



State of Wisconsin

Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities

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Issue: Caregiver Shortages

Wisconsin is experiencing a statewide caregiver shortage, which was an ongoing issue prior to COVID-19, and now is at a critical point. The pandemic has caused instability in the caregiver workforce as workers are unable to provide care if their children's school or daycare has closed, if they are sick, or have been exposed to COVID-19. With lack of backup caregivers available this has caused some individuals with disabilities to move from their homes or apartments to live with parents or relatives or to move into rehabilitation facilities.

Recommendations:

- GCPD recommends DHS creating caregiver education materials on their personal responsibility to behave safely and the risk they pose to the people they care for when they disregard safeguards to prevent COVID-19 spread. This includes personal behavior, not coming to work sick or if they have been exposed to COVID-19, getting their flu shot, and the COVID-19 vaccine when available.
- GCPD also recommends the state providing temporary hazard pay for caregivers providing Medicaid-funded services during the pandemic to compensate workers for the risk they are enduring while caring for people with disabilities.
- In addition, GCPD recommends DHS requesting MCOs, ICAs, and other personal care providers to provide caregivers paid sick time to discourage caregivers coming to work when they are ill.