

Developmental Disability Services January Newsletter

Dates to Remember:

Services Closed

01/01/2026

01/19/2026

Key Focuses of Our Services in 2026

We are enthusiastic about prioritizing habilitation through classes, clubs, groups, and curricula, while continuing to offer purposeful recreation.

Building rapport and deepening relationships with stakeholders and our community to deliver valuable resources, supports, and education will also be a central focus.

January Affirmations

Affirmations to start the new year.

- I am worthy just as I am.
- I will be kind to myself this year.
- I deserve to prioritize my needs.
- My unique experiences matter.



THANK YOU

As we celebrate National Pharmacist Day on 01/12/2026, we want to acknowledge all of the pharmacists and technicians for their unwavering dedication, expertise, and compassionate care that keep those in our services healthy and safe. We are profoundly grateful to you!

Goodwill Gives Back

STANDING WITH LEXINGTON



Round Up
for
Lexington
NEBRASKA

Learn More

When you round up your purchase in December 2025 and January 2026, your gift will be donated to the Lexington Community Foundation to distribute to organizations offering emergency assistance, basic needs support, and workforce transition resources in the Lexington community.

LEXINGTON
community foundation

Goodwill
Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

In response to the recent announcement of the Tyson plant closure in Lexington, Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska will direct all Round Up donations collected at its 11 retail store locations to the Lexington Community Foundation. These funds will support local organizations providing services to individuals and families affected by the shutdown.

Goodwill's Round Up program invites shoppers to round their purchase totals to the nearest dollar, with the difference used to support community needs. Beginning December 4th through the month of January, all Round Up contributions made at Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska retail stores will be donated to the Lexington Community Foundation to distribute to organizations offering emergency assistance, basic needs support, and workforce transition resources.

"Goodwill exists to strengthen the communities we serve," said Kendra Lutz, Development Officer "At a time when so many Lexington residents are facing uncertainty, we want to ensure that every Round Up dollar given locally stays local and directly supports those who need it most."

The Lexington Community Foundation has a proven track record of responding quickly and effectively to community needs. By partnering with the Foundation, Goodwill ensures that contributed funds will be distributed to trusted organizations that are providing immediate assistance, including food support, financial help, & housing stability.

Services Showcase



This year's Holiday Party was filled with pure magic. Individuals we serve danced, laughed, and enjoyed a warm meal together, filling the room with joy. The highlight came as gifts were handed out—eyes lit up, smiles spread, and everyone felt seen and celebrated. It was an afternoon of connection, and holiday cheer.

A special thanks to those who helped make it unforgettable.

NASP News

UPDATES FROM THE NEBRASKA
ASSOCIATION OF SERVICE
PROVIDERS



Event Summary

The Nebraska Association of Service Providers invites you to our 2026 annual conference focused on 'the next wave' of change, innovation, and opportunity.

The HCBS landscape is ever-evolving – through policy shifts, technological advancements, workforce challenges, and growing advocacy. This conference is designed to equip attendees with the insights, tools, and partnerships needed to stay afloat.

From frontline direct support professionals to organizational leaders, state officials to self-advocates, this event will foster a dynamic exchange of ideas while honoring the essential role of the HCBS system in promoting independence and inclusion.

“The Next Wave” is not just a theme—it’s a call to action. Together, we are preparing for what’s next and shaping what’s possible.

Impact Initiatives

If you are interested in making a positive impact by supporting quality services and championing the rights of those we serve, please connect with your local manager to learn more about joining our Advisory Committee or Human Legal Rights Review Committee. We are always seeking passionate individuals to get involved!

Advocacy Efforts

KEEPING YOU UPDATED WITH
POTENTIAL CHANGES TO
SERVICES AND SUPPORTS



If you or a family member uses the
Aged & Disabled Waiver, changes
are underway.

****This does not directly impact Goodwill DD
services but information is available as it may impact
others.***

Proposed Cap on Nebraska A&D Waiver: What It Means

Summary of statement by Disability Rights Nebraska (Dec 2025)

Why advocates are concerned

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) proposes re-introducing annual funding thresholds in the Medicaid Aged and Disabled (A&D) Waiver, potentially limiting community-based services and increasing institutional placements.

Public Comment: Dec 5, 2025 – Jan 5, 2026

Holiday timing and limited early details raised transparency concerns.

150% REVIEW

\$138,657

High-utilization review
triggered

175% CAP

\$161,766.50

Services limited to this funding

BASELINE

\$92,438

Avg. nursing facility per-capita
(SFY 2025)

What DDD described in the proposal

- Review occurs when combined waiver spending exceeds 150% (\$138,657); services limited at 175% (\$161,766.50)
- Limits based on SFY25 nursing facility average of \$92,438
- Service Coordinators work to reduce supports under the 175% cap while maintaining health & safety
- If needs cannot be met, referrals may include institutional services (nursing facilities)

If you're concerned: Take action before Jan 5

- Talk to your DHHS Service Coordinator to learn your current annual funding (150% ≈ \$138,657)
- Submit public comment to the Division of Developmental Disabilities by Jan 5, 2026
- Contact your state senator to request preserving services; share concerns
- Consider sharing your story with local media (Channel 6 Omaha expressed interest)
- Or contact Disability Rights Nebraska to share your story through advocacy channels

NASP Call to Action

INVITE YOUR NEBRASKA SENATOR

Protect Medicaid Home & Community-Based Services (HCBS) for people with intellectual & developmental disabilities (I/DD)

HCBS is in crisis:

- 90% of providers face staffing shortages
- 64% turn away new referrals
- DSP turnover: ~40% annually
- Nebraska faces a \$432M+ budget shortfall

Why HCBS matters:

- Saves \$295K/year vs. institutional care
- Every \$1 invested returns \$1.40 to the state
- Legislators set Medicaid rates – they control access & quality

Take Action:

1. Find your senator:
nebraskalegislature.gov/senators/senator_list.php
2. Invite them to visit you
3. Share your stories
4. Follow up & stay connected

Amplify your voice:

- Write a Letter to the Editor
- Share on social media
- Attend town halls
- Partner with advocacy groups

****This call to action is a summary due to projected
budget cuts to Nebraska DHHS which can possibly
impact DD Services.****

Resource Roundup

Public Comment Period

Pursuant to 42 C.F.R. §441.304(f), the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is required to give public notice related to the state's plan to renew the 1915(c) Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) **Aged and Adult and Children with Disabilities Waiver (NE.0187)** and amend the **Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver (NE.40199)**. For more information, go to the [DDD Public Comment page](#).

The 30-day public comment period is from December 5, 2025, through January 5, 2026.

interRAI Assessment Information

DDD began using interRAI assessment tools for developmental disabilities (DD) waivers on July 1, 2025. Learn more about this decision, the assessment tools, and Nebraska's assessment process on the [interRAI Assessment Information webpage](#) [↗](#).

**NEWS RELEASE**

INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SUPPORT ACT
Tax credits for direct support professionals, employers of individuals receiving services, and agencies

MEDIA CONTACT:
Erin Maier, (531) 893-1595
erin.maier@nebraska.gov



Lincoln, NE— In April 2024, Governor Jim Pillen signed the Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities into law, effective January 1, 2025.

Employers:
\$500 per direct support professional (DSP) employed ≥ 6 months, 500 hours or more

Direct support professionals:
\$500 if employed as a DSP ≥ 6 months, 500 hours or more

Employers (HCBS):
\$1,000 per employee receiving Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) employed ≥ 6 months, 200 hours or more

Tax credit allocation locations:

- Up to \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2025-2026
- \$1,500,000 for fiscal year 2026-2027
- \$2,000,000 annually thereafter

"These tax credits are essential for supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the people and organizations that assist them."

Tony Green, Division of Developmental Disabilities

Division of Developmental Disabilities

**Good Life. Great Mission.**
DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Home & Community-Based Services (HCBS) Stakeholder Meetings

What is new in the Division of Developmental Disabilities?
Get updates from all DHHS Divisions!

Meetings are held on the first Monday* of every month.
Join us at 4:00 p.m., CT

We will provide updates and give you the opportunity to ask questions.
Send questions or request topics ahead of time:
DHHS.DDDCommunityBasedServices@nebraska.gov.

Presented on Zoom:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81170221250?pwd=ZFRUHC0VfHCUDBrWHpnVmdnackrUT09>

Upcoming meeting dates on the Stakeholder webpage:
<https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/HCBS-Stakeholder-Meetings.aspx>

Login information on the DDD calendar (bottom of the homepage):
<https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Developmental-Disabilities.aspx>

*Meeting will be held the second Monday when the first is a holiday.

Employee Updates

NEW EMPLOYEES

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EMPLOYEES ON THE MOVE

Lucas Skrdlant - Grand Island Program Manager

DEPARTURES

Malcolm Roy - Grand Island Habilitation Specialist
Lindsey Robinson - Hastings DSP
Rayelyn Warner - Hastings DSP
Elizabeth Bauman - Hastings DSP

UPCOMING TRAININGS

01/01 - MANDT Initial
01/08 - Mission New Hire
01/08 - Med Aide Refresher
01/12 - CPR Refresher
01/15 - Med Aide Initial
01/19 - DDS New Hire Orientation

****MANDT Refreshers for SLPs throughout the month****

.....➔ **Give Big During Goodwill's 2025 Annual Campaign** ⬅️.....

Thank you for being part of the Goodwill family. Your support creates opportunities every day. If you would like the opportunity to come and visit or learn more about our impact don't hesitate to reach out.