



Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential

## **Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP) Advocacy Priorities & Issue Areas**

**2017-2018**

LEAP advocates for systems change to promote Independent Living for all people who live with disabilities. Our policy agenda drives our advocacy and service efforts in the areas of: Home and Community Based Services, Employment, and Access to Benefits and Resources needed to achieve independence and self-sufficiency.

Independent Living (IL) encompasses health (including long-term services and supports – LTSS), education, economic stability, employment, and community inclusion including supports such as accessible housing, transportation and access to assistive technology. LEAP works in coalitions and independently to monitor, improve, and educate consumers, stakeholders and decision makers about policies that impact Independent Living.

### **ADVOCACY PRIORITIES**

#### **PROMOTE ACCESS, QUALITY AND SCOPE OF HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES (HCBS)**

- Improve Access to Medicaid, particularly home and community-based services (HCBS)
  - Monitor and seek to improve policy as Ohio Medicaid continues to move towards privatization through managed care for all categories of Medicaid recipients
  - Monitor Ohio's compliance with equity requirements under the Affordable Care Act, rooted in the Americans with Disabilities Act
  - Build and participate in coalitions in Northeast Ohio and statewide for stronger advocacy and coordinated education of policymakers and consumers
  - Educate consumers and advocates on Medicaid eligibility and HCBS waiver options
  - Promote alignment and expansion of capacity of Medicaid HCBS Waivers
  - When implemented, facilitate access as a model Single Entry Point agency under Ohio Medicaid's 'No Wrong Door' program.
  - Provide input and recommendations to The Administration for Community Living (ACL) regarding policies related to persons with disabilities
  
- Improve Quality of Home and Community-Based Services(HCBS) under Medicaid
  - Monitor and seek improvements to Ohio Medicaid managed care, particularly the use of person-centered planning, self-direction, care coordination and choice of provider.

- Promote consumer choice of provider by supporting competitive reimbursement of independent providers and expansion of the independent provider workforce.
- Enhance the Scope of services in Home and Community-Based Service Waivers and Demonstrations to include Benefits Navigation, Employment, Non-Medical Transportation, Transition Coordination and Assistive/Adaptive Technology

### **PROMOTE EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC STABILITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

- Promote inclusion of adults with disabilities, including transitioning youth, in Ohio’s re-design of workforce programs, including Vocational Rehabilitation, under the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act of 2014 and the reauthorized Rehabilitation Act; Support the Employment First model of service for those in the Developmental Disabilities system
- Continue to educate consumers and advocates about financial work incentives especially Ohio’s Medicaid Buy-In for Workers with Disabilities (MBI-WD) and STABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience)

### **PROMOTE ACCESS TO BENEFITS AND RESOURCES**

- Benefits Navigation: Advocate for the support of expert benefits communications and personal enrollment support to ensure that individuals have the necessary information to make the right benefits decisions.
- Support ABLE and other emerging federal policies that allow people with disabilities to work without jeopardizing access to needed benefits.
- Assistive Technology: Promote the elimination of barriers in federal assistive technology policy to increase the availability of and access to assistive technology devices and services for people with disabilities
- Support access to assistive/adaptive technology needed to live independently via Medicare, Medicaid and the health insurance Marketplace.
- Housing: Support expansion of accessible housing and non-discrimination under the Fair Housing Act, including support to the Ohio Housing Trust Fund and Section 811 Rental Assistance Program
- Transportation: Support state and local policies that expand availability of accessible transportation
- Personal Care Assistance: Promote continuation and expansion of Personal Assistance Services & Supports (PAS) by adding Attendant Services and Supports to their state Medicaid plans so that it would be available as a ‘Medicaid card’ service to individuals with an institutional level of care.

**PROMOTE EQUITY AND NONDISCRIMINATION:** In this and all of its work, LEAP supports policies and actions that advance the principles of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the *Olmstead* Decision in all community rights, including voting.