

**HB1244 MARYLAND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION WAIVER ADVISORY COUNCIL -
ESTABLISHMENT HEARING**

HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 5, 2025, House Office Building, Room 240

Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair

Delegate Bonnie Cullison, Vice Chair

Position: Favorable with Amendment

Please accept the following as the written testimony of Service Coordination, Inc. regarding HB 1244 *Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration Waiver Advisory Council Establishment*.

Introduction:

SCI is a leading non-profit organization providing award-winning case management services and advocacy for more than 16,000 individuals with disabilities and medically complex needs across Maryland. SCI's mission is to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities understand their choices and create pathways to community resources that respect their dignity and rights.

SCI provides case management services to 12,000 of the approximately 19,000 people in the state of Maryland who currently receive Medicaid waiver services through funding from the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). We are the largest nonprofit case management organization in the state, and we organize and chair a Coordination of Community Services (CCS) Community of Practice (CCS COP) comprised of a majority of CCS providers across the state.

SCI supports individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities through case management, person-centered planning, and the coordination of comprehensive services related to housing, employment, relationships, financial management, health monitoring, and recreation. Case managers often serve as the initial contact for people seeking services, providing crucial guidance throughout the complex application and eligibility determination and redetermination processes. Case managers assist people in understanding the criteria and requirements, help them gather the necessary documentation and submit the eligibility recommendation. Case managers engage with people and their families to explore their unique wants and needs, facilitating the development of a person-centered plan that reflects the person's preferences and goals. They play a pivotal role in connecting people to essential supports and services, addressing various aspects of the person's life and promoting overall well-being. After services are initiated, case managers continue to monitor the delivery of those services to ensure they align with the person-centered plan. They advocate for the person's preferences and needs, addressing any issues that arise.

Concerns About the Current Waiver Advisory Council and Input on HB 1244, Which Seeks to Strengthen the Council:

Waiver Advisory Council members advise and provide recommendations to the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) on system design, service delivery, and quality enhancement strategies for the Medicaid waiver programs. SCI agrees that improved collaboration among ID/DD providers and the Maryland Department of Health is critical and especially, given the proposed DDA budget cuts and coordination that will be required for effective implementation of associated cost containment measures.

In addition to being the largest case management service provider in the state, SCI convenes, organizes and chairs, a Coordination of Community Services (CCS) Community of Practice (CCS COP) that is open to all CCS case manager provider organizations across the state. In this forum, we discuss policy, and practice matters which regard CCS service best practices, administration and requirements and facilitate close coordination with officials at the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). MDH officials have recently attended CCS COP meetings to share about upcoming policy changes which impact CCS providers. Despite SCI's reach, expertise and efforts leading the CCS Community of Practice, SCI was previously denied a seat on the Waiver Advisory Council. SCI wishes to thank The Coordinating Center and the Worchester County Health Department who currently serve on the Waiver Advisory Council as CCS providers and hope to join them in representing the interests of CCS providers, which we believe will be of substantial benefit to the state.

Accordingly, we request the following:

SCI proposes two amendments to House Bill 1244

Amendment No. 1

On page 2, in line 29, strike "**ONE**" and substitute "**TWO**".

Rationale: Revise one to two Coordinators of Community Services (CCS) providers, as the current Waiver Advisory Charter already includes two seats for two CCS providers.

Amendment No. 2

On page 4, in line 27, after "**SERVICES**" insert: "**SERVICE COORDINATION, INC.**".

Rationale: Service Coordination, Inc. serves over 16,000 people through case management across the state of Maryland, is the largest Coordination of Community Services (CCS) provider in the state and facilitates a Coordination of Community Services (CCS) Community of Practice (COP). SCI would like to represent Coordination of Community Services (CCS) providers on the Waiver Advisory Council, because of our reach, expertise and leadership.

We value collaboration and welcome the opportunity to discuss our recommendations further. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact Sarah Butts, Vice President of Government Relations at sbutts@sc-inc.org.