

# **Family Forum on Potential Impact of Budget Reductions on Waiver Services January 26-27, 2021 Questions and Answers**

## **Budget Information**

### **How can I access the state budget?**

The State budget can be accessed at [ai.wyo.gov/divisions/budget](http://ai.wyo.gov/divisions/budget), under news and notes.

It can also be accessed at [https://drive.google.com/file/d/13b5\\_YaauiiQjFld-8wGQfQusfsyOqRCh/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/13b5_YaauiiQjFld-8wGQfQusfsyOqRCh/view).

### **What is the actual bill number?**

House Bill 1, the supplemental general government appropriations supplemental bill. It's not on the legislative website yet (as of 1/27/2021) because they are still adjusting it with some amendments that came out of the Appropriations Committee. The specific area is in the Department of Health, which is Department 048. It is found on pages 888 through 893 of the supplemental budget bill and that correspondence to pages 120 through 125 of the Department of Health section of the budget bill.

### **How will information on the status of the budget be disseminated?**

Information on the status of the budget will be updated on the WIND Family Forum website at

<https://www.uwyo.edu/wind/family-forum/>.

### **It was mentioned that some services will be cut but others will be increased – what services will see an increase in funding?**

No services are being eliminated. Rather, what's being reduced is individual budgets (the ability to purchase services). In Wyoming, 1,054 individual budgets would be decreased and 814 individual budgets would increase. The concern is that people with the highest needs will face the biggest cuts. The people who will be seeing an increase don't really need additional funding and may not be able to spend those extra monies.

We are not sure where the money goes if it is not used, but it will not be available to those on the waiting list or by those who need it. Generally, it goes into Medicaid to help with medical costs.

The way the proposed reduction is written is that funding would be frozen entirely for the wait list. No new individuals would be placed on the comprehensive or support waivers during the current biennium, which ends June 2022.

### **Has the Department of Health offered a rationale for these cuts?**

The Healthcare Finance Division put this proposal forward as a budget reduction.

### **Will funding for therapies, nursing, etc. be continued?**

Yes, they were a part of the step 2 reductions that the Governor made. However, that reduction has been reversed so people receiving those services should see no lapse.

### **Is the WLRC taking a cut to their budget? As drastic as this proposed budget?**

No, there will be no budget cuts to WLRC.

## Individual Budget Amounts (IBAs)

### What does IBA stand for?

Individual Budget amount

### Who is a good contact for finding out how these proposals would affect my family specifically?

If you are unsure of how this will affect your family, the best place to start is by contacting your case manager or your provider. They should be able to provide that information for you.

### How do I find out what level of service a person is?

This can be found on the first page of their plan of care.

### How do I use the calculator on the WIND family forum webpage?

You first find the level of service score, which should be on the first page of the plan of care. There are then four additional pieces that you will note: lives on their own, lives with family and they are up to 18 years old, lives with family and they are 21 years of age and older, and lives with other people. When you find the living situation, that will give you a corresponding individual budget amount (IBA).

**How is the rate determined? Is there a detailed scoring system?** The rate through services is established through a cost-based process that occurs every four years.

### Do we know why they chose to use the LOS score vs. taking money from budgets that aren't being used?

We are unsure at this time. This is one of many proposals that were submitted and what was chosen by the Governor's office as a reduction.

## Contacting Your Legislators and the Governor

### How do I testify with the legislature?

You can use the "Testify" button on the legislature's website and then you will be allowed to join the Zoom meeting with the committee. You can also reach out to legislators directly by phone or email.

### Can out-of-state family members advocate to the Wyoming legislature?

Yes, the legislative process is meant to be driven by the people, not just residents of Wyoming. People from other states are also welcome to comment. Although when emailing legislators, you may consider mentioning your relationship to Wyoming right away since many legislators may not read emails that don't come from their constituents.

### Would it help to send letters to the Governor so that he knows how this impacts individuals in Wyoming?

Yes, because ultimately, the Governor has to sign off on this bill and he does have line item veto authority in Wyoming. If he is not convinced that this is a good change or a good amendment, then he would have that opportunity.

The nature of this reduction is very complicated so it is important that our policymakers understand exactly what is at stake.

Additionally, the 6.2% increase, the federal match increase that has been a part of the COVID pandemic, has been extended through June of 2022. That means the state gets 6.2% more in Medicaid, general

Medicaid reimbursements, which will help the overall Medicaid program. It is important that all legislators know that that enhanced rate has been continued for a significant amount of time.

**What is the best way to contact Governor Gordon?**

You can email Governor Gordon at [mark.Gordon@wyo.gov](mailto:mark.Gordon@wyo.gov) or at <https://governor.wyo.gov/contact>. You can also email Darlena Potter, Governor Gordon's constituent services representative at [darlena.potter@wyo.gov](mailto:darlena.potter@wyo.gov).

You can also call the Governor's office at 307-777-3909 or send mail to State Capitol, 200 West 24th Street, Cheyenne, WY 82002

**Why are there no state legislators on this forum panel?**

Several legislators were invited to participate in the WIND forum, but they are currently in session and unable to attend. The WIND staff will share the recording of the forum and resources with the legislators.

**How are agencies advocating for individuals?**

The DD network agencies are all advocating against these cuts. WIND is advocating by facilitating this forum and providing information on the website at <https://www.uwyo.edu/wind/family-forum/>. Protection & Advocacy and the Governor's Council are also advocating in the ways that they see fit.

## **Legal Action**

**Are these budget cuts unconstitutional?**

Protection & Advocacy is looking at the issues that involve the Weston consent decree, and will be looking at that in detail. It's likely not a Constitutional question, but it may be a question of enforceability of the rights that are under Weston and the ability to enforce that under either statutory law or case law.

**Will P&A be considering any litigation to challenge this action?**

All remedies available will be looked at, including administrative, legal and others. It has not been determined at this time if litigation will be used.

**Are other states in same position as WY?**

This is an issue specific to Wyoming.