



# Developmental Disabilities Administration

## FY 2027 Budget Overview

### Community Pathways Waiver Program

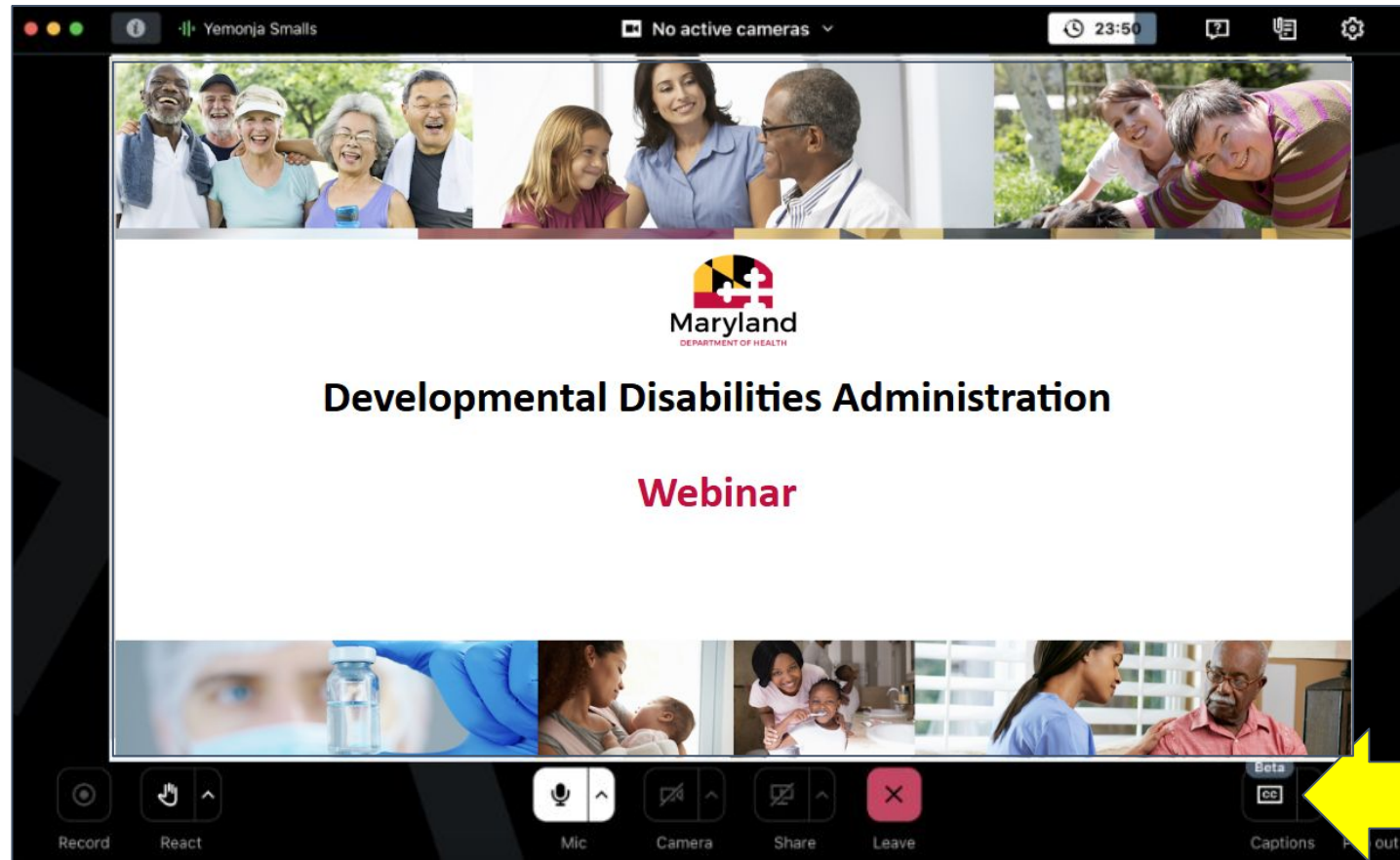
May 4, 2026



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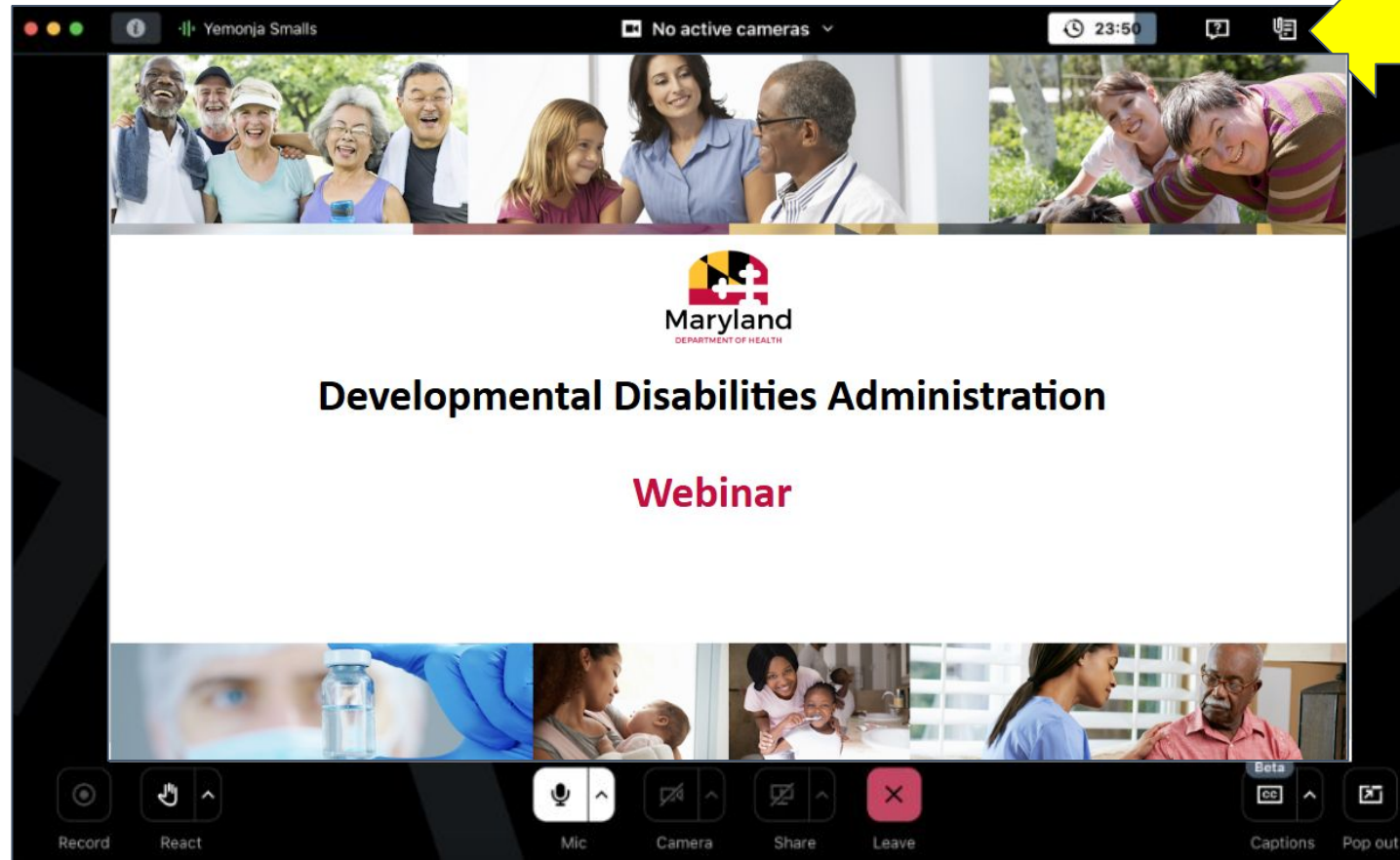
# Welcome

# Housekeeping - Closed Captioning



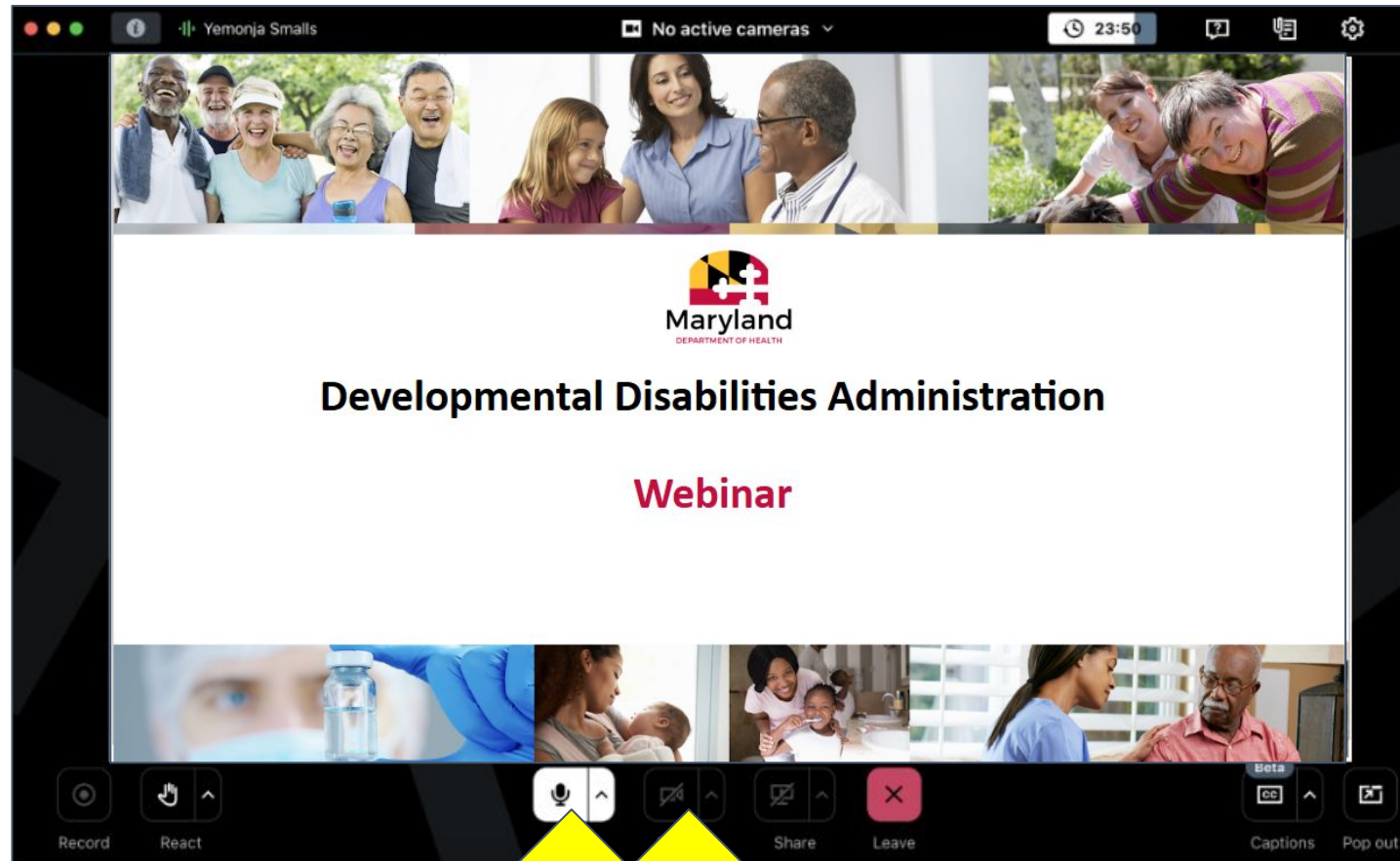
Click the CC button in the lower right corner for closed captioning

# Housekeeping - Handouts



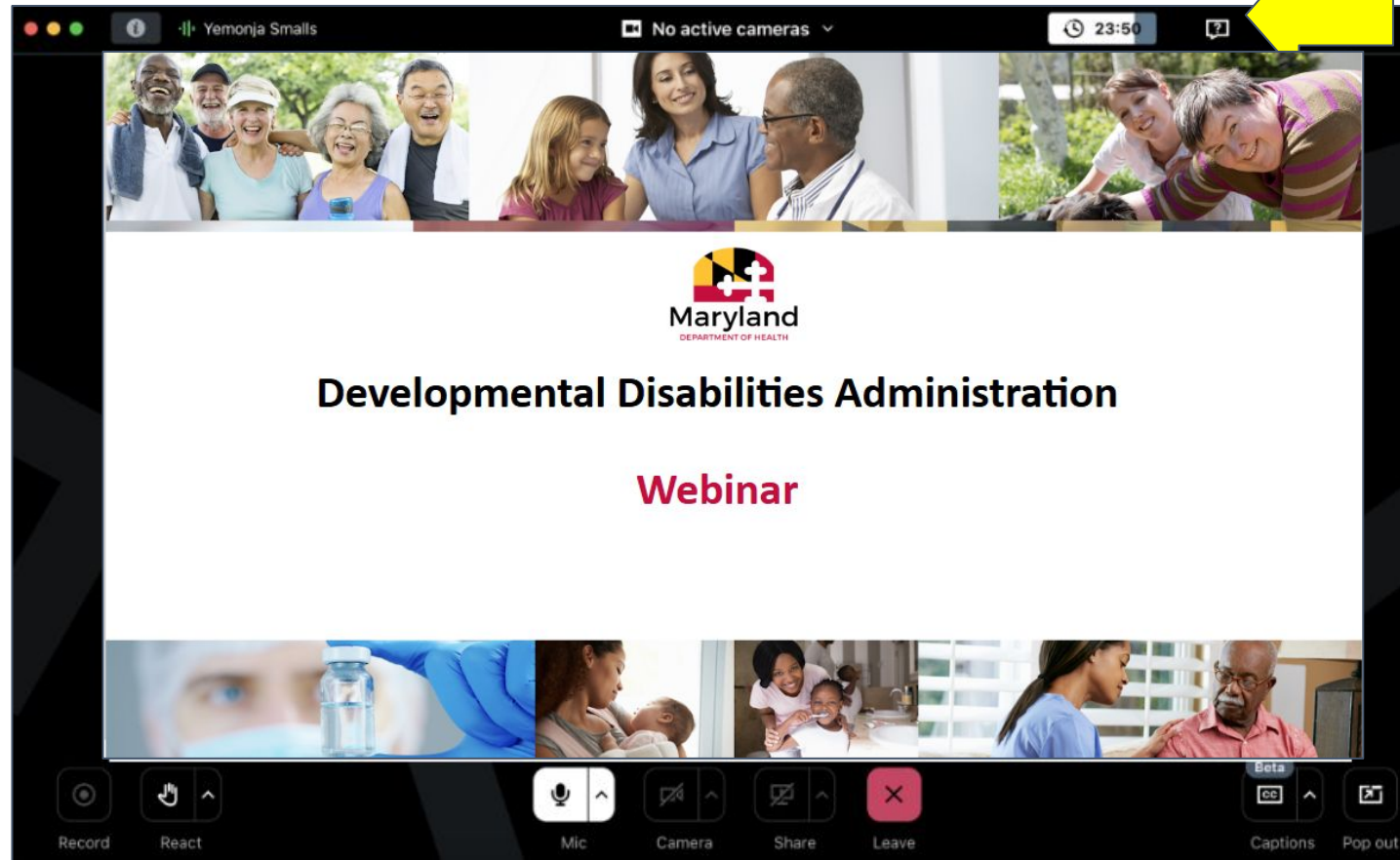
Click the paperclip in the upper right corner to download handouts

# Housekeeping - Mics and Cameras



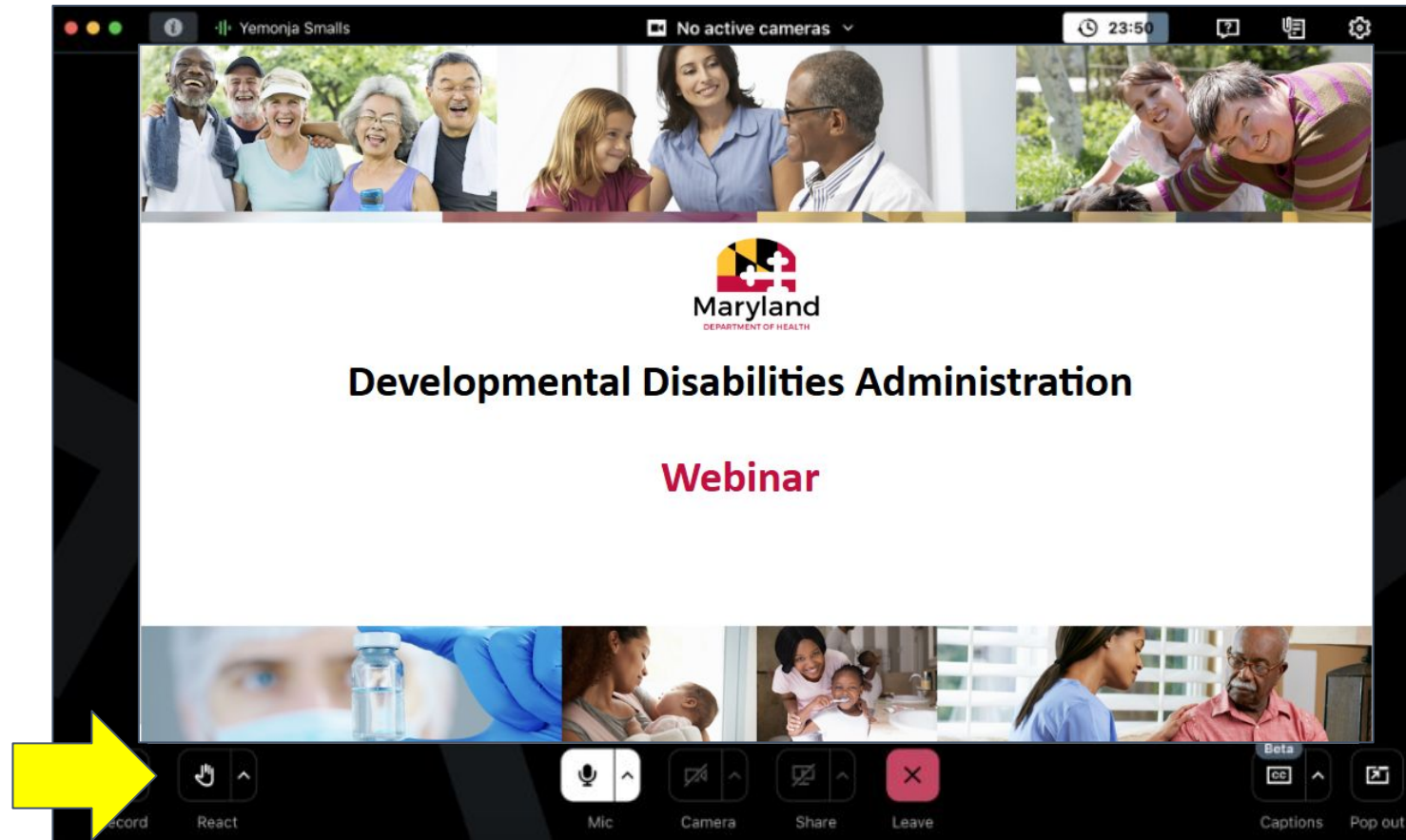
Microphones and Cameras are turned off

# Housekeeping - Questions



Click the question mark in the upper right corner to type a question for us

# Housekeeping - Raise Hand



Click the hand icon in the lower left corner to raise your hand

# Conduct

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The open exchange of diverse perspectives is an important value of our group. We ask that everyone engage in a respectful and constructive way, treating one another with dignity and good faith.

To help maintain a positive and productive environment, we ask participants to avoid disruptive behavior, inappropriate language, or personal attacks. If needed, facilitators may step in to address concerns and support a respectful meeting space for all.

# Agenda

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- **Why changes to the program are needed**
- **What is changing**
- **When changes will take effect**
- **Where to find more information**
- **How to provide input**

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**Why are changes needed?**

# Bottom line: Ongoing Program Sustainability

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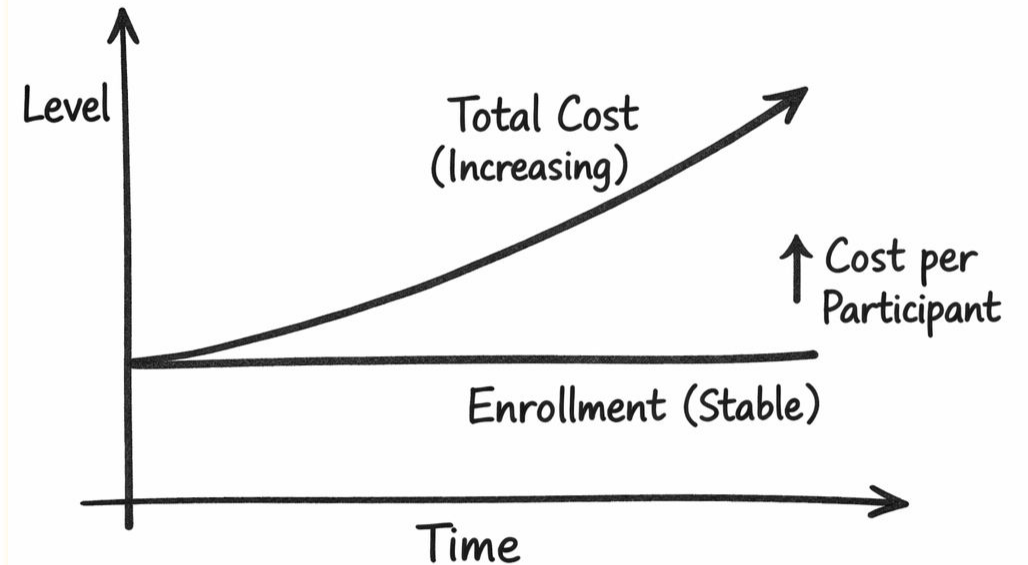
The FY 2027 changes are needed to keep the system working well year after year, even as needs, costs, and policies change.

## These changes are needed to:

- Ensure DDA can continue to deliver essential services into the future
- Meet federal requirements (like the home and community-based services rules)
- Keep the system strong, stable, and able to meet people's needs

# Cost Trends

- DDA spending has grown rapidly since FY 2023, exceeding available funding while participant enrollment has remained steady.



***Current spending levels are not sustainable***

# Federal Requirement: Cost Neutrality

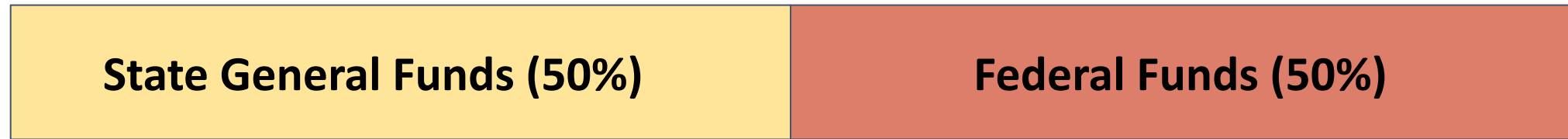
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**What is Cost Neutrality?** The average cost of home and community-based services delivered under the waiver program cannot exceed what Medicaid would pay (on average) for care in an Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities.

# Federal Requirement: Cost Neutrality

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DDA services are paid for through a 50/50 partnership between State and federal funding.



*If average waiver program costs exceed average institutional costs, federal funding for the Community Pathways program could be lost.*

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**What is Changing?**

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# **Wage Rates - Self-Directed Services**

# Align to BLS Wage Tables

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- New Bureau of Labor Statistics wage tables to be issued May 15, 2026.
- Reasonable and Customary Wages aligned to Bureau of Labor Statistics wage tables.
  - Family as staff
  - Non-family as staff
- Wage exception process eliminated.



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# **Self-Directed Budget Methodology**

# Self-Directed Services Budget Methodology

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- New Self-Directed Services rates will be used to establish annual budgets.
  - The budget will factor in costs for employee-related expenses (FICA, benefits, etc.), training, and transportation.
- Effective September 1, 2026
  - Will require revised person-centered plans and updates to annual budgets in July and August.
  - Coming soon: New budget sheet; training.

# Provider Categories

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- Participants who self-direct can obtain services from:
  - Employees
  - DDA providers
  - Individual providers (formerly “vendors”)
    - Nursing Staff
    - Support Brokers

*Helps ensure high-quality services*

# Financial Management and Counseling Services Fees

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- DDA will separately pay **Financial Management and Counseling Service fees.**
  - No longer will be something that has to be included in participant budgets

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**60/40 Rule:  
Legal Guardians, Relatives and Legally  
Responsible People**

# Weekly Hour Limits

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If a **relative, guardian, or legally responsible person** is paid to support one or more participants:

- They can work **up to 40 hours per week total** (per participant).
- They can work **up to 60 hours per week total** (across all participants they support).
- Each participant can receive a **total of up to 60 hours per week** from all relative/guardian/legally responsible providers combined.

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**Community Living - Group Home  
Shared Dedicated Support Hours**

# DDA's Dedicated Hours Update

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- Each participant is retired, transitioning from one meaningful day service to another, recovering from a health condition, or receives less than **30 hours** of meaningful day services.

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# **Community Provider and Coordination of Community Services Rates**

# Provider-Managed Services Rates

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- Support Services fee-for-service rates' funding percentage will be capped at 102% of the fully loaded rates
- All rates' funding percentage paid to community services provider agencies and Coordination of Community Services agencies will be reduced by 2%

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**Waiver Amendment**

# Waiver Amendment Process

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- Underway now
- First step: Public Input
  - Submit comments by mail or email by May 28 11:59 p.m. EDT
  - Comment instructions can be found on our website
- Webinar: Tomorrow, May 5, 2026
  - In English: Noon
  - In Spanish: 3:00 p.m.
  - [Register here](#)
  - Will be recorded; links will be posted on our website

# Public Comment Process

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- Comments can be:
  - Submitted to [wfb.dda@maryland.gov](mailto:wfb.dda@maryland.gov)
  - Mailed to: DDA Federal Programs at 201 West Preston Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore MD 21201
- Comments must be submitted electronically or postmarked by **11:59 PM on May 28, 2026.**


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# Where to Find More Information

# Where to Find More Information (1 of 2)

Search...  Individuals and Families ▾ Providers and Professionals ▾ Media and Publications ▾ Offices and Administrations ▾

 MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
**Developmental Disabilities Administration**

Home About Apply People & Families Services CCS & Providers Waivers & Policies Crisis

**Quick Links**

- Waiver Changes
- Guide to Services
- Easy-to-Understand Guide to Services (English)
- Easy-to-Understand Guide to Services (Spanish)
- Maryland Statewide Resources
- Report Abuse or Concern
- Person-Centered Planning

## Waiver Changes

### Coming Soon: Changes to the Community Pathways Program.

A number of changes are planned for the Community Pathways Medicaid waiver program for the 2027 fiscal year.


These changes are required by the State's 2027 budget or to comply with federal guidelines. Even more important, these changes are needed to ensure DDA can continue delivering the essential services thousands of Marylanders with intellectual and developmental disabilities depend upon to live in the community – and to provide services to more people.

Some of these changes take effect on July 1, 2026. Others take effect on September 1, 2026.

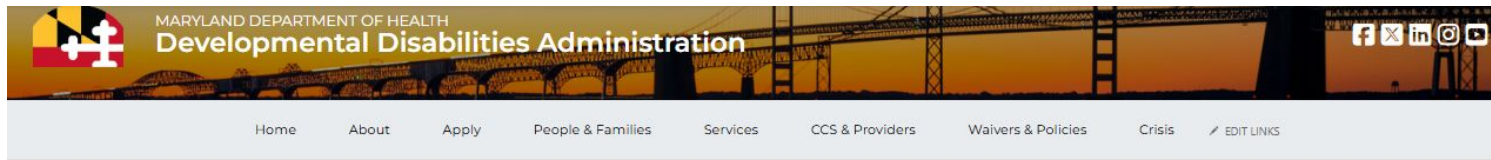
#### Input Needed: Proposed Amendment to the Community Pathways Waiver Amendmen

Some of these changes require approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, through the formal waiver amendment process. The first step in that process is collecting public input for 30 days. That comment period opened April 29, 2026 and will remain open through May 28, 2026. Our [2026 Community Pathways Medicaid Waiver Amendment](#), has more information, including:

- Waiver amendment documents
- Plain language summaries and Spanish materials
- Instructions for submitting public comments



# Where to Find More Information (2 of 2)



## 2026 Community Pathways Medicaid Waiver Amendment

The FY 2027 budget for the state of Maryland includes provisions that require changes to the Community Pathways Medicaid waiver program.

To make these changes, the Maryland Department of Health is proposing a waiver amendment to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The proposed amendment also includes changes to ensure the Community Pathways program can continue to provide services and supports to Marylanders with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

As part of that process, we are seeking input on the proposed amendment from our stakeholders. You can submit comments until 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, May 13, 2026.

The resources below provide details on the proposed changes and how you can submit feedback. We also are hosting a series of webinars to explain the changes and answer your questions. We hope you will join us!!

### Overview of the Proposed Amendment

- [Easy-to-Read Summary -](#)
- [Resumen de Fácil Lectura -](#)

### Upcoming Webinars

We are hosting a series of webinars (two in English, one in Spanish) to provide an overview of the proposed amendment and answer questions. Please join us! (We also will post a recording shortly after the first webinars.)

#### Webinar: Proposed Waiver Amendment (English)

- Tuesday, May 5, 2026, from 12 - 1:30 p.m. - [Register Here](#)
- Tuesday, May 12, 2026, from 6 - 7:30 p.m. - [Register Here](#)

#### Webinar: Propuesta de enmienda a la exención (En español)

- Martes, 5 de mayo de 2026, de 3:00 a 4:30 p.m. - [Regístrate aquí](#)

### Self-Directed Services Webinars

- [Changes to Reasonable And Customary Standards and Wage Exception Process](#)

Webpage:

[Community Pathways Waiver Amendment](#)

Webpage: [Community Pathways Waiver Amendment](#)

<https://health.maryland.gov/dda/Pages/Community-Pathways-Waiver-Amendment-4-2026.aspx>

# Questions?

02:00