

News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



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Special Announcements:

GATES Board of Directors Meeting:

Friday, April 30, 2021, ZOOM Call - 10:00 AM to noon

Halfway Mark...



**Dawn A.
Randolph, MPA**

February 22, 2021

Key Events This Week

Session is in five days - February 22-26

Monday, February 22nd

Today is the 20th day of a 40-day session. They are finally voting on bills in both Chambers. Currently no bills of interest are moving regarding employment or disability issues.

Midpoint of session reached this week

While we do not know when crossover day will be for each chamber, legislators are moving bills finally. Crossover day is when a bill must leave one chamber for the other in order for it to be considered this session. This is the first year of the biennium (sessions are two years long) and any bill that does not make it this year will be considered for next year. The only bill this does not apply to is the appropriations bill which always must pass, even if it is a few days late for crossover.

Flow of the session for the next two weeks

The House and Senate are still taking the session in two week increments and we have a schedule through March 1st for Day 25.

Amended Budget Finalized and signed

The Senate moved quickly to pass the Amended budget when the House sent it over on January 28th. In only 14 days the two Chambers agreed on all the House and Senate additions and the Governor signed the Amended FY21 budget on February 15th. This ensured that the business that needed to be done to fund state government this fiscal year was completed before the session had any urgent need to suspend due to increase in COVID-19 infections. However, that does not seem likely at this point because numbers are trending down, and the session should be able to complete its business sometime in late March.

Big Budget FY22 moving through the House

During the week of February 15th while I enjoyed an extended stay in the hospital, House budget subcommittees met to hear from agency officials and the public on the Governor's recommendations for FY22 (**HB 81**). I could not be prouder of our GATES family as each CEO testified via zoom on Monday, Feb 15th and then wrote letters to committee members to request the restoration of the line item for CRPs. It was amazing to also hear from a parent after GATES members testified on how difficult it was to get services from GVRA. While none of us knew the parent and her son, it was quite obvious that they were greatly disappointed and were amazed that a group of providers would take the time to testify about it. If you would like to view the hearing you can watch it at [here](#). This is a four and a half hour hearing. You can see Executive Director Chris Wells near the 1 hour 7-minute mark and GATES members at the 3 hour 9-minute mark.

Next steps are working with the committee, Chairman Terry England and Speaker Ralston to continue to advocate for the line item with follow-up thank you emails. Thank you to everyone who has already submitted those emails.

FY '22 Budget Details

NOTE: Cuts are in bright red while any additions are in green. Overall, any increase in funds have come from the federal government due to COVID-19 and various changes to the FMAP formula (Federal Medical Assistance Percentage) or from the CARES Act. Cuts or reductions in funding was supplanted with federal funds. If you want to look at the [budget tracking document](#) you can view it online.

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation

Department Administration

Purpose: The purpose of this appropriation is to help people with disabilities to become fully productive members of society by achieving independence and meaningful employment.

Recommended Change:

Governor made no recommended changes.

House held hearings and awaiting their recommendations.

VR Program

Purpose: The purpose of this appropriation is to assist people with disabilities so that they may go to work.

Governor made no recommended changes.

House held hearings and awaiting their recommendations.

Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities - Service Impact

Adult Developmental Disabilities Services

Purpose: The purpose of this appropriation is to promote independence of adults with significant developmental disabilities through institutional care, community support and respite, job readiness, training, and a crisis and access line.

Recommended Changes:

- Increase fund for 100 additional slots for the New Options Waiver (NOW) and the Comprehensive Supports Wavier Program (COMP) for individuals with intellectual disabilities **\$1,957,356**.
- Increase funds to reflect the adjustment in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) from 67.03% to 66.8% **\$1,541,873**.
- Increase funds to reflect the loss of the enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency **\$10,925,195**.

Total Change State Funds \$3,499,229 & State Funds increase because of COVID-19 FMAP 10,925,195

Child and Adolescent Developmental Disabilities

Governor no recommended changes.

Awaiting House changes.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Governor no recommended changes.

Awaiting House changes.

Adult Mental Health Services

Purpose: The purpose of this appropriation is to provide evaluation, treatment, crisis stabilization, and residential services to facilitate rehabilitation and recovery for adults with mental illnesses.

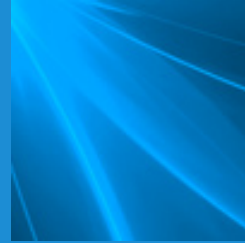
Recommended Change:

- Increase funds to reflect the loss of the enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency **\$2,335,605**.
- Increase funds to reflect the adjustment in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) from 67.03% to 66.8% **\$257,039**.
- Utilize existing funds to expand the housing supports pilot program for the Georgia Housing Vouchers Program \$0

Total Change **State Funds \$2,592,644**

Call for Information

THE PORTAL is a communication tool for GATES and GATES members. If you have stories about your organization, staff announcements, program descriptions, or other information you want to share with other GATES members, please send the info to Charles Hall, chall@asginfo.net



GATES

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