

VOR - Illinois State Report 2017

The census of the State Operated Developmental Centers (SODCs) in Illinois has remained stable. The census ending June 30, 2016 was 1,653. The census as of May 1, 2017 was 1,660. Although the state has attempted to move individuals from the SODCs, as individuals have moved into community placements other individuals have been admitted to the centers. This is in part due to the Chicago Tribune article "Suffering in Secret". This article highlighted the abuse/neglect/deaths that occurred in CILAs (Community Integrated Living Arrangements - group homes) in Illinois from 2011-2016. Over 42 deaths occurred, and over 1,311 cases of abuse and neglect were hidden or covered up by the Department of Human Services. This has led to some providers being unwilling to continue to care for severely behaviorally challenged individuals, and the department being more willing to move those individuals to state operated developmental centers. Seven SODCs remain open, and the current Governor has not announced any plans to close any of these in the near future.

Currently, over 16,500 people are served through the Division's Medicaid waiver program. The Department of Human Services has administrative oversight of over 200 private Intermediate Care Facilities for Developmentally Disabled individuals in Illinois. There are 4,585 individuals living in these private ICF/DD and similar type settings in Illinois. There are presently over 19,000 individuals on the Priority for Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) List. These are individuals waiting for services from the state of Illinois.

Due to the Tribune series of articles several bills have been introduced to increase the oversight of the community programs in Illinois, as well as increasing the accountability of community providers. Parents of individuals living in CILAs are demanding more oversight, as well as more training for staff employed in CILAs. The Department of Human Services is also reviewing all CILA operations, and is putting some providers on notice that if the services do not improve they will no longer be funded by the state of Illinois, and the homes will be closed.

Funding in Illinois for all DD services continues to be a constant struggle in Illinois, as there has been no budget for over 2 1/2 years. Several bills have been proposed to raise the minimum wage for all Direct Service Personnel in community settings to \$15. At this time the bill has passed the House and Senate, but the Governor vetoed the bill last year, and it is predicted it will be vetoed again, unless a budget is finally passed.