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WAITLIST FOR WAIVER SERVICES

Effective July 1, 2019 Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD) implemented a waitlist for waiver services

(JEFFERSON CITY, MO, September 17) The Department of Mental Health announced that effective July 1, 2019, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD) would implement a waitlist for in-home and residential Medicaid waiver services for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities because the Missouri State Legislature did not approve adequate funding. The Fiscal Year 2020 budget that was approved by the Missouri General Assembly only includes enough funds to serve approximately 444 new individuals annually, which is expected to leave more than 800 individuals waiting for services.

Services affected include residential, personal assistance, behavior therapy/counseling services, specialized medical equipment and supplies, day habilitation programs, employment services, adaptive equipment and much more. Kyle Schott, President of the Missouri Association of County Developmental Disabilities Services, says, "This is an unfortunate situation that will eventually end up costing tax payers more money. When individuals are denied these very necessary services it can cause an exacerbation of their condition resulting in hospitalization or nursing home placement. This lack of services will result in more costly services that could have been otherwise avoided. We should be looking at ways to increase availability of services to help bring dignity to some of our most vulnerable citizens."

While the Governor Recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2020 included \$30.3 million for over 1,700 individuals with disabilities to access both residential and in-home services, the approved budget only includes \$8.5 million.

The Division of Development Disabilities is monitoring funding on a monthly basis. In-home services will be limited to 30 new individuals a month, and according to the Division, there were already 245 on an in-home waitlist for Medicaid eligible individuals as of September 2, 2019. Residential services will be limited to 5 new individuals per month, with 91 individuals already on the waitlist as of September 2.