Waiver Reimagine: Simplify, streamline the disability home and community-based waiver system

Issues:

- Over 47,000 Minnesotans with disabilities live, work and engage with their community with support from four disability home and community-based services waiver programs administered by DHS, counties and tribes: Brain Injury, Community Alternative Care, Community Access for Disability Inclusion and Developmental Disabilities.
- These four waivers have different eligibility criteria, different services, distinct administrative requirements and different resource allocation methods. While the programs provide critical supports, people with disabilities and other stakeholders agree that the disability waiver system is complex and could be easier to understand and use.
- The Waiver Reimagine project, started in 2018, included studies to identify ways to make the waiver system better, simpler and more efficient, and to create an individual budget methodology to better reflect a person’s needs in their service plan. Throughout 2018 DHS and stakeholders worked to develop recommendations as a result of two studies.

Proposal:

Based on recommendations of DHS and stakeholders who participated in the Waiver Reimagine project, Governor Tim Walz proposes to:

- Prepare for aligning the four disability waivers into two waivers: one serving people living independently or at home with family and one that serves individuals in residential settings.
- Streamline services available under the four existing disability waivers to align the service menu and prepare for future reconfiguration.
- Finalize and prepare for implementation of an individual budget methodology.
- Develop technical systems to support the new system.
- Enhance resources available to people receiving services and their families as they plan for their services and their lives.

Benefits:

- More equitable distribution of resources across the state by streamlining the system and linking a person’s needs more closely to the amount spent in their service plan.
• Better distribution of waiver dollars based on a person’s individual needs, regardless of waiver program or location.
• Enhanced authority, flexibility, and accountability for people with disabilities and their families by providing information about available budgets and resources to plan for services.

Fiscal impact:

• $2.1 million in FY 2020-21; net savings of $4.8 million in FY 2022-23

Related information:


DHS Communications: March 2019