

COVID-19 Policy Update: American Rescue Plan

President Joe Biden signed the American Rescue Plan into law. All of the advocacy efforts undertaken by The Arc network over the past year to show #WeAreEssential are reflected in the \$1.9 trillion relief bill, which passed the Senate last week, and the House this week. The hard-fought advocacy for supports for people with disabilities, their families, our workforce and the systems that provide services paid off. While we will celebrate the victories, we must also turn our attention to priorities for the recovery legislative packages to come in 2021. Below is a summary of major provisions of the law.

Medicaid:

- Includes a Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) specific FMAP increase. An additional 10% FMAP from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 is available to strengthen and expand access to HCBS
- Provides a 5-percent FMAP increase for Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) for states that have not yet done so

Stimulus/Taxes/Paid Leave:

- Stimulus payments for people making under \$80,000 for individuals or \$160,000 for couples, including adult dependents
- Expanded Earned Income Tax Credit to provide enhanced benefit to childless adults
- Expanded and refundable Child Tax Credit to help low income families
- Renewal of tax credits for businesses providing COVID-related leave to employees

Child Care:

- \$15 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program and \$24 billion for a child care stabilization fund

Education:

- \$2.58 billion for grants to States under part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- \$200 million for preschool grants under section 619 of the IDEA
- \$250 million for programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities under part C of the IDEA

Health care:

- Significant premium subsidies for people purchasing health coverage on the Marketplaces
- Includes funding increases for coronavirus testing, vaccine distribution, and increases the size of the public health workforce

Housing:

- \$27.4 billion for emergency rental assistance, including \$5 billion for housing vouchers
- \$5 billion in homelessness assistance
- \$10 billion in homeowner assistance
- Utility assistance

Non-Profits:

- Expansion of the Paycheck Protection Program to apply to non-profits larger than 500, as long as there are not more than 500 employees at any one location
- Federal Unemployment Coverage for Reimbursing Employers. The legislation includes language improving the federal coverage of the unemployment costs of reimbursing nonprofits from 50% to 75% prospectively during the period April 1 through August 29, 2021

State and Local Government:

- Provides \$350 billion to help states, counties, cities, and tribal governments respond to COVID-19

Transportation:

- \$30.5 billion for transit agencies
- Amtrak relief funding
- Funding for airports and airlines