

COVID RESPONSE

Comprehensive measures continue to be taken to keep residents and staff healthy. Booster vaccinations have been made available to residents. Deaths from the virus have been kept to very few residents living in intermediate care facilities (habilitation centers in Missouri). Every week there is progress with a return to more normal times.

NO NEW ADMISSIONS POLICY IN MISSOURI

Missouri has had a policy of no new admissions to state run Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with and Intellectual Disability (ICFs/IID) (called habilitation centers in Missouri) since 2008.

Families, hospitals, and other social agencies do call habilitation centers for assistance with placement, but have to be directed to our Regional Office that only place persons in the community.

The current habilitation centers are: Bellefontaine, Higginsville, South County, St. Charles, and Southeast Missouri Resident Services at Poplar Bluff/Sikeston. The census of the habilitation centers continue to dwindle as older residents are passing away.

Family organizations have met with the Missouri Department of Mental Health about opening up admissions, but have not been successful in changing the policy.

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM FOR DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

April 4, 2022

Jefferson City - Today, Governor Mike Parson announced that in response to the continuing challenges of accessing an available and skilled workforce, the Department of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD), has developed *Missouri Talent Pathways*, an initiative to recruit and retain a highly skilled and dedicated workforce.

The first of its kind in the nation, *Missouri Talent Pathways* was recently approved by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship. *Missouri Talent Pathways* is now a registered apprenticeship program which blends on-the-job mentoring with technical instruction and culminates in participants receiving a certificate as a Certified Direct Support Professional. As a registered apprenticeship intermediary, the Division and its community partners will have access to an expanded applicant pool, traditional workforce development programs, and a career ladder framework for direct support professionals.

"This registered apprenticeship will increase career opportunities to more Missourians and is a great example of the kind of innovation that occurs in state government," Governor Parson said. "It's programs like this one, that allow Missouri to consistently rank among the top states for apprenticeship opportunities. We look forward to this program helping expand health care workforce solutions while improving our ability to care for some of Missouri's most vulnerable citizens."

For more information from the Department of Mental Health go to <https://dmh.mo.gov/dev-disabilities/service-providers/talent-pathways>

MISSOURI ADVOCACY TO RETAIN 14C CERTIFICATES of the FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

There are U.S. bills that would eliminate 14c certificates that allow paying wages based upon productivity. Eliminating these special wages would put many sheltered workshops out of business. Missouri has a vibrant system of workshops. Websites concerning Missouri workshops advocacy include:

- Missouri Association of Sheltered Workshops:
<https://moworkshops.org/newsFolder/board-5-10-21.html>
- Coalition for the Preservation of Employment Choice
<https://preserve14c.org/>