



Minnesota Disability Law Center's Policy Proposals to Phase Out Subminimum Wage in Minnesota

Dalaine Remes
Kristina Petronko



Minnesota Disability Law Center

- Designated Protection & Advocacy Agency for vulnerable adults & people with disabilities in MN
- Part of Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid (MMLA)
- Responsibilities include legal support, monitoring of facilities, individual case advocacy & policy advocacy, & representative payee review
- Statewide Services
- **Free** legal services for individuals with legal problems related to their disabilities
- Some limitations based on case priorities, staffing and grant restrictions



How are we different from other advocacy organizations?

Minnesota Disability Law Center (MDLC)

- Offers FREE legal assistance on issues related to a disability
- Has NO income guidelines or citizenship requirements
- Is staffed by Attorneys and Legal Advocates
- Is statewide with offices in Minneapolis, Duluth, Fertile and Mankato



MDLC's Work Beyond Individual Cases

We also provide:

- Policy advocacy to resolve problems that affect many people with disabilities (with MDE, DHS, DEED, etc.)
- Work collaboratively with other advocacy organizations to address systems issues & advocate for equal rights and protections
- Community legal education presentations
- Technical assistance regarding disability rights to advocates, attorneys, providers and other interested parties throughout the state and nationwide



Policy Proposals for Phasing Out Subminimum Wages in Minnesota

1. Pass legislation to phase out the payment of subminimum wages in Minnesota by a specific date with funding to implement the phase out
2. Modify Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services Waiver Employment Services to ensure that people receiving waiver employment services are not earning subminimum wages as a part of their employment support service
3. Provide sufficient financial resources, policy guidance and technical assistance to employment service providers transitioning towards helping people find community jobs.
4. Ensure access to benefits planning to encourage competitive, integrated employment



Policy Proposals for Phasing Out Subminimum Wages in Minnesota (cont.)

5. Fund transportation and help people find transportation to get to and from work, particularly in rural areas and in areas without public transportation
6. Design and implement data collection to ensure that we are tracking each person's progress away from subminimum wage work and towards community jobs
7. Modify Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Employment Services to ensure the service system fully supports and funds the individualized process of supporting a person to find a community job based on their interests and strengths



Policy Proposals for Phasing Out Subminimum Wages in Minnesota (cont.)

8. Support and demand seamless collaboration amongst special education providers and DEED's vocational rehabilitation program to ensure youth who have disabilities aged fourteen to twenty-four leave school with a concrete plan, resources, and contacts for future education, training, or employment
9. Expand the information, options and education provided by DHS, DEED, MDE to empower people with disabilities to learn, through person-centered practices, about support to find a community job
10. Provide high quality, integrated day programming for people who choose not to work

