the disability community are included in laws to combat COVID-19.