

Background:

Title IV, Chapter 531, Section 531.0235 of the Texas Government Code requires TCDD, jointly with the Office of Prevention, to prepare a biennial report on the state of services to persons with disabilities in Texas. This report is to be provided to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Executive Commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission no later than December 1st of even-numbered years, prior to the beginning of each regular session of the Texas Legislature. The next report is therefore due by December 1, 2012.

Six reports have been submitted by TCDD and TOP to date. TCDD has tailored recommendations in each report to focus on an area that significantly impacts persons with disabilities. Key focus areas of previous Biennial Disability Reports were:

- ✓ Overview of Current Services, Supports, and Needs (2000)
- ✓ Special Focus on Personal Assistance Services (2002)
- ✓ Special Focus on Housing (2004)
- ✓ Employment (2006)
- ✓ The state’s allocation of resources to provide long term services and supports for people with developmental disabilities (2008)
- ✓ Representative profiles of the needs and situations of people with disabilities, and their families, who are waiting for services in Texas (2010)

The Council approved a special focus for the 2012 Biennial Disability Report: *The interconnectivity of education with employment for individuals with developmental disabilities, including measures of consumer satisfaction.*

TCDD staff will review the proposed recommendations for the 2012 Biennial Disability Report with the Committee of the Whole. The Committee will also receive an update regarding the status of Biennial Disability Report activities and may provide additional guidance as appropriate. Additional information is included in the meeting materials.

Committee of the Whole

Agenda Item 7.

Expected Action:

The Committee of the Whole will recommend TCDD 2012 Biennial Disability Report Recommendations for Council approval.

Council

Agenda Item 11.

Expected Action:

The Council will consider the 2012 Biennial Disability Report Recommendations as recommended by the Committee of the Whole and determine final action.

System Recommendations

1. Rebalance the system that serves persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities by expanding cost-effective policies honoring the choices of individuals to live in the most integrated setting to meet their needs, identifying and providing supports and services to meet the needs of persons when and where they need them, and transferring the savings so that more persons with disabilities have the opportunity to be included in their communities.
2. Develop and implement strategies that address the needs of families in crisis to prevent the unnecessary placement of children in any institutional setting.
3. Address the direct support workforce shortage by collecting and analyzing trends regarding workforce demographics and wages, developing and promoting a peer support workforce, expanding consumer direction, and restructuring payment methodologies to ensure that the legislature has the ability set direct service wages at levels commensurate with the value and scope of the service.

Special Focus Section – Education and Employment Recommendations

1. Develop, with broad agency and stakeholder input, a methodology to track services and employment outcomes for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities across agencies and programs.
2. Ensure that the planning process for individualized education services and supports for students with disabilities is person and family centered and directed; information about real work options is discussed early and often during the transition from school to adult services; and that options considered by students, families and school personnel include supported work-study, internships, community activities, mentoring programs, local and state post-graduation resources and independent living options.
3. Identify systemic barriers that prevent some persons with disabilities from achieving competitive employment in integrated settings including agency policies and procedures, practices, and financing structures, and develop implementable strategies to remove those barriers and improve outcomes.
4. Expand the number of employers interested in hiring persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities by continuing to disseminate information and training materials about common, reasonable accommodations, tax incentives, best practices and benefits of employing persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.