

Testimony to the Transformation Panel

Compensation for Direct Service Professionals

The compensation that DSPs earn is an embarrassment. You wouldn't want to work for what they earn today.

My experience comes as a parent of an adult with Down Syndrome who lives in a residence. I see the Direct Service Professionals who work with my son to be individuals that choose to do the work that they do because that is what they want to do. They do the work in spite of the fact that they do not earn a living wage. They do this because they are dedicated, educated, compassionate, patient, diligent, thorough and selfless. I could go on and on and on. They should be treasured much like other PROFESSIONALS such as doctors, nurses, teachers and physical therapists, to name a few. This is especially true because they care for the most vulnerable among us.

They must go through a comprehensive process to enter the field and we, as parents, wouldn't have it any other way. There are very few jobs that require this intensive screening. Successfully making it through that type of rigorous scrutiny in itself should be worth compensation well over and above that which food workers earn. Yet, this is not the case.

There is huge turnover in the field because the staff cannot possibly earn enough without working two or three jobs.

As a society, we should be ashamed of ourselves. This cannot and should not continue.

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