**Issue: Medicaid Waivers**

Funding to reduce the Medicaid waiver waiting list made its way into our [2020-2021 state budget](https://www.lbb.state.tx.us/Documents/Appropriations_Bills/86/Conference_Bills/86R_HB1-F.pdf)! The legislature appropriated $24.7 million to reduce 4 different waiver waiting lists, including HCS and CLASS but excluding TxHmL. Over the course of the next two years, the waiting lists for these two waivers will only decrease by 1.3% and 0.3% respectively, which is not nearly enough. However, this is still a small step in the right direction since no funding was appropriated for this purpose last session. The legislature also budgeted for a study to investigate strategies to reduce the waiting list, including looking at other states and acquiring federal funding.

We know that Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) do not have the best track record when it comes to appropriately authorizing services for adults with disabilities. Many bills in discussion at the Capitol this session would’ve taken a closer look at this issue as well as delay the transition of some Medicaid waiver services under the management of MCOs. The two bills we highlighted on this issue last month ([HB 2453](https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=86R&Bill=HB2453) and [HB 4543](https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=86R&Bill=HB4543) ) did not get to the governor, but we’re happy that [HB 4533](https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=86R&Bill=HB4533) did. If signed into law, this bill will create a pilot test and prolong the transition of community-based services to be carved into managed care in hopes for better implementation.

**Issue: Employment**

While [SB 1818](https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=86R&Bill=SB1818) did not pass, there were still a couple victories when it comes to Texans with intellectual disabilities working in the community. First, Governor Abbott has already signed [SB 753](https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=86R&Bill=SB753) into law, which will finally put an end to discriminatory subminimum wages for Texans with disabilities. Texas is among the first states to eliminate subminimum wages, which will go into effect September 1, 2019. Governor Abbott has also signed [SB 2038](https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=86R&Bill=SB2038) into law, which will explore occupational training and competitive, integrated employment options for people with IDD.

*Stay tuned to* [*The Arc of Texas*](https://www.thearcoftexas.org/advocacy/) *and the* [*Texas Council on Developmental Disabilities*](http://www.tcdd.texas.gov/news/) *for more analysis on the 86th Legislative Session and how it impacted Texas with intellectual disabilities.*