



**Direct Service
Provider
Wage Report**
December 2025



**Department of
Medicaid**

**Department of
Aging**

**Department of
Developmental
Disabilities**

Background

Following the enactment of Amended Substitute House Bill 33 by the 135th General Assembly, the DeWine-Husted Administration and Ohio lawmakers approved targeted funding to enhance compensation for direct care workers. This investment responded to challenges faced by providers during the COVID-19 pandemic and rising economic pressures. Budget allocations across the Ohio Departments of Medicaid, Aging, and Developmental Disabilities were directed toward provider rate increases to support workforce stability and improve access to care.

To monitor the impact of these rate increases, Section 751.20 of the legislation requires annual reporting on direct care worker wages. The departments of Medicaid, Aging and Developmental Disabilities conduct agency surveys, as described within.

Introduction

The programs and services highlighted in this report are for individuals with a variety of functional needs or disabilities who need assistance to remain in their home and to prevent unwanted and unnecessary institutionalization. These services help individuals remain independent with activities such as assistance with bathing, dressing, eating, and walking. Individuals receiving these services are enrolled in a Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) Medicaid waiver and/or receive community State Plan services.

Waiver Program Overview

The 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Program is a Medicaid initiative that allows states to offer long-term care services in home or community settings instead of institutions. It supports community-based, cost-effective, and person-centered care tailored to an individual's preferred living environment.

In Ohio, there are six waiver programs designed for individuals who would otherwise qualify for care in a nursing or intermediate care facility. This report focuses on the following waivers:

Individual Options (IO) Waiver: Serves individuals with intellectual disabilities or developmental disabilities ages 0 or older who meet an ICF/IID level of care.

Level One (L1) Waiver: Serves individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities ages 0 or older who meet an ICF/IID level of care.

SELF Waiver: Serves individuals with intellectual disabilities or developmental disabilities ages 0 or older who meet an ICF/IID level of care.

PASSPORT Program: Serves individuals ages 65 or older and individuals with physical disabilities ages 60-64 years who meet a nursing facility level of care.

MyCare Ohio Waiver: Serves dually eligible (Medicare and Medicaid) individuals ages 65 or older and individuals with physical disabilities aged 18-64 years who meet a hospital or nursing facility level of care.

Ohio Home Care (OHC) Waiver: Serves individuals with physical disabilities aged 0-59 years who meet a hospital or nursing facility level of care.

Waiver Program Expenditures

In SFY22 there were more than **107,000 individuals enrolled in HCBS waivers**, with waiver service expenditures totaling approximately \$2.13 billion dollars. In SFY23 there were 117,951 individuals enrolled in HCBS waivers, with service expenditures totaling approximately \$3.5 billion dollars.

For this report, the dollar amounts allocated to waiver program costs represent the total expenditures, including state and federal matching funds, as well as county department of developmental disability funds for Individual Options, Level One and SELF waiver programs.

The table below outlines enrollment **SFY23 figures, average costs, and total expenditures** across **six Medicaid waiver programs in Ohio**.

SFY 2023 Waiver Program Enrollment and Expenditures *

Program	Enrollment	Avg. Waiver Cost per Individual	Avg. State Plan Cost per Individual	Total Avg. Cost per Individual (waiver + state plan services)	Total Waiver Expenditures
Individual Options**	25,767	\$86,751	\$16,462	\$103,213	\$2,235,320,385
Level One**	17,808	\$12,132	\$10,071	\$22,203	\$216,051,078
SELF**	2,169	\$15,099	\$15,274	\$30,373	\$32,750,173
PASSPORT	24,951	\$11,876	\$13,046	\$24,923	\$296,324,805
MyCare (CY 2023)	38,124	\$14,593	\$6,645	\$21,238	\$556,342,157
Ohio Home Care	9,132	\$18,793	\$35,191	\$53,984	\$171,614,775

**Data derived from annual waiver program 372 reporting for SFY23, unless otherwise noted.*

***Individual Options, Level One and SELF expenditures have not been adjusted for county board of developmental disabilities share of cost.*

Service-Specific Expenditures

The waiver programs deliver a range of services designed to offer cost-effective alternatives to institutional care. For this reporting cycle, particular focus is placed on waiver-funded homemaker-personal care and nursing services.

The table below summarizes expenditures for Homemaker, Personal Care, and Waiver Nursing services across six Ohio Medicaid programs.

Program	Homemaker & Personal Care Waiver Services	Waiver Nursing
Individual Options	\$1,690,976,094	\$1,487,846
Level One	\$68,343,670	\$0 (service not available)
SELF	\$22,311,603	\$0 (service not available)
PASSPORT	\$232,806,462	\$316,115
MyCare (CY 2023)	\$401,264,421	\$8,650,287
Ohio Home Care	\$142,763,056	\$5,716,675

State Plan Home Health and PDN Services

Ohio's Medicaid State Plan offers home health services—including nursing, skilled therapy, and aide services—for up to 8 hours per day, with a combined weekly limit of 14 hours for home health aide and nursing services without prior authorization for fee-for-service individuals. Individuals under age 21 may exceed this limit if they qualify under the EPSDT (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment) benefit. Adults over 21 may receive additional hours with prior authorization from the Ohio Department of Medicaid. Also, those who are discharged from an inpatient stay of three or more days may qualify for a combined total of 28hrs per week for up to 60 days without prior authorization.

Private Duty Nursing (PDN) services are also available under the State Plan for individuals with more intensive or specialized nursing needs requiring 4 or more hours per day of nursing with prior authorization. Private duty nursing is provided in the individual's place of residence by licensed nurses. Also, those individuals, adult or child, who are discharged from an inpatient stay of three or more days may qualify for PDN services up to fifty-six hours per week, and up to sixty consecutive days from the date of discharge from an inpatient hospital stay of three or more covered days. PDN is available to individuals only if they have a medical need comparable to a skilled level of care as evidenced by a medical condition that temporarily reflects the skilled level of care.

The table outlines expenditures for three categories of in-home nursing services, as well as individuals served.

Service Type	Individuals Served	Total Cost
Home Health Aide	21,905	\$176,706,301
Home Health Nursing (RN & LPN)	45,415	\$95,585,815
Private Duty Nursing	1,785	\$135,271,316

Ohio Department of Medicaid & Ohio Department of Aging Program Services

The initial survey, conducted for calendar year 2023, established baseline data for workers delivering home and community-based services (HCBS) through Ohio Home Care, PASSPORT and MyCare waiver and state plan programs. Surveys were developed and administered by Ohio State, Miami and Ohio universities and state agencies. The current report focuses on wage data and findings related to home health, private duty nursing, personal care, and waiver nursing services, with Survey Year Two reflecting wage changes following rate increases effective January 1, 2025.

The initial report provided baseline information for calendar year (CY) 2023 (Survey Year One) about direct care workers providing home and community-based services (HCBS) to individuals in Medicaid Waiver Programs and through the Medicaid State Plan. Survey Year Two begins to reflect reported wage status post rate-increases implemented January 1, 2025.

Home Health and Personal Care Aides

Direct Care Worker-Homemaker/Personal Care Summary

Home care agencies that billed Ohio Medicaid for personal care services in 2023 and 2024 were invited to participate in the survey. In 2023, 1,332 agencies were invited, and 430 (32%) agencies completed Survey I. In 2024, 1,261 agencies were invited, and 341 (27%) agencies completed the survey. About two-thirds of agencies completed both surveys.

Survey Participants

Agencies reported higher hourly wages in 2024 compared to 2023.

In 2023, most home health and personal care aides earned **\$12.00–\$12.50 per hour**.

In 2024, pay rose to **\$14.75–\$15.00 per hour**.

Program or Payer	Survey I (2023)	Survey II (2024)
Medicaid Waiver Services - PASSPORT	\$12.50	\$15.00
Medicaid Waiver Services - MyCare	\$12.50	\$15.00
Medicaid Waiver Ohio Home Care Program	\$12.00	\$14.75
Medicaid State Plan Services	\$12.50	\$15.00
Medicare of Private Insurance	\$12.00	\$14.75
Private Pay Clients	\$14.00	\$15.00

Bonuses and Fringe Benefits for Home Health and Personal Care Aides

Agencies reported no changes in benefits between 2023 and 2024. In both years, the three most common benefits were paid bonuses (such as sign on or holiday pay), paid holidays, and vacation time, with about half of participating agencies reporting paid bonuses and one third offering paid holidays and/or vacation benefits.

Recruitment and Retention of Home Health and Personal Care Aides

In 2024, the proportion of participating agencies reporting difficulty retaining workers fell by nearly 50%, and those reporting recruitment challenges dropped by about 30% compared to 2023.

Nursing Staff

Survey Participants

Home care agencies that billed Ohio Medicaid for personal care services in 2023 and 2024 were invited to participate in the survey. In 2023, 1,332 agencies were invited, and 430 (32%) agencies completed Survey I. In 2024, 1,261 agencies were invited, and 341 (27%) agencies completed the survey. About two-thirds of agencies that completed Survey I also completed Survey II.

Median Hourly Wage for RNs and LPNs

Home care agencies reported higher hourly wages in 2024 compared to 2023.

In 2023, most RNs earned **\$35.00 per hour**, and LPNs earned **\$25.00–\$28.00 per hour**.

In 2024, ranged from **\$35.00-\$40.00 per hour** for RNs and **\$28.00-\$30.00 per hour** for LPNs.

Program or Payer	Median Hourly Wage*			
	RNs		LPNs	
	Survey I (2023)	Survey II (2024)	Survey I (2023)	Survey II (2024)
Medicaid Waiver Services – PASSPORT	\$35	\$40	\$25	\$30
Medicaid Waiver Services – MyCare	\$35	\$40	\$25	\$28
Medicaid Waiver Ohio Home Care Program	\$35	\$40	\$25	\$29
Medicaid State Plan Services	\$35	\$39	\$25	\$28
Medicare or Private Insurance	\$35	\$37	\$26	\$28
Private Pay Clients	\$35	\$35	\$28	\$29

Bonuses and Fringe Benefits for RNs and LPNs

Compared to 2023, home care providers in 2024 were more likely to offer nursing staff vacation time (42.7% vs. 36.2%), health insurance (24.3% vs. 21.8%), and retirement contributions (20.2% vs. 15.4%). Other fringe benefits remained largely unchanged.

Recruitment and Retention of RNs and LPNs

In 2024, agencies reported a **37% decrease** in difficulty retaining nursing staff compared to 2023, and those reporting recruitment challenges **decreased by 31%** compared to 2023.

Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities Services

Survey Summary

Since CY 2020, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) has surveyed providers on Direct Support Professional (DSP) compensation, DSP turnover, DSP employment tenure, and other pertinent employment information. The survey results provide insight into the current state of DSP compensation and the overall workforce.

A secondary purpose of the survey was to evaluate the impact of reimbursement rate increases on DSP compensation. The survey was developed in collaboration with a workgroup comprised of DODD agency staff and stakeholders representing families, providers, and county boards of developmental disabilities. Until CY 2023, the survey was focused on DSPs that provided Homemaker/Personal Care (HPC) services.

The CY 2023 survey was sent to just over 1,600 Providers that were reimbursed for HPC or Adult Day Services (ADS) in 2023. The survey window opened April 15th and ended June 30th, 2024.1 As of this writing, 1,412 providers (86%) have fully completed the survey which represents 92% of total payments.

Survey Participants

The CY2024 survey was sent to 1,739 agencies who provided HPC and/or adult day array services in 2024 who were still providing services during the data collection period of April 15, 2025 - June 30, 2025. A total of 1,543 surveys were completed as of June 30, 2025, yielding a response rate of 89%. The 1,543 completed surveys accounted for 95% of the HPC and adult day array reimbursement for service date calendar year 2024.

Wages and Compensation, 2020-2024

The tables below reflect the average and median DSP hourly wages and compensation from 2020-2024. The average starting wage in 2024 was \$15.73 compared to \$13.96 in 2023, and the average regular wage in 2024 was \$17.71 compared to \$15.56 in 2023. Total hourly compensation, which includes wages, fringe benefits/bonuses, and employer-share of payroll taxes and worker’s compensation, also increased in 2024. Average hourly compensation increased from \$21.65 in 2023 to \$23.44 in 2024. Adult day array providers reported to offer higher wages and compensation per hour than agencies only offering HPC.

Homemaker/Personal Care (HPC) Services Only						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	23-24 Change
Reporting Providers	74	494	845	957	979	22
Starting Wage, Average	\$11.35	\$12.15	\$13.00	\$13.84	\$15.67	\$1.83
Starting Wage, Median	\$11.00	\$12.00	\$13.00	\$14.00	\$16.00	\$2.00
Regular Wage, Average	\$13.00	\$13.64	\$15.26	\$15.30	\$17.45	\$2.15
Regular Wage, Median	\$12.17	\$13.00	\$14.34	\$14.72	\$17.01	\$2.29
Total Compensation/Hour, Average	\$18.05	\$18.74	\$19.90	\$20.70	\$22.88	\$2.18
Total Compensation/Hour, Median	\$16.04	\$17.26	\$19.00	\$19.56	\$21.40	\$1.84

Adult Day or Vocational Habilitation Only		
2023	2024	23-24 Change
66	93	27
\$14.47	\$16.05	\$1.58
\$14.00	\$16.00	\$2.00
\$16.34	\$18.54	\$2.42
\$15.72	\$18.54	\$2.82
\$23.23	\$24.82	\$1.59
\$22.61	\$24.43	\$1.82

Career Planning or Employment Services Only		
2023	2024	23-24 Change
15	13	-2
\$18.47	\$17.78	-\$0.69
\$18.00	\$17.00	-\$1.00
\$19.86	\$19.67	-\$0.19
\$19.91	\$18.90	-\$1.01
\$28.71	\$28.14	-\$0.57
\$27.57	\$26.52	-\$1.05

Multiple Services						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 Actuals	23-24 Change
Reporting Providers	103	300	138	491	458	-33
Percentage of Statewide Reimbursement						
Starting Wage, Average	\$11.12	\$12.02	\$13.02	\$13.96	\$15.73	\$1.77
Starting Wage, Median	\$11.00	\$12.00	\$13.00	\$14.00	\$16.00	\$2.00
Regular Wage, Average	\$14.86	\$13.85	\$15.26	\$15.81	\$17.98	\$2.17
Regular Wage, Median	\$12.55	\$13.00	\$14.60	\$15.15	\$17.40	\$2.25
Total Compensation/Hour, Average	\$18.22	\$19.33	\$19.45	\$22.94	\$24.16	\$1.22
Total Compensation/Hour, Median	\$16.90	\$17.98	\$19.00	\$22.23	\$23.35	\$1.12

Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits varied by size of agency as measured by the number of people served in calendar year 2024. Agencies serving 20 or more people with developmental disabilities were more likely to offer various fringe benefits to their DSPs than agencies serving fewer than 20 people.

Length of Employment

Approximately 25% of DSPs on December 31, 2024, were employed for 0-6 months. Longer-term employees, or those who remained with their current employer for two or more years, reached 44%. Length of employment varied by type of service provided—adult day array providers reported a greater percentage of long-term employment (49.3%-63.0%) than did agencies that only provide HPC services (38.3%).