Understanding the Competitive Workforce Factor

• In 2019, legislators made a critical investment in the disability services workforce by beginning to address the 17% wage gap that exists between working in disability services as a Direct Support Professional and working in other comparable jobs in our communities.

• Specifically, the legislature created a new Competitive Workforce Factor within the Disability Waiver Rate System with the goal of making the wages and benefits of disability services jobs more competitive.

• The Competitive Workforce Factor was set at 4.7% and will equate to an average 3% to 4% increase in the dollars individuals receive for accessing services, the majority of which go to staff wages and benefits.

• The Competitive Workforce Factor was officially approved by the federal government near the end of 2019 and will now begin being implemented on an individual by individual basis throughout the 2020 calendar year.

• In December of 2020, providers of disability services are required to post a report of the additional revenue generated by the Competitive Workforce Factor and how their organization will use that revenue.

• The establishment of the Competitive Workforce factor was a significant step forward in strengthening the disability Direct Support Professional workforce.

• **Underpaid:** The average hourly wage for direct care is $13.15 which is 17% less than jobs requiring similar skills and experience.

• **Understaffed:** With 18,500 current openings within our workforce of 93,000 the profession has a 19.3% vacancy rate, one of the largest in the state.

• **Under pressure:** 50% of DSPs stay in their position for less than a year.

*Data based on Department of Human Services 2019 Cost Reporting Pilot Labor Market Reporting Preliminary Findings

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