

Arizona Cuts Critical Health and Human Services

Government agencies in Arizona are in the process of implementing mandatory spending cuts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009. State spending reductions include a state employee hiring freeze, furloughs, and layoffs as well as cuts to critical health and human service programs across all state agencies.

Among the cuts are numerous programs that support persons with disabilities:

- elimination of Medicare Part D prescription drug co-payments for AHCCCS dual eligible beneficiaries;
- elimination of state-only funded services through the Arizona Division of Developmental Disabilities;
- creation of a waiting for vocational rehabilitation services; and
- creation of a waiting list for independent living services for 400 persons with disabilities.

It is important to keep in mind that the state legislature is in the process of resolving an even greater budget deficit for fiscal year 2010 (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010). The projected deficit for the state for FY 2010 is estimated at \$3 billion.

The staff of the Arizona Center for Disability Law is reviewing the cuts to determine what, if anything, our agency can do to maintain or restore critical health and human service programs for persons with disabilities in Arizona. The Board of Directors of the Arizona Center for Disability Law will be considering changes to our fiscal year 2009 priorities (October 1, 2009 – September 30, 2009) to respond to this crisis in April.

What You Can Do

We must be relentless and persistent in our advocacy to stop further cuts to critical human service programs.

1. Write the Governor and state legislative leaders and let them know that these cuts are unacceptable and hurt people with disabilities.
To contact Governor Jan Brewer by phone, dial (602) 542-4331. To contact the Governor by email, follow this link <http://azgovernor.gov/Contact.asp>
To contact your state legislators, follow this link:
<http://www.azleg.gov>
2. Participate in Arizona Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities legislative awareness day on Tuesday, March 10, 2009.
<http://www.azgcdd.org/LegislativeDay2009.asp>
3. Tell us how you think our FY 09 priorities should change to respond to the cuts in critical health and human services programs.
Current ACDL priorities: <http://www.azdisabilitylaw.org/priorities.html>
To send us a message: center@azdisabilitylaw.org