



Developmental Disabilities Administration

FY 2027 Budget Overview

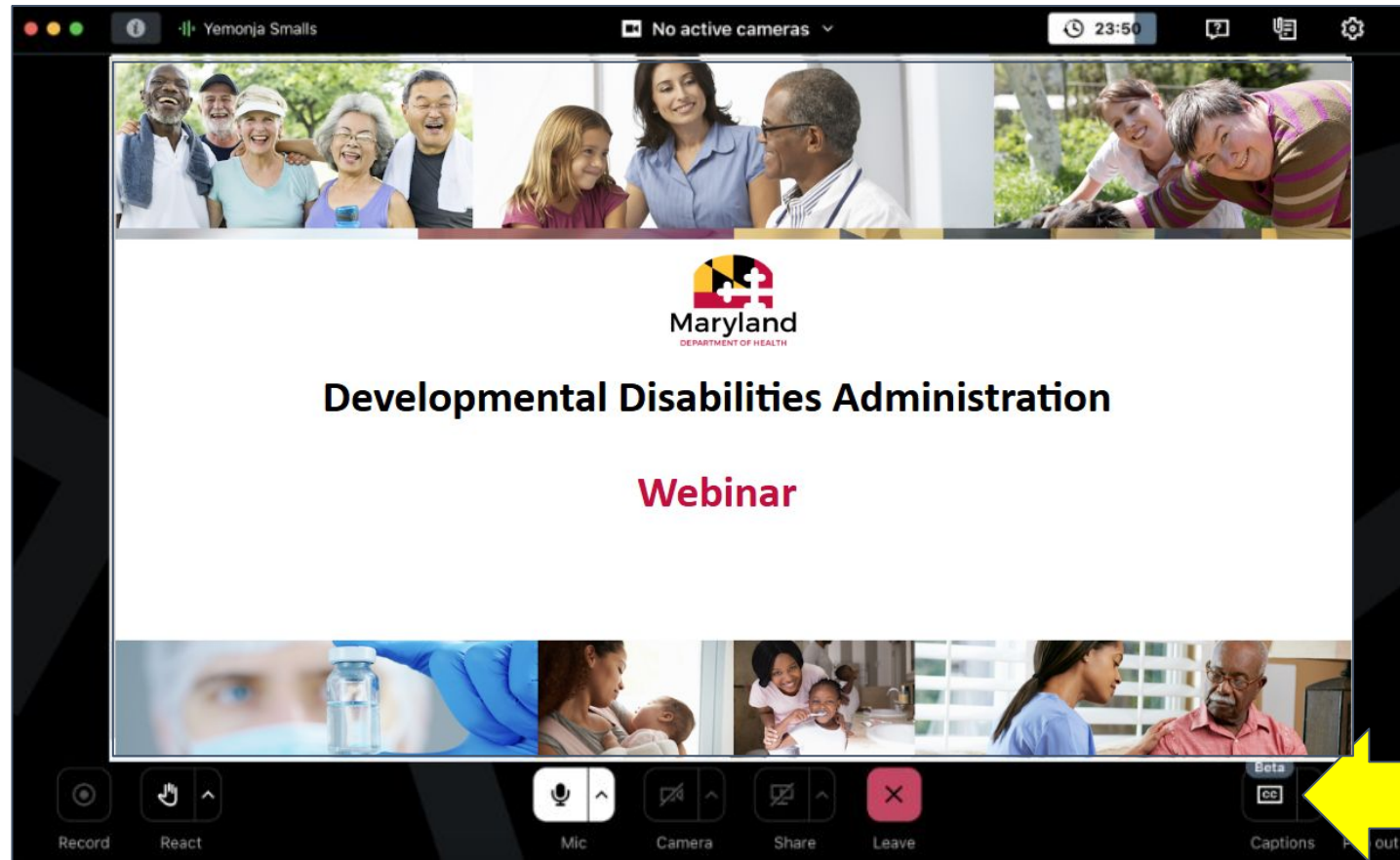
Community Pathways Waiver Program

May 11, 2026



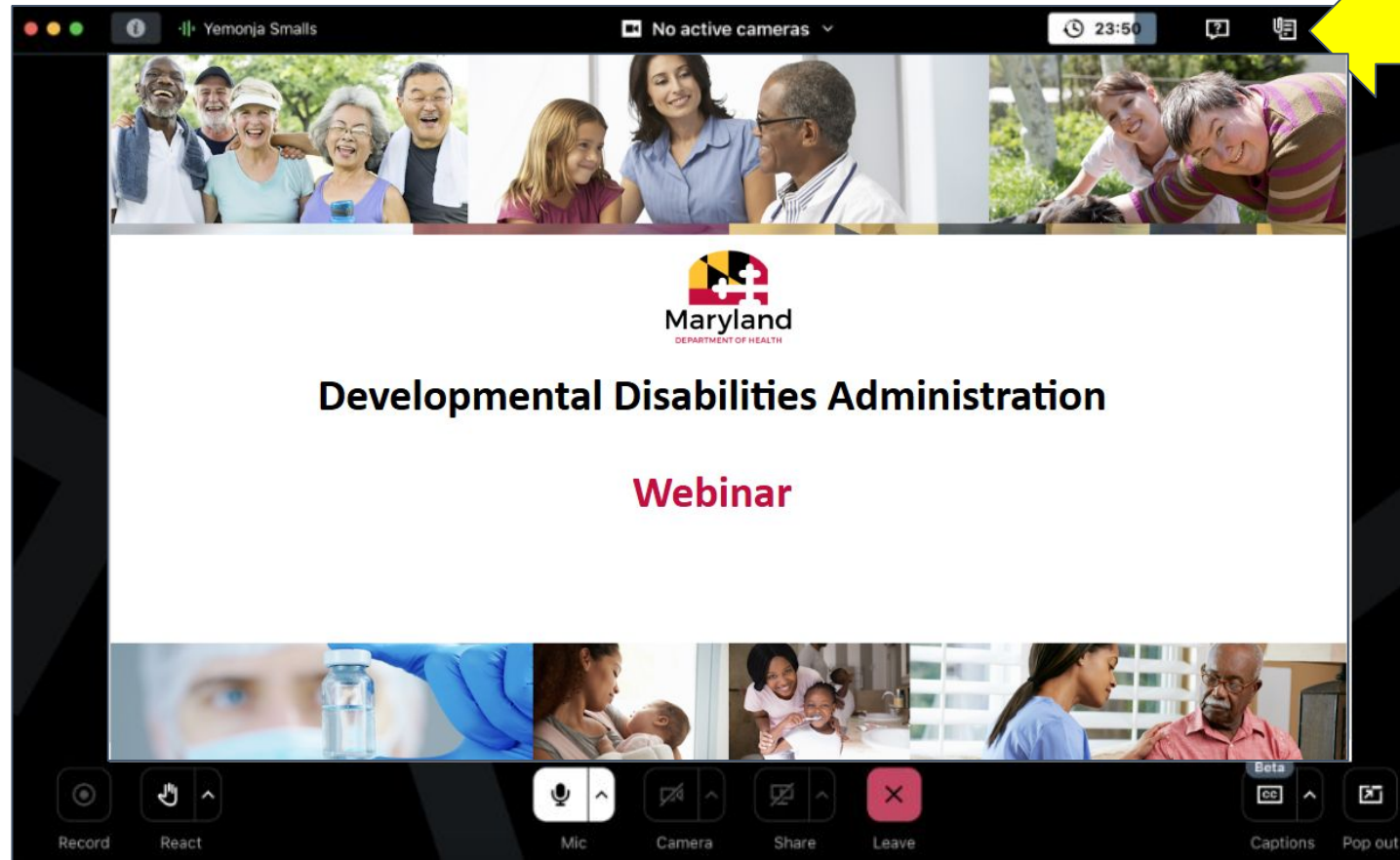
Welcome

Housekeeping - Closed Captioning



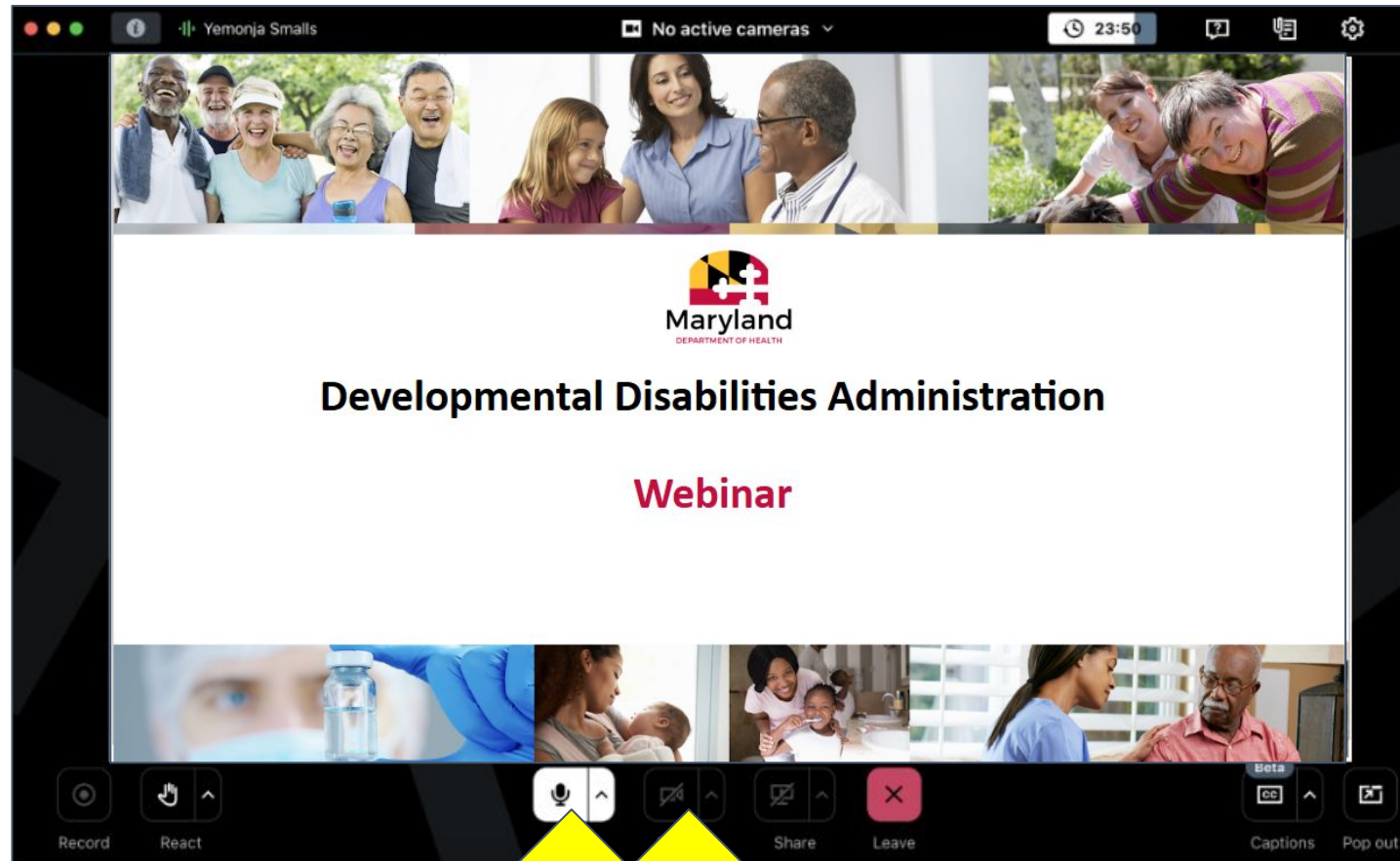
Click the CC button in the lower right corner for closed captioning

Housekeeping - Handouts



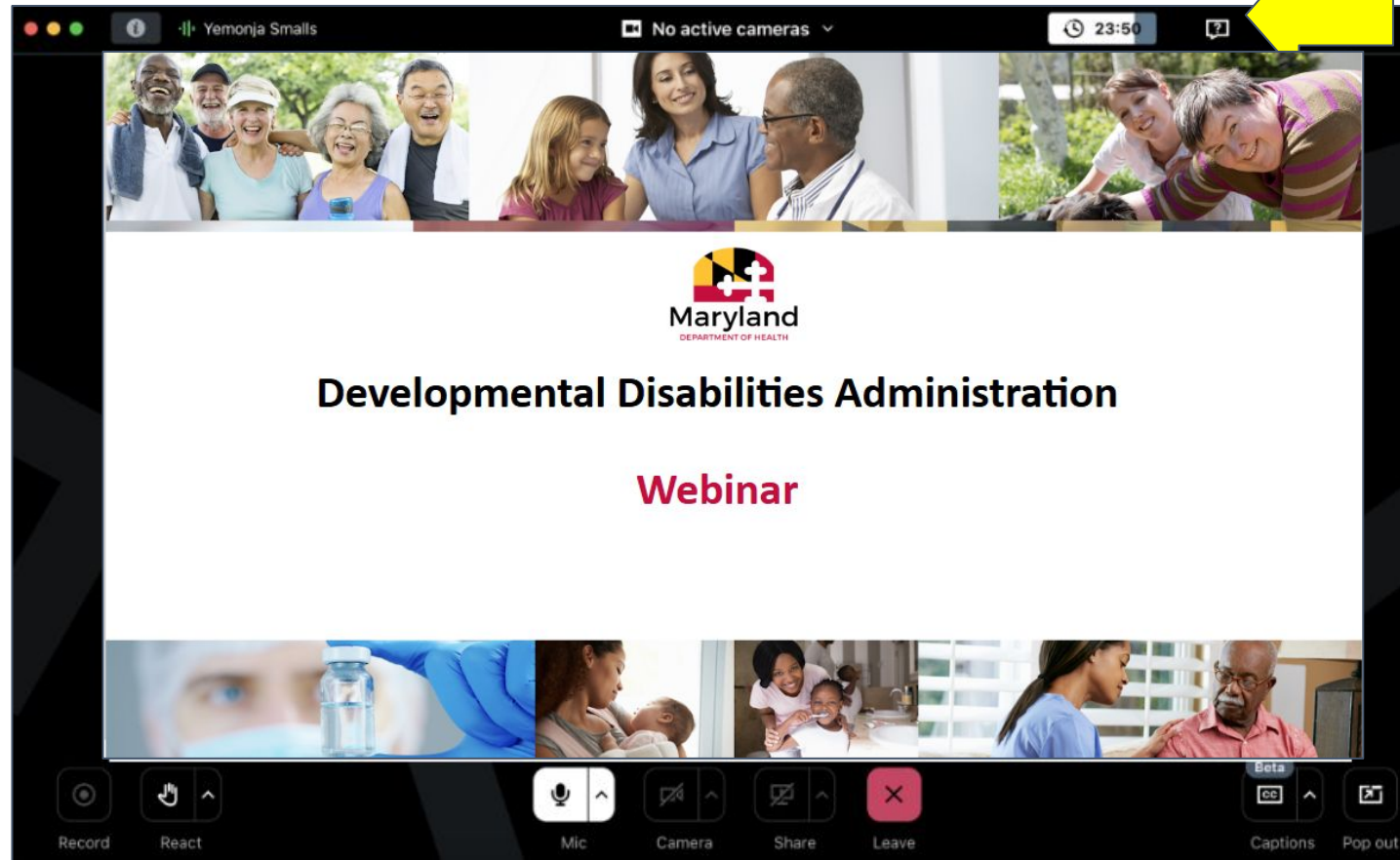
Click the paperclip in the upper right corner to download handouts

Housekeeping - Mics and Cameras



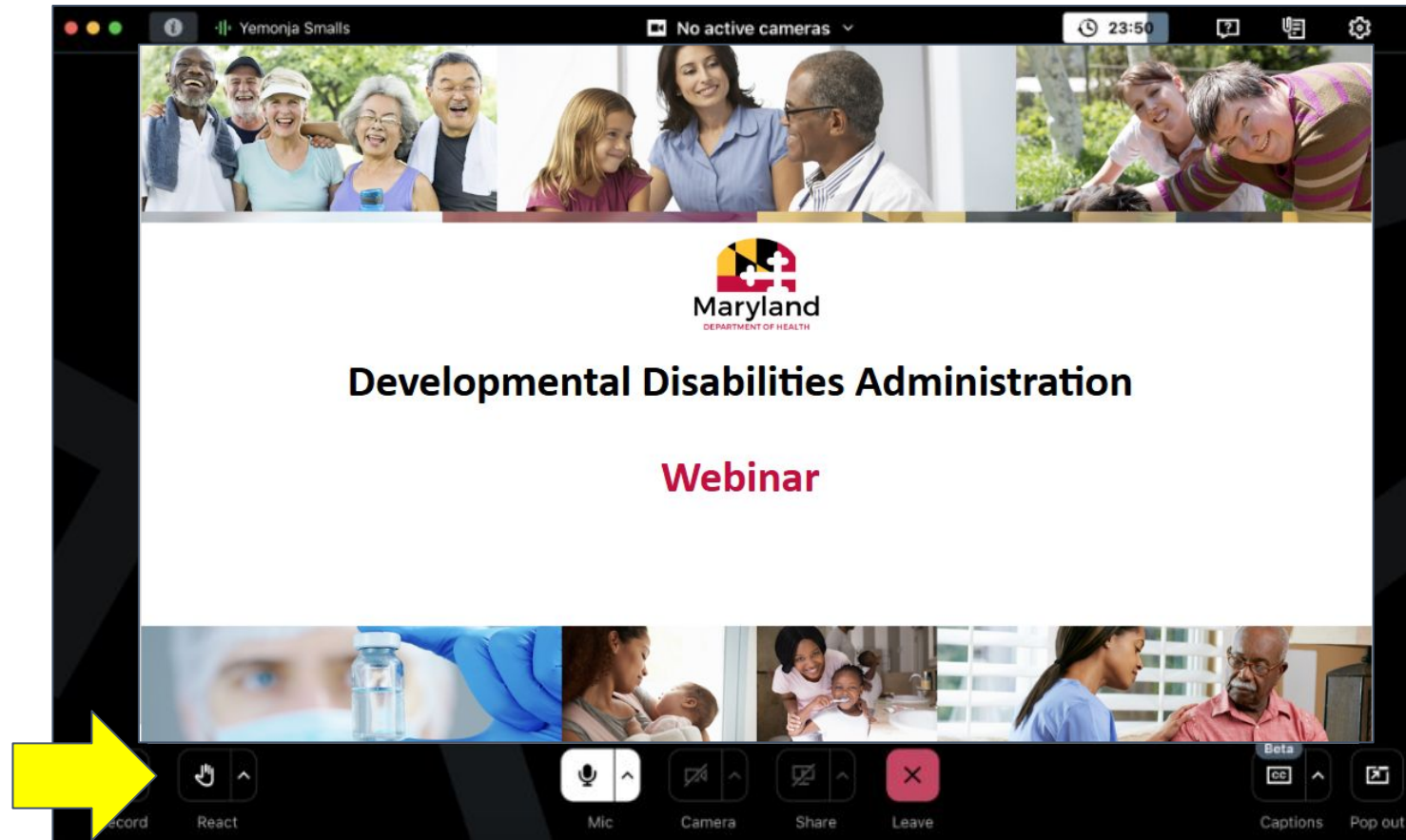
Microphones and Cameras are turned off

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

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

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

Community Pathways Program

Why are changes needed?

Bottom line: Ongoing Program Sustainability

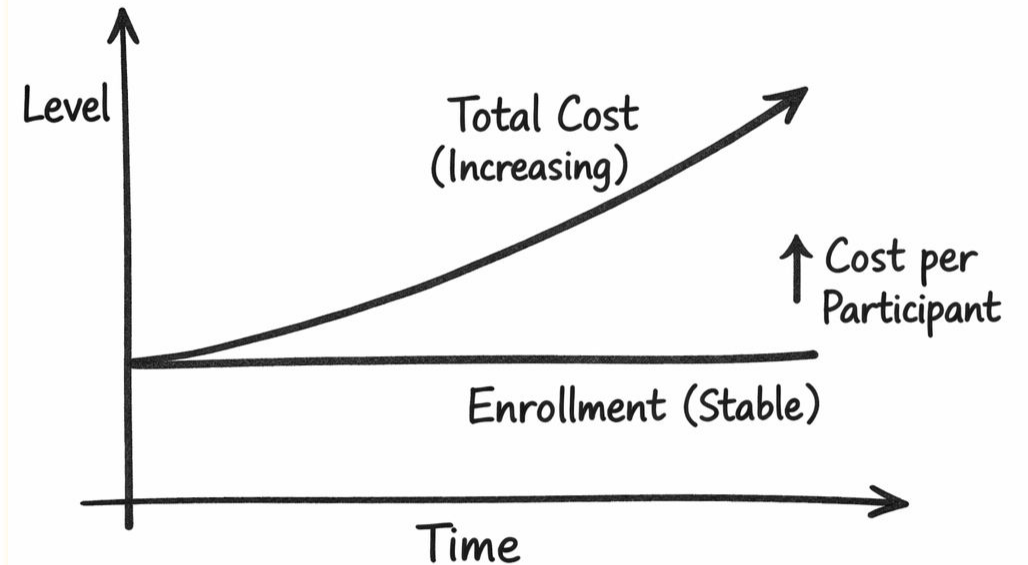
The FY 2027 changes are needed to keep the system working well year after year, even as needs, costs, and policies change.

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.



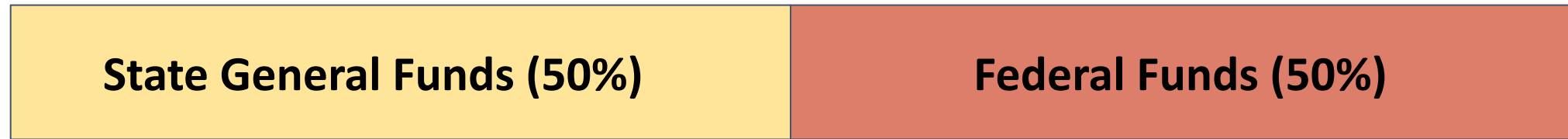
Current spending levels are not sustainable

Federal Requirement: Cost Neutrality

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

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.

Community Pathways Program

What is Changing?

Community Pathways Program

Wage Rates - Self-Directed Services

Align to BLS Wage Tables

- 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.



Community Pathways Program

Self-Directed Budget Methodology

Self-Directed Services Budget Methodology

- 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

- 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

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

Community Pathways Program

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

Weekly Hour Limits

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.

Community Pathways Program

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

DDA's Dedicated Hours Update

- 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.

Community Pathways Program

Community Provider and Coordination of Community Services Rates

Provider-Managed Services Rates

- 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%

Community Pathways Program

Waiver Amendment

Waiver Amendment Process

- 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

Public Comment Process


- Comments can be:
 - Submitted to 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.**

Community Pathways Program

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.

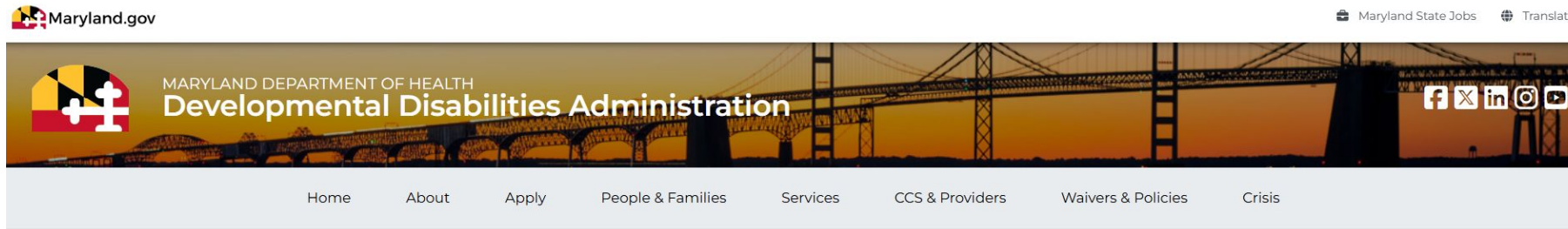
Input Needed: Proposed Amendment to the Community Pathways Waiver Amendmen

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)



Webpage:
[Community Pathways Waiver Amendment](#)

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, 28, 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](#)



Questions?