

Direct Support Professionals in Georgia

— Georgia is only as strong as its workforce —

Georgians with disabilities rely on Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), otherwise known as professional caregivers, to live their lives. For many, Direct Support Professionals are the difference between a lonely, isolated life and living a productive life in the community.

Yet some Georgians with disabilities under age 65 that self-direct their home and community based waiver or private pay are **working with limited information** when hiring their Direct Support Professionals. Only with all the information can Georgians with disabilities make the right decision and **protect themselves from unscrupulous individuals**.

What does a Direct Support Professional assist with?



Toileting
and bathing



Getting dressed
and ready
for work



Living an
independent life
in the community

What is the problem facing consumers using DSPs?

The Georgia General Assembly recognized the importance of fingerprint background checks for Direct Support Professionals in 2018 when they created Georgia's Long-Term Care Background Check Program, known as SB 406.

Among other things, the bill created the Central Caregiver Registry to allow family members who are employing Direct Support Professionals for their loved one (age 65 or over) to obtain an employment eligibility determination from the Department of Community Health. Such a determination assures the family member/employer that their Direct Support Professional has passed a criminal background check and registry check.



What Georgia Needs: Unfortunately, some **people with disabilities were left out** of the previously passed bill. We need your help to **expand access to the Central Caregiver Registry for individuals with disabilities** (under age 65) who self-direct their home and community based waiver or private pay for their Direct Support Professionals.

Questions? Want to help? Contact **GCDD's Public Policy Director Dawn Alford** at 404.805.9741 or dawn.alford@gcdd.ga.gov or **GCDD's Planning & Policy Development Specialist Hanna Rosenfeld** at 404.275.8119 or hanna.rosenfeld@gcdd.ga.gov.

