



Today!

Welcome
Bills of Interest: Quick Status Update
HOME Project: What It Is & How to Comment
Join the Medicaid Rally Monday!

Bills of Interest



Tracked Bills of Note:

- [HF 2003](#): Separate Special Education Schools (passed subcommittee)
- [HF 2203](#): Allowing any epinephrine delivery systems in schools (passed committee)
- [HF 2250](#): Allowing Iowa Tuition Grants to be used for CTP programs (passed committee)
- [HSB 621](#): Requiring regular rate reviews for HCBS providers (passed subcommittee)
- [SF 2087](#): Includes vocational rehabilitation as a work search activity (passed committee)
- [SSB 3052](#): Sets up legal framework to allow driverless cars (passed subcommittee)
- [HF 2306](#): New responsibilities for educators working with students with IEP/504 plans

[**www.iowaddcouncil.org/bill-tracker**](http://www.iowaddcouncil.org/bill-tracker)

Deadline for committee action is Friday, February 20

Let Us Work Update



LET US WORK!

A campaign to give people with disabilities the freedom to work.

Good News: MEPD Program expansion coming next week!

HOME Project

Hope & Opportunities in Many Environments (HOME)



What Is HOME?

- Started in 2022 with a review of Iowa's home & community-based services (HCBS) system.
- Iowa is submitting a waiver to make changes based on feedback from stakeholders.
- **Goal:** Make sure people can get behavioral health, disability, and aging services in their own communities.

What changes are being made?

- Updated uniform assessment process to determine level of need.
- Refocus waivers on need vs. diagnosis.
- Creating a single menu of services.
- Combining many waivers into two new age-based waivers and retaining elderly waiver.

Children and Youth waiver to provide extra Medicaid services for children and youth with disabilities, special health care needs, and mental health needs up to age 21. The waiver program is intended to help children to live at home with family instead of in an institution like a hospital or nursing facility.

Adults with Disabilities waiver to provide extra Medicaid services for adults with disabilities aged 21 to 64. The waiver program is intended to help adults live at home instead of an institution like a hospital or nursing facility.

HOME Project

Hope & Opportunities in Many Environments (HOME)



Who is eligible under the new waivers?

- Intellectual Disability
- Physical Disability
- Developmental Disability
- Autism
- Brain Injury
- HIV/AIDS
- Serious Emotional Disturbance (for CY waiver only)

How many waiver slots will there be?

- No cap on services.
- 3,736 projected participants in AD (limited to 3,239 slots)
Reserving capacity for children (197 in year 1 – 486 in year 5) & adults from institutions (65).
- 2,408 projected participants in CY (limited to 2,188 slots).
Reserving capacity for children coming from institutions (100 each year).
- Waiver priority needs assessment scoring

HOME Project

Hope & Opportunities in Many Environments (HOME)



What is the timeline for these changes?

- **Phase 1:** Starting later in 2026, all members on the AIDS/HIV, Health & Disability, Physical Disability, and Children's Mental Health waivers will transition to the new HOME waivers. Members on the Brain Injury and Intellectual Disability waivers will remain on their current waivers but will continue to have access to all current services on those waivers.
- **Phase 2:** In 2027, all members on the Brain Injury and Intellectual Disability waivers will transition to the new HOME waivers.

HOME Project

Hope & Opportunities in Many Environments (HOME)



What new services are added?

- Community transition services
- Peer mentoring
- Some will gain access to prevocational & supported employment
- Both added to CY & AD waivers

What services will be eliminated?

- In-Home Family Therapy (removed from both)
- Skilled/Unskilled Attendant Care (removed from CY, but moved to EPSDT/State Plan)
- Nursing, Home Health Aid (removed from CY, but moved to EPSDT/State Plan)
- Interim Medical Monitoring & Treatment-IMMT (removed from CY, but moved to EPSDT/State Plan)

What is individualized budgeting?

- Beginning July 1, 2027, people will have individualized budgets based on need.
- Everyone will have a base set of services with add-ons based on need.
- HHS will set budget caps until then, based on level of care currently receiving.
- This guarantees people will have the current services until assessments determine need.

HOME Project

QUICK GUIDES



<https://hhs.iowa.gov/medicaid/about-medicaid/medicaid-projects/home/public-comment-information>

HOME Project: How to Make Public Comment



When is the public comment period?

- The public comment period is open now through **Friday, February 13, 2026, at 11:59 pm (Iowa time)**. Iowa HHS has extended the public comment from the usual 30 days to six weeks to give Iowans more time to share thoughts.

How does the public comment period work?

- Public has six weeks to read about the changes & share your opinions.
- The waiver documents are very long, so Iowa HHS also made shorter guides that explain the most important changes.
- During the public comment period, anyone can give feedback. This includes people who use HCBS services, their families, service providers, and advocates. Comments can be sent by mail or email.

HOME Project:

How to Make Public Comment



What should my public comment include?

- Public comments can suggest changes, point out problems, or highlight things that are good in the proposed new waivers.
- Comments will be most helpful if they are clear and specific. Try to give an example and explain why the change matters to you.
- Focus on what is most important for you, your family, or your community. **The details you share help Iowa HHS understand your point of view.**

How can I share my comments?

- You can email your comments to: **HCBS_Public_Comment@hhs.iowa.gov**. Please write "HCBS new HOME Waivers" in the subject line of the email.
- Written comments are to be submitted to:
Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Policy Team
Iowa Department of Health and Human Services – Medicaid
312 East 12th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

HOME Project

How to Make Public Comment



What happens next?

- After the comment period ends, Iowa HHS will review all the feedback. They may make changes to the waivers based on what people say.
- Iowa HHS will submit its final waiver applications to the federal government (along with summary of comments received during the public comment period).
- A federal agency called the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will then review the waivers. CMS may approve them or ask for changes. If changes are needed,
- Iowa HHS will update the waivers and send them back to CMS for final approval.
- While CMS is reviewing the new HOME waiver applications, Iowa HHS will keep working on plans to get systems and processes lined up so launching the new HOME waivers goes smoothly.



With Medicaid, We Can:



February 9th
Iowa State Capitol Building





Want to brush up on your advocacy skills before meeting with your legislators? Or just need to know which door to get into the Capitol building?

Drop in for our weekly "mini-training" every Friday during the legislative session!

When: Friday, Feb 6 @12:30-1 pm
(after Capitol Chat!)

Who: All disability policy advocates
(new or experienced!)

Where: <https://capture.zoom.us/j/4831945000?omn=89567500558>
(zoom link changes each week)



Mark Your Calendars

February 20, 2026

First Funnel Deadline

Bills must be voted out of their committee of origin (where they are first assigned)

2026 Capitol Chats (Noon-12:30 pm)

Friday, February 20

Friday, March 6

Friday, March 20

Friday, April 3

Friday, April 17

Friday, May 1 (if needed)