

BUDGET PRIORITIES

MODIFY: Health and Mental Hygiene **Part P** – Increase the Targeted Inflationary Increase (TII) from 1.7% to 2.7% and **Restore** Care Coordination Organizations as eligible programs under the TII

INCLUDE: **CareForce Affordability Initiatives** – Affordable Housing Lottery Preference (S.8676), Employer-Assisted Housing Matching Grant Program (S.8672), and SONYMA CareForce Home Ownership Incentive (S.8675)

ACCEPT: Revenue **Part A** - Enhancing the New York Child and Dependent Care Credit

RESTORE: OPWDD Healthcare Enhancement to help provider agencies improve and expand employee health coverage affordability.

Targeted Inflationary Increase (TII)

Including a **2.7% Targeted Inflationary Increase (TII)** in SFY 2026–27 is crucial to ensuring access to supports and services. Over the past five years inflation has increased by 23.7% and minimum wage has increased by 26.5% while rates have increased by 15.8%. Without a 2.7% increase, funding will continue to lag behind the actual cost of delivering services — leaving non-profit providers unable to competitively compensate Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), sustain existing programs, or meet the growing needs of New Yorkers with I/DD.

In addition, we are requesting that Care Coordination Organizations (CCOs) are **restored** as eligible programs under the TII. Doing this is critical to preserving person-centered planning, navigation of services, and coordination of medical and behavioral health care for individuals with I/DD—functions that are foundational to quality outcomes and cost-effective care.

NYDA SURVEY DATA

Statewide Average Starting Wages and Staff Vacancy Trends



SFY	COLA/TII	Average Starting Wage Increase
2021-22	1.0%	2.7%
2022-23	5.4%	6.9%
2023-24	4.0%	4.6%
2024-25	2.84%	3.5%
2025-26	2.6%	9.1%
	15.8%	26.8%

CareForce Affordability Initiatives

In 2023–24, NYDA, in partnership with Miami University of Ohio, conducted a first-of-its-kind statewide study examining Direct Support Professionals’ (DSPs) quality of life and the barriers affecting workforce stability. One of the most striking findings: **nearly half of all DSPs experience housing insecurity.**

To respond to this challenge—and related pressures tied to childcare and healthcare—NYDA is advancing the following targeted policy proposals:



- ❑ **Affordable Housing Lottery Preference:** Establishing a CareForce Affordable Housing Lottery Preference within state-supported housing programs would prioritize these workers for affordable units near their workplaces, supporting workforce stability and community continuity. (S.8676)

- ❑ **Establish an Employer-Assisted Housing Matching Grant Program:** A state Employer-Assisted Housing Matching Grant—providing a 50 percent match, up to \$3,000 per worker annually—would be used to support employees with security deposits, rent support, emergency arrears, or first-time homebuyer costs, reducing turnover and strengthening service continuity. (S.8672)

- ❑ **Create a SONYMA “CareForce” Homeownership Incentive:** This would expand access to homeownership for DSPs and similar workers through interest rate reductions and down-payment assistance and align with existing state incentives for other essential professions. (S.8675)



- ❑ **Enhance the New York State Child and Dependent Care Credit:** This would lower out-of-pocket care costs, support workforce participation, and improve financial stability for working families. (**Accept:** Revenue Part A - Enhancing the New York Child and Dependent Care Credit)



- ❑ **Restore the Healthcare Enhancement Program:** Reinstate funding to allow nonprofit providers to create or enhance health insurance coverage or reduce frontline workers’ out-of-pocket costs. A \$2,500 annual credit per eligible employee is crucial to maximize affordability without further straining provider agency budgets.

	Cost Increases from 2023-2025	Projected Costs for 2026
Health Insurance	16.7%	11.5%