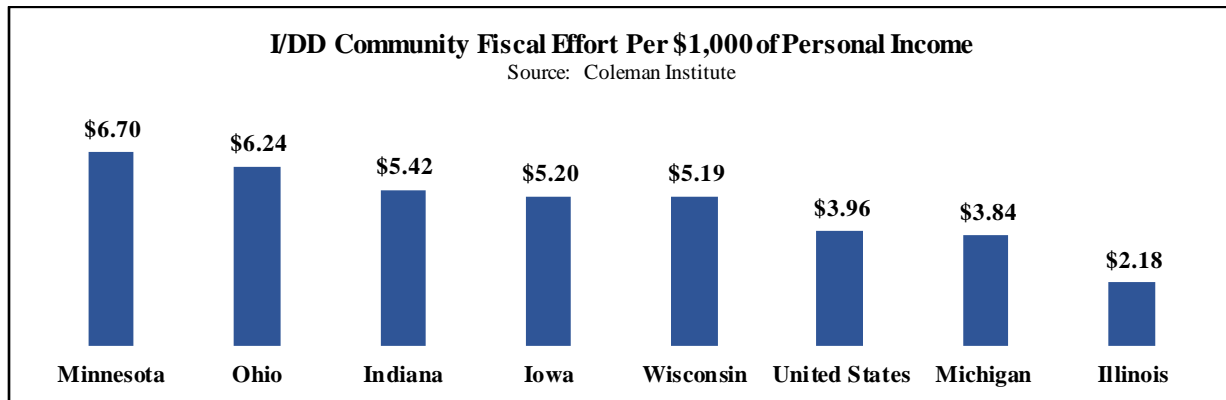


Promoting policy and practice that supports all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to access services and resources to pursue meaningful and valued lives

## Impact of \$15/hour Minimum Wage on People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Receiving Community Services

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The state of Illinois contracts directly with more than 200 organizations, most of which are not-for-profit, to care for more than 11,000 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in group homes in the community, who would otherwise be living in costly institutional settings. Illinois' reimbursement for community I/DD services ranks 47<sup>th</sup> lowest in the country and well behind our neighboring states.



The most significant expense associated with the delivery of community services is payment for care rendered by the direct support workforce, referred to as DSPs. DSPs provide daily care, supervision and support that enables people with I/DD to remain safe, active and involved members of their community. Due to Illinois' failure to provide a adequate reimbursement for I/DD community services, agencies are increasingly struggling to recruit and retain a sufficient DSP workforce. The key challenge is the shrinking gap between state reimbursement for the average (not starting) DSP wage and wages the same labor pool can attract from other employers (Amazon, Walmart, Target), as well as enhanced minimum wage ordinances in Chicago and Cook county.

We acknowledge the inadequacy of the current minimum wage in Illinois and the struggles faced by people who rely on it to support themselves and their families. As momentum builds for increasing the Illinois minimum wage, we urge policy makers to assure that the impact of this decision on the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the staff they rely upon is addressed. Any decision to increase minimum wage must be accompanied by a commitment to increase reimbursement to community agencies that employ direct support workers to at least maintain the current differential that exists. Direct support workers were never intended to be minimum wage positions, given the tremendous responsibility, capability and disposition the work demands. When the state first began contracting with community agencies, the gap between DSP reimbursement and minimum wage was 93%. Today, the differential has shrunk to 45% statewide, 9% in Cook county and is even with minimum wage in Chicago. Reimbursement for DSPs cannot simply keep pace with minimum wage; rates paid for direct support staff must surpass minimum wage to reflect the complexity, value and demands the position merits. The below chart shows the necessary state reimbursement at different potential minimum wages to maintain the current 45% premium.

Minimum Wage	\$9.00	\$10.00	\$11.00	\$12.00	\$13.00	\$14.00	\$15.00
45% Premium	\$13.05	\$14.50	\$15.95	\$17.40	\$18.85	\$20.30	\$21.75

Any minimum wage action must assure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are able to remain a part of their communities with continued support from the staff they rely upon and the agencies that employ them. The Institute looks forward to continuing to serve as a partner and resource in developing solutions that promote the effective, efficient and innovative use of public resources to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Illinois.