

## News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



THE  
**GATES PORTAL**

### In This Issue:

Session set to end  
March 31st

### Special Announcements:

**GATES Board of Directors Meeting:**  
Friday, April 30, 2021, ZOOM Call - 10:00 AM to noon

## Session set to end March 31st



**Dawn A.  
Randolph, MPA**

### March 1, 2021

#### Key Events This Week

*Session is in three days - March 1, 3 & 5*

*Crossover Day set - March 8*

*Each chamber must get their bills passed their chamber over to the other side by next Monday, March 8th or they will die or need to be amended to another bill. The House and Senate have created two full committee days on Tuesday, March 2nd and Thursday, March 4th. This will allow committees to move bills to the floor faster.*

#### Flow of the session for the rest of the 2021 Session

The House and Senate agreed to tackle the final adjustment resolution by setting the final day of the 2021 session on March 31st. We have an end date! The chambers usually convene at 10am and committees occur early morning to after lunch. The resolution is [HR 264](#). Here is the schedule.

March 1 Monday - Day 25  
March 2 Tuesday - Committee Day  
March 3 Wednesday- Day 26  
March 4 Thursday - Committee Day  
March 5 Friday - Day 27

**March 8 Monday - Day 28 (Crossover)**

March 9 Tuesday- Day 29  
March 10 Wednesday- Day 30  
March 11 Thursday - Day 31  
March 12 - Day off - may have committees

March 15 Monday - Day 32  
March 16 Tuesday - Day 33  
March 17 Wednesday- Day 34  
March 18 Thursday - Day 35  
March 19 - Day off - may have committees

March 22 Monday - Day 36  
March 23 Tuesday - Day 37  
March 24 Wednesday - Committee Day  
March 25 Thursday - Day 38  
March 26 Friday - Committee Day

March 29 Monday - Day 39  
March 30 Tuesday - Committee Day  
**March 31 Wednesday - Day 40 (Sine Die)**

**Legislation**

The session is focused on business development, voting, and other public concerns. There are not many healthcare or disability bills moving through the session at this time. This week there will hopefully be a few and an update after Crossover Day. But there is nothing to advocate for or against at this time.

**Big Budget FY22 about to move out of the House**

We are awaiting the House Appropriations Committee meeting to provide the recommendations for FY22 ([HB 81](#)). It will definitely happen this week and I believe it will likely be Wednesday very early in the morning. At this moment GATES line item request is not receiving strong support from Appropriations Chairman Terry England nor GVRA Executive Director Chris Wells, who is opposed to the line item request.

In a meeting with Chairman England last Wednesday, February 24th, Charles Hall, Dave Ward, and Dawn Randolph, the Chair expressed his concern for the line item request at this time:

1. The Governor can (and does) easily veto line items, and that would take the entire amount out of the budget for the line itemed CRP's contract or he could veto all CRP contracts;
2. Language used to direct funding for CRPs in the bill could be removed for a CRP or multiple CRPs through an undefined amount or a range. This would not remove the funding from the agency but it would also leave no clear intent for the CRP(s).

3. It is unclear to Director Wells whether a line item appropriation would stand up to federal scrutiny. We have no independent indication from RSA if this is accurate. We are researching this premise.

On a positive note, Chairman England is seeking solutions. Legislators are hearing concerns and frustrations from Georgians with disabilities that they are not being served. Our advocacy to legislators is working in this respect to raise awareness of services needed.

As soon as we know the House Budget recommendations, we will begin advocacy in the Senate Human Development and Public Health Subcommittee of Appropriations chaired by Senator Ben Watson (R-Savannah). He is the 'brand new' Chair of this committee after the retirement of Senator Renee Unterman (R) last year to run for Congress (she lost the primary). We have some sympathetic Senators on this committee, advocacy will still be needed.

#### **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.

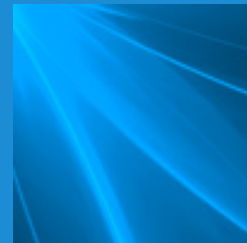
#### Recommended Change:

- 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](mailto:chall@asginfo.net)



# GATES

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