

ADVOCACY

People First of Toledo Monthly Newsletter



**People First
of
Toledo**



Waiver Waiting Lists

By Quinn Thomas

On October 1, 2018, Ohio got rid of its DODD Medicaid waiver waiting list. Everyone on it was supposed to be moved to a transitional list and assessed by their local county board by December 31, 2020. Now, as of October 1st, 2024-- six years after the waiting list was done away with-- over 1350 Ohioans with disabilities are still on it. What happened?

Medicaid waivers provide necessary services to individuals with developmental disabilities. These are called home- and community-based services (or HCBS). For decades, the system was set up so that there were a limited number of waivers issued every year. People would go without necessary services for months or years or

UPCOMING EVENTS

SPOOKY BOARDWALK

October 13, 2:00-4:00 at Sunshine Communities.

TRUNK OR TREAT

October 15, 5:30, at Larc Lane.

AWARDS CEREMONY

October 17, 5:30-10:30, at the Summit in Toledo. All People First members will get a free ticket!

HALLOWEEN PARTY

October 25, 6:00-8:00, at Courageous Acres.

AUTISM WALK

October 27, 9:00, at Franklin Park Mall.

ONE-DAY CONFERENCE

November 8, 9:00-5:15, at the University of Toledo Lancelot Thompson Student Union.

even longer while on a waiting list to receive the next available waiver. Without home- and community-based services, people with developmental disabilities were kept essentially warehoused in large institutions, segregated from the general population.

It took years of advocacy to get rid of this system. So why is there still a waiver waiting list?

When someone wants a waiver, the county board completes an assessment for them. There are three possible outcomes to this assessment: no need, current need, or immediate need. If you are determined as having no need for a waiver, then you won't get one. Current need means the county board thinks you're going to need a waiver within the next twelve months. Immediate need means you need to be put on a waiver right away.

People with a current need are the

ones who make up the new waiting list. Someone with a current need could be looking to move out of an ICF, could have caregivers who are becoming unable to continue providing care, or they could simply need minimal supports-- such as wanting ADS or employment supports, or only needing staff to help some of the time.

When someone has a current need, the county board is supposed to help them get that needed support through alternative services. If they can't and you absolutely have to have a waiver, then you are placed on the waiting list.

There is no rule for long someone can spend on the waiting list. There is no point where people with a current need have to receive a waiver.

The Ohio waiver waiting list gets longer almost every single day. The people on it need services, and cannot get them elsewhere. #FixTheList

OUR NEXT MEETING

October 24th, 6:00-7:30, virtually on Zoom or in-person at the Holland Library in Community Room B. Meeting dues are \$5 or \$50 for twelve months.

For this meeting, we will be discussing disability representation in popular media and in Hollywood in particular. Note that this is not our usual date.