



JOHN R. KASICH  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF OHIO

## **TRANSFORMING THE WAY THE STATE SERVES OHIOANS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

### *Giving More Individuals Opportunities to Live and Work in Their Communities*

As a compassionate leader who worked to help lift all Ohioans, Governor John R. Kasich transformed Ohio's developmental disabilities system by giving more individuals more opportunities to live and work in their communities.

- **Making Unprecedented Investments to Help Ohioans with Developmental Disabilities** : The governor took great strides to ensure every Ohioan with a developmental disability who wants to live and work in the community can do so by investing over \$350 million in new funds to increase home- and community-based services, support community work opportunities and modernize new options for individuals. Gov. Kasich believed all Ohioans should be able to choose the setting for care that is right for them and has continued to build on the success of his first term to improve the quality and accessibility of home- and community-based alternatives to institutional placements. As a result, more than 65 percent of long-term care spending was directed to home- and community-based options, rather than institutional settings.
- **Increased Employment Opportunities for People with Developmental Disabilities**: In 2012 Gov. Kasich launched "Employment First," which put a priority on helping Ohioans with development disabilities find living-wage jobs in real workplaces, replacing the longtime policy of assuming Ohioans with development disabilities were only capable of working in sheltered workshops. As a result of "Employment First," more than 9,900 Ohioans with development disabilities are working in real jobs in their communities – a 38 percent increase since 2012. The Governor also championed legislation to align state policies and educational programs to support community employment for working-age adults with developmental disabilities.
- **Improving Continuity of Service to Ensure That Young Ohioans Thrive**: Convinced that bureaucracy should never get in the way of the quality of care our children with developmental disabilities deserve, the Kasich Administration reformed early intervention services provided to young children with developmental delays from birth to three years of age. Previously these services were administered by two separate state agencies. With the alignment of this program within a single agency, children in need of additional services as they grow older now benefit from a seamless transition of care.
- **Eliminating the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Waiting List**: Individuals with significant disabilities now have immediate access to vocational rehabilitation services. For the first time since 1991, Ohio has succeeded in eliminating the waiting list for these individuals with disabilities to obtain such services that prepare them for employment.

- **Modernizing Health Care Administration:** In a home care setting, the caretaker typically has a long-term relationship with an individual; a sense of comfortability is maintained over time. And yet, these same caretakers had not been allowed to administer basic health care products. Gov. Kasich worked to increase the types of medications and health care-related activities that can be administered by a direct care staff member, so individuals' needs can be met in a timelier and less intrusive manner.
- **Enhancing Coverage for Families Dealing with Autism:** Ohio made autism services available to state employees and their families. In addition, autism services have been defined as part of the "essential health benefit" package in Ohio.
- **Improving the Lives of Individuals with Autism:** Gov. Kasich supported the creation of an online training and certification program to improve the quality of life for individuals and families by creating a better trained support system. The program offers practical information and skills that are demonstrated with real-life examples, and can benefit anyone who interacts with individuals with autism, including parents, grandparents, service providers, teachers and first responders. The program, which is free for all Ohioans, can be accessed anywhere.
- **Putting New Technologies to Work for Ohioans with Developmental Disabilities:** Gov. Kasich signed an executive order to make Ohio a "Technology First" state. This initiative will expand opportunities for Ohioans with developmental disabilities to improve their lives with the help of innovative supportive technologies such as apps, cell phones, smart pads, and smart speakers to augment the supports delivered by caregivers.



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