

“ELIMINATE THE WAIT”

HCBS Waitlists at a Crisis Point in Kansas

BOLD LEADERSHIP & ACTION NEEDED IN 2024 KANSAS LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The waitlists for the Intellectual/Developmental Disability (IDD) and the Physical Disability (PD) Home & Community Based Services (HCBS) Medicaid Waiver programs have reached a crisis point. Since KanCare launched in 2013, the IDD and PD Waitlists have gone **from bad to worse** to **utterly out of control in Kansas**.

In Kansas, these HCBS services are critically important to individuals with disabilities' daily lives. HCBS Waiver services are separate from Medicaid healthcare plans, and include the following services:

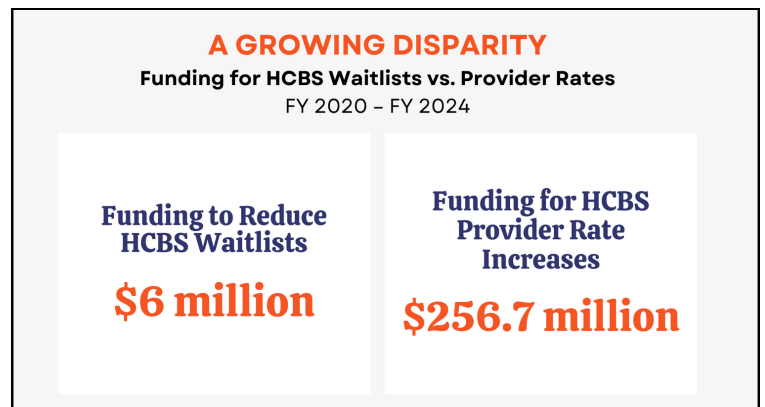
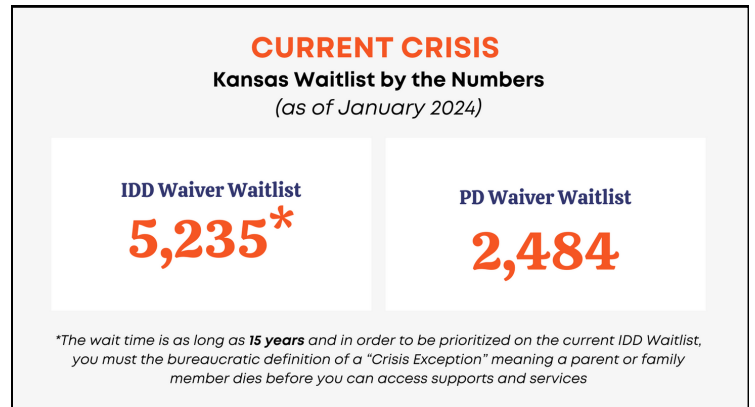
- assistive services
- adult day supports
- financial management services
- medical-alert rental
- overnight respite
- personal care services
- residential supports for adults and children
- enhanced care services
- specialized medical care
- supported employment
- supportive home care
- wellness monitoring

Due to Kansas' historically long HCBS waitlists, people with disabilities are waiting longer than ever to receive life-affirming services. The waitlist is so long, many Kansans only move off the waitlist and onto an HCBS Waiver after a parent or family member dies; and a bureaucrat in Topeka has decided their crisis is bad enough to qualify for a **crisis exception**.

BOTTOM LINE

Over the last 5 years, the IDD & PD waitlists have been largely ignored. Both waitlists are in crisis because the Governor and Kansas Legislature have NOT increased funding to reduce the record-high waitlists.

- Governor Kelly has never proposed a funding increase to HCBS waitlists during her entire tenure.
- In the last five years, the Kansas Legislature has provided one small increase in funding to reduce the HCBS waitlists (**As the graphic above shows, HCBS Waitlist funding received \$6 million compared to \$234.2 million for provider rates in the last 5 years**).
- **Kansas has a large, historic Budget Surplus of \$2.7 Billion & a Rainy Day Fund of \$1.4 Billion.** Now is the time to make significant investments to finally **Eliminate the Wait for HCBS Waivers**, which will result in far better outcomes for Kansans with disabilities to have better access to community supports, workforce development opportunities and live longer, healthier lives.



2024 INVESTMENT NEEDED BY KS LEGISLATURE & GOVERNOR

For FY 2025, we are respectfully requesting that the Kansas Legislature & Governor Kelly appropriate funding to reduce the IDD and PD Waiver Waitlists each by 20%. **Specifically, the legislature needs to appropriate \$29,288,776 SGF (\$75,916,684 all funds) to add 1,100 slots on the IDD waiver and \$4,447,880 SGF (\$11,528,980 all funds) to add 500 slots on the PD waiver.**

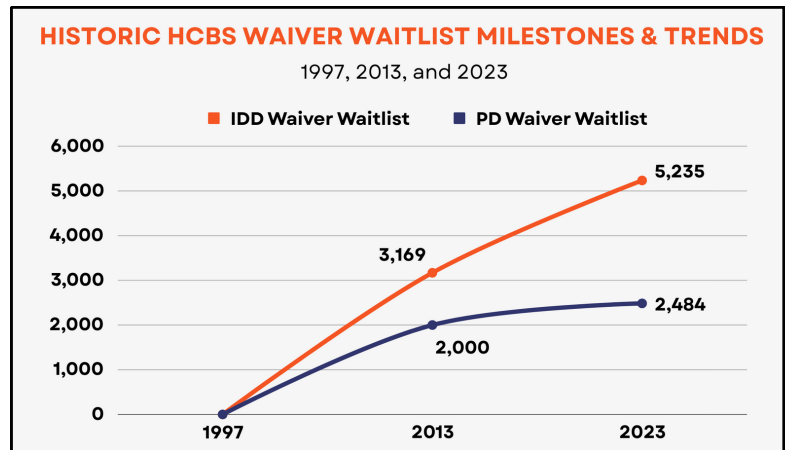
FACT SHEET

1) Historic Underfunding of the Waitlists by Kansas Governors & Kansas Legislature:

- Governor Kelly has never proposed any funding increase to reduce HCBS waitlists since taking office.
- Governor Brownback was the last Kansas Governor to propose a small increase in the HCBS Waitlist which happened in FY 2016.
- In the last eight years, the Kansas Legislature has only proposed:
 - **IDD Waitlist:** one small increase of \$3 million for the IDD Waitlist compared to five years of consecutive funding for IDD HCBS provider rates which amount to a total \$234.2 million, **nearly 80 times more increases for provider rates than IDD waitlist slots.**
 - **PD Waitlist:** A large similar disparity on the PD Waiver, which only received \$3 million vs. \$22.5 million for PD Waiver provider rates over the last 5 years.

2) The IDD & PD Waitlists have reached horrific, all-time historic highs in Kansas:

- Before KanCare (1997-2012), the HCBS waitlists were much smaller.
- When KanCare went into effect in 2013, Kansans with disabilities were promised that switching to Managed Care system would save a significant amount of money, and those savings would be targeted to eliminate the HCBS waitlists. This promise never happened, and waitlists have only worsened.
- In early 2024, the current Kansas IDD and PD Waitlists reached an all-time high:
 - IDD Waiver Waitlist = 5,235
 - PD Waiver Waitlist = 2,484



3) HCBS Provider Rates Support vs. Funding for IDD & PD Waitlists: *Provider Rates directly impact disability service agencies, leadership and staff. Whereas, waitlist funding supports the individual with a disability and their family.*

- Waitlist funding has an immediate impact on individuals and families in Kansas by reducing waitlists and providing necessary services and supports.
- Past provider rate increases lacked restrictions to guarantee investment in the direct support professional workforce.
- ***We support provider rate increases, but the focus now must be on waitlists.***

4) The Community Supports Waiver (CSW) is a small step but it alone will not solve the long-term needs for the IDD Community in Kansas:

- The proposed Kansas CSW is a “Waiver-lite” option with limited support that will not meet the needs of all Kansans with IDD. According to KDADS, the earliest a CSW could be offered in Kansas is late 2026.
- A CSW alone will not even come close to eliminating the IDD Waitlist. Only a combination of funding significant new slots and the CSW will effectively Eliminate the Wait for HCBS.

CONTACT US

Sara Hart Weir, Executive Director, Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities

913-329-3614

sara@kcdd.org

Mike Burgess, Director of Policy & Outreach, Disability Rights Center of Kansas

785-845-7245

mike@drckansas.org