

SENATE, No. 1194

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 3, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator STEPHEN M. SWEENEY

District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)

Senator TROY SINGLETON

District 7 (Burlington)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Addiego, Madden, Greenstein, Gopal and Pou

SYNOPSIS

Makes FY 2020 supplemental appropriation of \$16.5 million for direct support professional wage increase.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/5/2020)

1 **A SUPPLEMENT** to "An Act making appropriations for the support
2 of the State Government and the several public purposes for the
3 fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 and regulating the disbursement
4 thereof," approved June 30, 2019 (P.L.2019, c.150).

5
6 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and the General Assembly of the
7 State of New Jersey:

8
9 1. In addition to the amounts appropriated under P.L.2019,
10 c.150, there is appropriated out of the General Fund the following
11 sum for the purpose specified:
12

94 INTERDEPARTMENTAL ACCOUNTS

70 Government Direction, Management, and Control

74 General Government Services

9420 Other Interdepartmental Accounts

GRANTS-IN-AID

04-9420	Other	Interdepartmental	Accounts	\$16,500,000
.....				
Total Grants-in-Aid Appropriation,				
	Other	Interdepartmental	Accounts	
.....				\$16,500,000

Grants-in-Aid:

04 Direct Support Professional Wage Increase (\$16,500,000)

13
14 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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17 **STATEMENT**

18
19 This bill makes a FY 2020 supplemental appropriation of \$16.5
20 million for direct support professional (DSP) wage increase. These
21 funds would increase the existing appropriation of \$40 million, for
22 a total FY 2020 appropriation of \$56.5 million. A DSP provides
23 hands-on supports to people with intellectual and developmental
24 disabilities (I/DD) and are the reason people with I/DD are able to live
25 meaningful lives in the community. DSPs implement complex
26 behavioral health plans, oversee and administer essential medical care,
27 comply with regulations and reporting requirements, and serve as
28 advocates, companions, mentors, and caregivers. Although the
29 appropriation benefits DSPs providing services under provider
30 contracts or fee-for-service agreements within several departments,
31 the vast majority is ultimately allocated to the Division of
32 Developmental Disabilities in the Department of Human Services.

33 At an average starting salary of \$12 per hour, DSP wages are not
34 competitive, with an increasing number of retailers paying \$15 to \$18
35 per hour and New Jersey's minimum wage on a path to \$15 per hour

1 for entry-level jobs that are far less demanding. To compound the
2 issue, there is a growing DSP shortage that is threatening the safety
3 and health of individuals with I/DD living in community-settings.

4 It is the sponsor's goal that this supplemental appropriation will
5 provide the funding necessary in order for the DSP workforce to stay
6 competitive and maintain a stable. According to the Coalition for a
7 DSP Living Wage, these funds, along with a federal match of \$16.5
8 million, will equal a \$1.20 an hour increase for DSPs, which is needed
9 in order to accommodate the next increase to the minimum wage on
10 January 1, 2021 to \$12 per hour.