



South Carolina Human Service Provider Association

Position on Disability Services Professionals Defined as Essential Healthcare Employees

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) and other disability services professionals are essential and integral employees of SCDDSN's service provider network. These employees ensure that the basic health and safety needs of the vulnerable population we serve is met around the clock, and that is especially true during this public health emergency. Without these workers, thousands of South Carolinians would be left without essential care and support.

The South Carolina Human Service Provider Association (SCHSP), which represents over 50 providers of services and supports to people with lifelong disabilities in South Carolina, maintains an official position that DSPs and other disability services professionals are "essential health care workers".

The federal legislation, "Families First Coronavirus Response Act" (FFCRA) has not definitively categorized DSPs or other disability services workers as "health care providers". This has left States with a critical step to make in order to ensure the health and safety of those living in supported facilities and in need of in-home supports.

Many states, including Washington, New York, and parts of North Carolina have already taken action to declare our workforce as essential healthcare employees.

New York State Education Department has issued guidance stating that "Essential health care workers may include... direct support professionals..."

Washington State (by Governor Proclamation) defines the essential workforce as including "social workers" and "Workers who provide support to vulnerable populations to ensure their health and well-being including family care providers", among others.

North Carolina State, Mecklenburg County issued a statement including "residential facilities and shelters" and "other community-based government operations and essential functions including human services" as "essential services".

Please join us in encouraging the Department of Labor, and other officials of the great State of South Carolina to take this crucial step in declaring DSPs and other disability services professionals as "essential healthcare employees".

Respectfully,



Jason Tavenner, Chair
SC Human Service Providers

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