

# The Economic and Social Impact of Disability Services Providers in New York and NYSID: New Developments

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# The Economic and Social Impact of Disability Services Providers in New York and NYSID: New Developments

## 1. Executive Summary

The Rockefeller Institute of Government examined the economic impact of nonprofit disability service providers in New York State in 2023. The Institute found that 408 of these providers reported \$9.0 billion in revenues. Overall, nonprofit disability service providers:

- Generated \$15.6 billion in economic output in New York State. This includes the \$9.0 billion in revenues generated by the providers, \$2.0 billion in output for their suppliers, and \$4.6 billion related to employee spending.
- Supported 194,186 full-time jobs with service providers, their suppliers, and in the wider regional economy.
- Contributed \$2.4 billion in federal and state tax revenue.

The Institute also examined data from New York State Industries for the Disabled, Inc. (NYSID) providers in 2023. The results show a total economic impact of \$470 million, based on \$291.6 million in contracts across 99 member agencies. These member agencies employed 4,794 individuals with disabilities in 2023, who collectively worked 3,665,789 hours.



SOURCE: NYSID.

# NYSID BY THE NUMBERS 2023



**\$470 million**  
ECONOMIC IMPACT  
GENERATED



**4,794**  
WORKERS WITH  
DISABILITIES EMPLOYED



**\$79.8 million**  
IN WAGES FOR  
DISABLED WORKERS



**3,378**  
CONTRACTS



**\$291.6 million**  
TOTAL CONTRACT VALUE



**99**  
MEMBER AGENCIES



**38**  
CORPORATE PARTNERS

SOURCE: NYSID.

The economic impact of NYSID and disability service providers was realized across all regions of the state, with the largest impact in New York City, which has the highest population of any region. In New York City alone, NYSID had a total economic effect of nearly \$200 million, and disability service providers had an impact of over \$5 billion. Providers also had large economic impacts in the Mid-Hudson and Long Island regions, which are the second-highest regions in terms of population after New York City. NYSID's members and corporate partners, in contrast, had the largest economic impact in Long Island and the Capital Region, likely due to the proximity of the state government for contracting services through the Preferred Source Program in the latter.

This report proceeds as follows: Sections 2 through 5 provide background information on NYSID and the state of disability employment policy in New York State. [Section 2](#) provides an overview of NYSID and its history, [Section 3](#) provides an overview of disability service providers in New York, [Section 4](#) discusses policy changes and ongoing progress in supporting the employment of people with disabilities in New York, and [Section 5](#) discusses the demographics of people with disabilities in New York. Sections 6 through 9 discuss the economic impact of disability employment and discuss persistent policy challenges. [Section 6](#) discusses the economic impact in New York of disability service providers and NYSID, [Section 7](#) includes the economic impact by region, [Section 8](#) discusses persistent challenges facing the employment of people with disabilities, and [Section 9](#) concludes the report.

## 2. History of NYSID and the Preferred Source Program

NYSID was founded in 1975 as part of New York State's response to the Willowbrook Consent Decree.<sup>1</sup> The consent decree was in response to substandard and sometimes inhumane conditions at the Willowbrook residential school for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It spelled out specific procedures and practices to protect the residents, including rules about living conditions, personnel, education, medical services, and therapy. The consent decree effectively ended the "warehousing" of people with mental illnesses and disabilities in institutions in New York and encouraged the transition to community integration to encourage both independent living and employment.

The Preferred Source Program, of which NYSID is designated by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) as a facilitating agency, was established under Article 11, Section 162 of the New York State Finance Law, which was amended to provide additional opportunities to workers with disabilities through the New York State contracting process. The law requires state and local government agencies, as well as public benefits corporations, school districts, and public authorities, to make certain commodity and service purchases through the Preferred Source Program.

NYSID is a nonprofit membership organization with the goal of "advancing employment and other opportunities for individuals with disabilities and qualified veterans." The organization's member agencies include rehabilitative organizations throughout the

state, which provide myriad services to people with disabilities, including employment and employment support. Many of these organizations engage in affirmative businesses and social enterprises that provide direct employment for people with disabilities. NYSID currently has over 100 member agencies and additionally works with over 40 corporate partners. NYSID both facilitates contracts between these member agencies and corporate partners with government agencies and public entities, as well as monitors for compliance with the requirements of contracting through the Preferred Source Program. In addition, NYSID provides financing, grants, and technical support to member agency-affirmative businesses.

### **3. Overview of Disability Service Providers in New York State**

In New York State, Medicaid is the primary funder for the services that 131,000 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities rely on to live, learn, and work. Services are provided through a variety of agencies, including the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), the Office of Mental Health (OMH), and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Adult Career and Continuing Education Services—Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR), with the majority provided through OPWDD’s Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver that allows people to receive services in the community or at home. The more than 400 voluntary, nonprofit providers that serve this community are organizations, associations, and individual clinicians that provide support services to people with disabilities. These support services vary greatly based on the needs of individuals and the setting of care and can support both daily living needs as well as employment and education.

In 2023, OPWDD spent \$9.1 billion<sup>2</sup> in Medicaid funding to serve 130,955 people with disabilities in New York.<sup>3</sup> This is an increase of 13,000 served people and \$1.4 billion since 2018, and both the largest number of people served and the highest level of funding in the agency’s history.<sup>4</sup> Fifty-nine percent of people served are working age (21 to 64), and only 7 percent of people served are 65 or older. The two largest groups of people served are those with mild intellectual disabilities (32 percent) and autism spectrum disorder (27 percent).

The majority of OPWDD disability services spending goes to residential supports and services, and day and employment services. Of the \$9.1 billion spent on disability services by OPWDD in 2023, HCBS Waiver Services spending totaled \$7.45 billion and included: \$4.5 billion for residential supports and services (61 percent); \$2.3 billion for day and employment services (31 percent); \$323 million for services supporting self-direction; and over \$315 million for respite care. Another \$1.45 billion was spent on state plan services, including: \$664 million for community-based intermediate care facilities; \$491 million for care coordination/case management; \$95 million for day services; \$61 million for Article 16 clinics; and \$92 million for developmental centers. The majority of the \$2.3 billion in day and employment services funding is spent on day and community habilitation services; only 7 percent (\$162 million) went to prevocational or employment services.<sup>5</sup>

In 2023, OPWDD surveyed nonprofit agencies providing services with OPWDD funding and received responses from 61,728 direct support professionals (DSPs) and 6,431 front-line supervisors (FLSs) employed across 253 responding agencies. Most agencies are on the smaller side, with 61 percent of agencies employing fewer than 200 DSPs and serving under 500 adults with disabilities. DSPs are significantly more likely to be women (76 percent) or Black, Hispanic, or Latinx (51 percent) compared to the New York workforce as a whole. Average wages according to the 2023 survey ranged from \$17.64 in the Finger Lakes and Western New York to \$18.80 in the Capital Region and Central New York.<sup>6</sup>

## 4. Progress Toward Improving Employment Opportunities for New Yorkers with Disabilities

The Rockefeller Institute previously published two reports on the economic impact of NYSID in 2019 and 2021 using data from 2013 and 2018, respectively. The 2019 report also estimated the economic impact of providers. Since those reports were written, there have been significant changes in the employment landscape for people with disabilities, both nationally and especially in New York State. The most significant change was the Preferred Source Modernization Act.<sup>7</sup> This act directly addressed a recommendation the Rockefeller Institute made in our 2021 report to lower the direct labor requirement from 75 percent to 50 percent to allow social enterprises to become more integrated while still participating in the Preferred Source Program. This recommendation was in line with OPWDD’s integrated business guidelines and was codified into law through the Preferred Source Modernization Act, which also opened the Preferred Source Program to all people with disabilities, not only those “severely disabled,” a term generally used to refer to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Beyond the Preferred Source Modernization Act, the two other significant policy changes to support the employment of New Yorkers with disabilities are the transition away from federal 14(c) employment certificates, which allow some people with disabilities to be paid below minimum wage, and the declaration of New York as an “Employment First” state. Other contributing factors include the expansion of the 55-b/c program,<sup>8</sup> which supports employment for people with disabilities in New York State government, from 1,200 spots to 1,700 spots, and the creation of the Office of the Chief Disability Officer in 2022.<sup>9</sup> The rest of this section will discuss the Preferred Source Modernization Act, Employment First, and Federal 14(c) certificates.

### The Preferred Source Modernization Act of 2022

From 1975 to 2010, many of the people with disabilities who were employed with the support of Preferred Source contacts worked in sheltered workshops. Sheltered workshops were designed as spaces where people with disabilities could engage in vocational training in a supportive environment and earn wages with the goal of transitioning to an integrated workplace. In order to participate in Preferred Source, these workshops were required to have at least 75 percent of their employees be

people with disabilities, and some paid below minimum wage using federal 14(c) certificates (discussed below).

New York began to transition away from workshop employment in the early 2010s, with OMH requiring a three-year workshop phase-out in 2010 and OPWDD requiring a seven-year phase-out in 2013. This phase-out was completed in 2020. As part of the transition, OPWDD provided support and guidance to workshop providers and required that providers must have their proposals approved by OPWDD.

One of the primary arguments for maintaining workshops and sheltered employment is that these programs serve as transitional spaces so that people with disabilities can gain skills to eventually move into competitive integrated employment (CIE). This justification is not supported by the academic literature. A 2011 study compared observationally similar individuals with disabilities—those with the same diagnosis, secondary conditions, and gender—who participated in sheltered employment and those who did not. The study found that subsequent employment rates in competitive employment were the same across both groups, but the non-sheltered employment group earned significantly more per week and worked more hours. It also found that workers in sheltered workshops overall cost more to serve than those who were in other environments.<sup>10</sup>

On October 4, 2022, Governor Kathy Hochul signed the Preferred Source Modernization Act,<sup>11</sup> which was the first substantial update to the program since its 1975 inception. This update brought the Preferred Source Program in line with the workshop transformation that was already occurring in New York State by allowing more integrated employers to access Preferred Source contracts. The law made three significant changes to the New York State Finance Law to support New York State's Employment First principles:

1. The term “workshop” was replaced with “entity” when referring to the place of employment for working people with disabilities. This was done in line with Employment First principles of supporting competitive and integrated employment. Preferred Sources now works with private corporations and social enterprises.
2. The law removed the term “severely disabled” and replaced it with “disabled” to ensure that Preferred Sources can work with all people with disabilities.
3. The program reduced the percentage of workers with disabilities required to qualify as a Preferred Source from 75 percent to 50 percent to ensure that places of employment are not required to be segregated “workshops.”

These provisions were originally set to sunset in October 2025 but have been extended for an additional three years to October 2028.<sup>12</sup>

## Employment First

“Employment First” as a concept embraces the premise that all individuals, including those with disabilities, are capable of and should be supported in full community participation, including community life and competitive integrated employment (CIE).<sup>13</sup>

In 2014, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed an executive order to create a commission for Employment First policy and the commission released a report in 2015, finding that many people with disabilities and their families lacked information about important employment support programs and that there was a need for better education and a network of information for employers to enable and encourage the hiring of more people with disabilities.<sup>14</sup>

Since the 2015 report, Governor Hochul has released two executive orders (EO) pertaining to supporting employment for people with disabilities. The first, EO 31, issued in 2023, committed to making New York State a model employer for people with disabilities. The second, EO 40, issued in 2024, committed New York to be an Employment First state in which CIE is the preferred outcome for all people with disabilities when planning or providing services and supports to working-aged people with disabilities.

EO 40 defines integrated as: “With respect to provisions of services, a setting typically found in the community in which the persons receiving services interact with people with and without disabilities and with respect to employment outcome, a setting typically found in the community in which applicants or eligible individuals interact with people without disabilities.” It further defines competitive integrated employment as “work in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full time or part time basis in an integrated setting and for which an individual is compensated at or above minimum wage but not less than the customary wage and benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled.”

New York’s goal as an Employment First state to provide more opportunities for people with disabilities to live in, participate in, and work in the greater community alongside both people with disabilities and people without disabilities is supported by the Preferred Source Modernization Act discussed above and the elimination of 14(c) certificates discussed below.

## Moving Away from Federal 14(c) Employment Certificates

Section 14(c) of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) allows some workers with disabilities to be paid below the federal minimum wage. Under this law, employers must obtain a certificate from the Wage and Hour Division of the US Department of Labor and wages must be set at “commensurate wage rates,” which means that they should be based on the individual worker’s productivity relative to a worker without a disability performing essentially the same type, quality, and quantity of work in the local community.<sup>15</sup>

Most of these certificates go to sheltered workshop employment programs. There is significant evidence that people with disabilities, especially those with developmental and intellectual disabilities, have better outcomes in competitive integrated employment<sup>16</sup> and prefer that employment to workshop employment.<sup>17, 18</sup>

As of October 1, 2023, there were 800 active 14(c) certificates covering 42,700 workers with disabilities. In New York, there were 27 active certificates covering 1,667

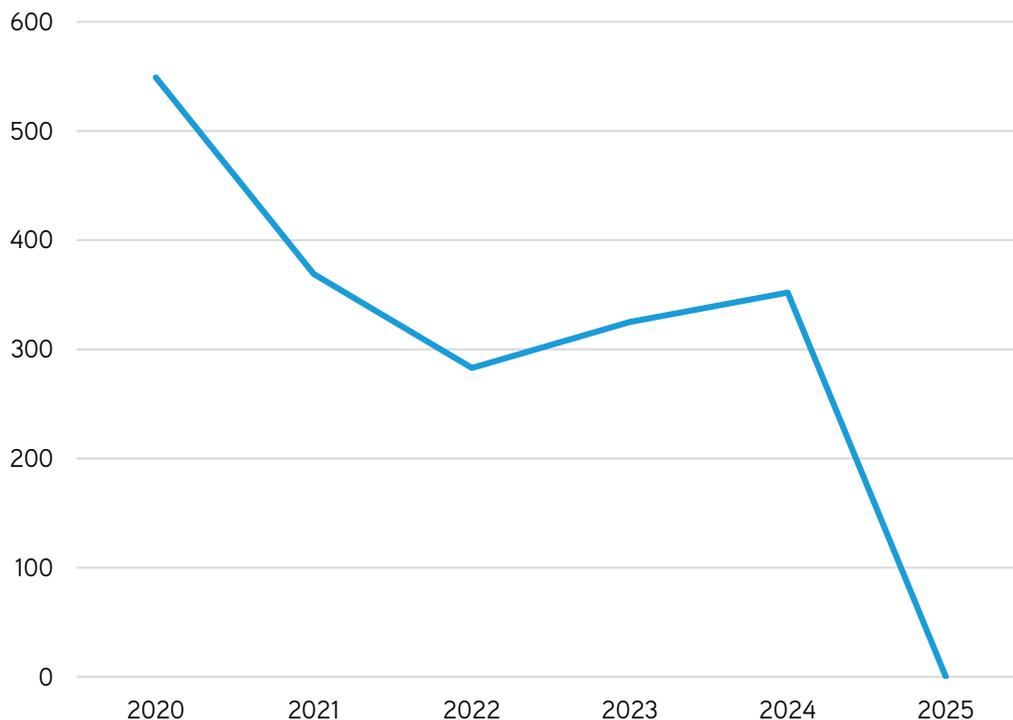
workers. These workers make up a very small percentage of the overall workforce with a disability. Of the 11,581,674 employed people with disabilities, only 0.37 percent worked under 14(c) certificates.<sup>19, 20</sup> The vast majority of these certificates go to social enterprises run by Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs). CRPs employed 93 percent of all workers who received certificates across the country and 100 percent of workers who received certificates in New York. Other certificates went to private businesses, hospital/patient worker programs, and school-to-work experience programs.

In 2024, the Biden administration proposed a rule to end the granting of 14(c) certificates. The administration argued that subminimum wages were only necessary to prevent people with disabilities from being unable to seek employment at all. The administration cited that legal and policy developments since the inception of 14(c) have significantly increased access to employment for people with disabilities and that the provision of subminimum wages is no longer necessary.<sup>21</sup> Many states had already begun phasing out 14(c) certificates through state minimum wage laws. From 2001 to 2024, the number of workers working under certificates fell from 424,000 to 40,579, a 90 percent decline.<sup>22</sup> The move away from subminimum wages and sheltered workshops is also due in part to recognition that employing people with disabilities can benefit the employers. A 2018 review of research on the impact of people with disabilities on their employers found that employers of workers with disabilities report increased profits, lower turnover, increased customer satisfaction and loyalty, and a more inclusive work culture.<sup>23</sup>

This rule change was withdrawn in July 2025 by the Trump administration. The administration stated that it believed that the cessation of 14(c) certificates could not be done unilaterally through the rulemaking process and would require congressional action. The withdrawal recognized that many states had limited the use of these certificates and that states were able to do so within their own constitutional frameworks. However, it stressed that states may be making tradeoffs between the availability of employment and the wages or quality of that employment.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the rule withdrawal at the federal level, New York continues to transition away from workshop employment and 14(c) certificates to competitive integrated employment under Employment First principles. The number of workers with 14(c) certificates working under NYSID contracts has significantly decreased over the past five years. In 2024, NYSID eliminated the allowance of 14(c) on any NYSID contracts, as New York has embraced Employment First principles and moved toward competitive integrated employment. The total number of employees working under certificates decreased from 548 in 2020 to 352 in 2024 and ultimately to zero in 2025. The 352 employees accounted for less than 1 percent of total hours worked on NYSID contracts.

**FIGURE 1 | 14(c) Certificates on NYSID Contracts**



*SOURCE:* NYSID reporting.

The response to limiting or eliminating 14(c) certificates has not been uniformly positive. Some service providers have been unable to maintain their employment programs when forced to pay minimum wage and are working on transitioning to alternative nonemployment programming or helping their clients find other employment programs.<sup>25</sup> Not all people with disabilities are able to work in competitive integrated environments, and advocacy groups have sprung up to support maintaining access to these certificates even while pushing for competitive and integrated employment.<sup>26</sup> As both the New York minimum wage and the prevailing wage on NYSID contracts have increased, it has become more difficult for a person with a profound impairment and/or high support needs to be competitive in integrated employment.

## 5. Disability in New York State by the Numbers

Organizations like NYSID and programs like the Preferred Source Program and the state’s 55-b/c program are important because people with disabilities face significant barriers in accessing high-quality employment and economic security. This section uses the most recent data available (2023) from the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) to provide context on the community of people with disabilities in New York State.<sup>27</sup>

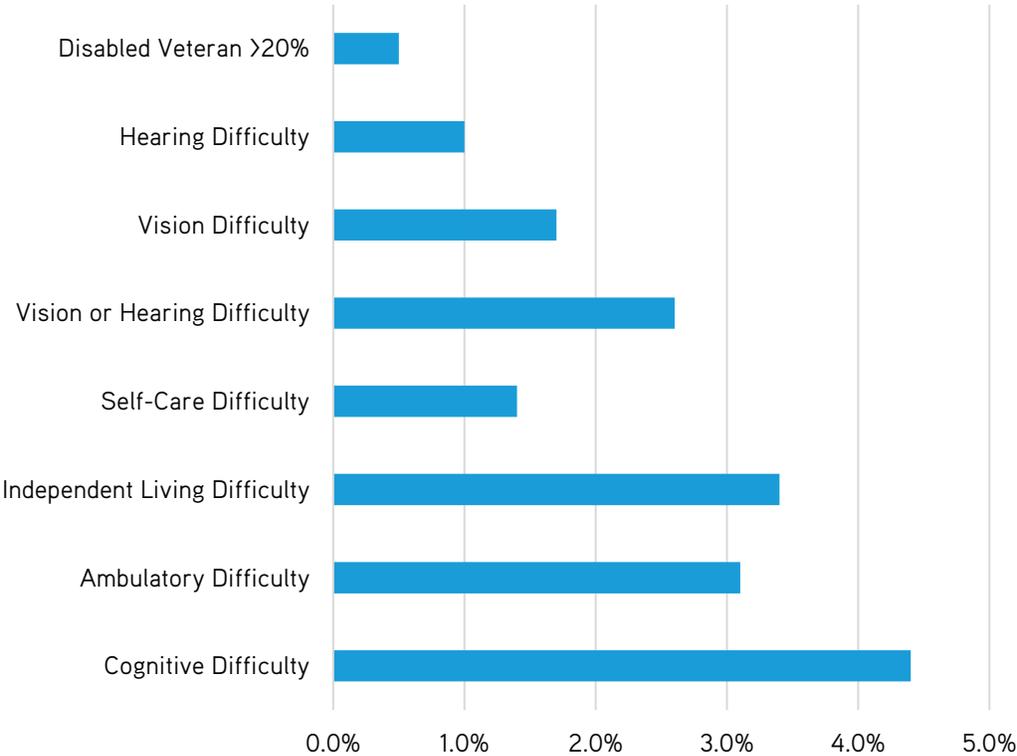
In 2023, approximately 2,620,700 people were living with disabilities in New York, which accounts for 13.4 percent of the state’s population. The percentage of people with disabilities of working age—those between the ages of 18 and 64—is lower at 10.5 percent, as disability is correlated with age. However, that still amounts to 1.25

million adults in the state. Because of the significant correlation between disability and age, as well as the high number of young adults in education, the rest of this section will focus on adults in the prime working ages of 25 to 55.

## Prevalence and Type of Disabilities in New York

The ACS asks respondents (heads of household) to identify whether a member of the household has one or more of six disability types: cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, independent living difficulty, self-care difficulty, vision difficulty, or hearing difficulty. The survey also records whether a member of the household is a disabled veteran and the level of that disability.

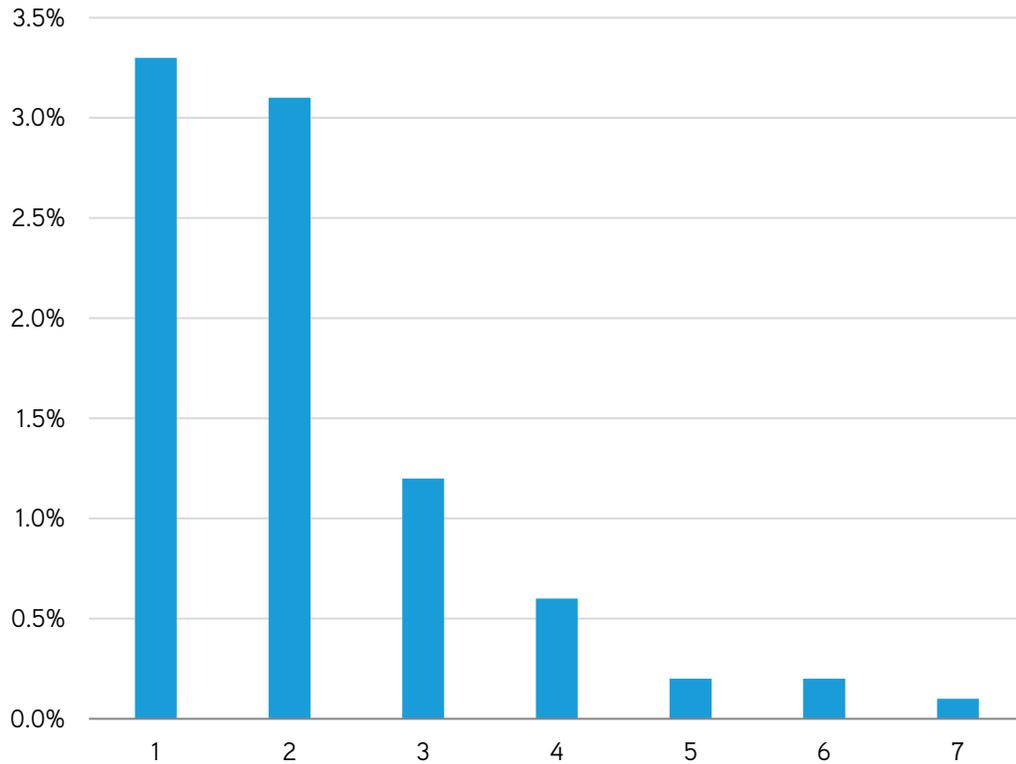
**FIGURE 2 |** Prevalence of Disabilities in New York State



SOURCE: IPUMS USA: 2023 American Community Surveys.

The most common type of disability among the population of interest is cognitive difficulty, with independent living difficulty as the second most common. About 4.4 percent of adults of working age report a cognitive difficulty, and 3.4 percent an independent living difficulty. Most people who report a disability (60 percent) report more than one.

**FIGURE 3 |** Number of Reported Disability Types



SOURCE: IPUMS USA: 2023 American Community Surveys.

## Poverty and Living Situation

People with disabilities in New York are significantly more likely to live in poverty and rely on the social safety net than their peers without disabilities. In 2023, 26 percent of people with disabilities lived in poverty according to the US Census’s official poverty measure, and 30 percent lived in poverty using their more holistic supplemental poverty measure. This compares to only 9 percent and 13 percent of nondisabled working-age adults, respectively, across the two measures. As such, people with disabilities are significantly more likely to rely on social safety net programs. People with disabilities are nearly three times as likely to rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits compared to their peers (38 percent compared to 14 percent). They also receive significantly more of their total income from other welfare programs (\$347 per year compared to \$72 per year on average) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI; \$1,512 on average compared to \$90) than their peers.

People with disabilities are significantly more likely to live in group quarters and lack access to tools critical to modern working conditions. Twice as many people with disabilities (8 percent) live in group quarters (college dorms, group homes, jails, prisons, and other group living facilities) compared to their peers (1.6 percent). They are also slightly less likely to have access to the internet in general and broadband internet specifically.

**TABLE 1 | Poverty and Social Program Participation**

	Disability	No Disability	Difference
Living in Poverty (Official Measure)	0.264	0.094	0.17***
Living in Poverty (Supplemental Measure)	0.295	0.132	0.163***
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	\$1,512	\$90	\$1,423***
Income from Welfare	\$347	\$72	\$274***
Receives SNAP	0.376	0.139	0.237***
Living in Group Quarters	0.077	0.016	0.062***
Access to Internet	0.967	0.98	-0.013***
Access to Broadband Internet	0.861	0.872	-0.011***

SOURCE: IPUMS USA: 2023 American Community Surveys.

## Health Insurance

People with disabilities are slightly more likely to have health insurance coverage compared to their peers (95 percent compared to 92 percent). However, that insurance is much more likely to be through public programs. Over half (55 percent) of people with disabilities receive their health insurance through Medicaid. Reliance on Medicaid can limit access to providers, as many providers choose not to accept Medicaid patients due to paperwork requirements and lower reimbursement rates.<sup>28</sup> This provider shortage is especially salient in rural areas.<sup>29</sup>

A further 15 percent of people with disabilities between the ages of 25 and 55 receive their health insurance through Medicare. Medicare is generally only available to people age 65 and older; however, younger people receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) are eligible for Medicare. Only 37 percent of people with disabilities receive their health coverage through an employer (either their own or a family member's) compared to 64 percent of nondisabled people.

**TABLE 2 | Health Insurance Coverage**

	Disability	No Disability	Difference
Any Health Insurance Coverage	0.945	0.922	0.023***
Health Insurance through Employer	0.371	0.643	-0.272***
Health Insurance through Medicaid	0.549	0.221	0.329***
Health Insurance through Medicare	0.15	0.013	0.138***

SOURCE: IPUMS USA: 2023 American Community Surveys.

## Education and Employment

The primary predictor of both employment and earnings is education. People with higher levels of education generally earn more, are less likely to be unemployed, and are unemployed for shorter periods of time. Fewer people with disabilities receive education credentials that are valuable on the job market. People with disabilities are also significantly less likely to graduate from high school compared to their peers.

More than 17 percent of people with disabilities between the ages of 25 and 55 do not hold a high school diploma or degree, which is almost twice the level for the same group without a disability (9 percent). Further, people with disabilities are less likely to complete postsecondary degrees. Only 25 percent of people with disabilities in this age group hold a bachelor’s degree or higher compared to nearly twice the rate for people without disabilities (49 percent).

**TABLE 3 | Education and Employment**

	Disability	No Disability	Difference
No High School Diploma	0.173	0.091	0.082***
Four-Year Degree or Higher	0.252	0.488	-0.235***
Employed	0.46	0.841	-0.381***
Unemployed	0.067	0.033	0.034***
In Labor Force	0.527	0.875	-0.348***

SOURCE: IPUMS USA: 2023 American Community Surveys.

People with disabilities are less likely to participate in the labor force, and when they do participate, they are more likely to be unemployed, work part-time, and earn lower wages than their peers. Overall, 46 percent of people with disabilities are employed during their prime working years compared to 84 percent of their peers. Part of that discrepancy is due to differences in labor market participation. Only 52 percent of people with disabilities participate in the labor market compared to 86 percent of other New Yorkers. There are still significant discrepancies in employment, even when comparing only New Yorkers who participate in the labor market. Thirteen percent of people with disabilities in the labor market are unemployed, which is three times higher than the unemployment rate for nondisabled workers (4 percent).

**TABLE 4 | Population In Labor Force (Age 25–55)**

	Disability	No Disability	Difference
Employed	0.873	0.962	-0.089***
Unemployed	0.127	0.038	0.089***

SOURCE: IPUMS USA: 2023 American Community Surveys.

People with disabilities work fewer hours and earn less than their nondisabled peers. Among those employed, 78 percent of people with disabilities work full-time (35 hours per week or more) compared to 86 percent of their peers. Further, people with disabilities are twice as likely to work a subpart-time schedule of fewer than 15 hours per week (4.6 percent compared to 2.7 percent). They also work for lower hourly wages, with an average imputed hourly wage of \$28 per hour compared to \$38 per hour.

**TABLE 5 | Population Reporting Being Employed**

	Disability	No Disability	Difference
Employed Full-Time	0.772	0.855	-0.083***
Employed Part-Time	0.228	0.145	0.083***
Employed <15 Hours/Week	0.046	0.027	0.019***
Imputed Hourly Wage	\$28.41	\$38.24	-\$9.82***

SOURCE: IPUMS USA: 2023 American Community Surveys.

As discussed above, there are significant population differences between people with disabilities and those without that may additionally affect wages. People with disabilities have lower levels of education on average and a higher average age even when only looking at the 25 to 55 population. To account for some of those differences, we used regression analysis to control for common factors that affect labor force participation, employment, and wages, including education, age, gender, and race.

**TABLE 6 | Impact of Disability Status on Labor Market Outcomes**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	n
Labor Force Participation	-0.348*** 0.000	-0.346*** 0.000	-0.312*** 0.000	-0.311*** 0.000	7,902,365
Unemployed	0.089*** 0.000	0.090*** 0.000	0.085*** 0.000	0.085*** 0.000	6,379,779
Full-Time	-0.083*** 0.001	-0.082*** 0.001	-0.070*** 0.001	-0.069*** 0.001	6,379,779
<15 Hours Per Week	0.019*** 0.000	0.019*** 0.000	0.018*** 0.000	0.017*** 0.000	6,379,779
Imputed Hourly Wage	-9.820*** 0.083	-10.090*** 0.082	-5.890*** 0.079	-5.860*** 0.078	6,379,779
Education Controls			X	X	
Age Controls		X		X	
Race Controls				X	
Gender Controls				X	

SOURCE: IPUMS USA: 2023 American Community Surveys.

Column 1 in the above table shows the raw differences in employment outcomes for people with disabilities and those without in New York. People with disabilities are 35 percentage points less likely to be in the labor force, when they are in the labor force they are 8.9 percentage points more likely to be unemployed, and when they do work are 8 percentage points less likely to work full time, 2 percentage points more likely to work fewer than 15 hours per week and have an imputed hourly wage \$9.82 lower than their peers. Controlling for personal characteristics, including education, in column 4 reduces those differences, but they are still large and statistically significant. Even accounting for education, age, race, and gender, people with disabilities are 31 percentage points less likely to participate in the labor force, 8.5 percentage points

less likely to be employed if they do participate, and earn \$5.86 less per hour than their peers.

## 6. Economic Impact in New York

Across New York, voluntary, nonprofit disability service providers and NYSID member agencies serve hundreds of thousands of people with a variety of life and employment supports. These include medical care, residential care, transportation, childcare, and workforce preparedness, among many others. Collectively, they generate billions of dollars in revenue, and they directly employ thousands of people. Their influence, though, extends far beyond their own operations. These providers purchase goods and services from other businesses, and their employees spend their earnings throughout the economy. Those activities create ripple effects that support other jobs and economic activity across the state.

This analysis aims to capture the total economic impact of all these activities using IMPLAN, a commonly used software for modeling. This software shows how a dollar spent in one industry circulates throughout the economy. It assigns each industry a “multiplier” that is used to estimate how a dollar spent in that industry spills over into other industries. For example, IMPLAN can show how janitorial work, document handling, or medical services contribute to employment and income in other sectors of the economy. IMPLAN measures three types of effects: direct, indirect, and induced.

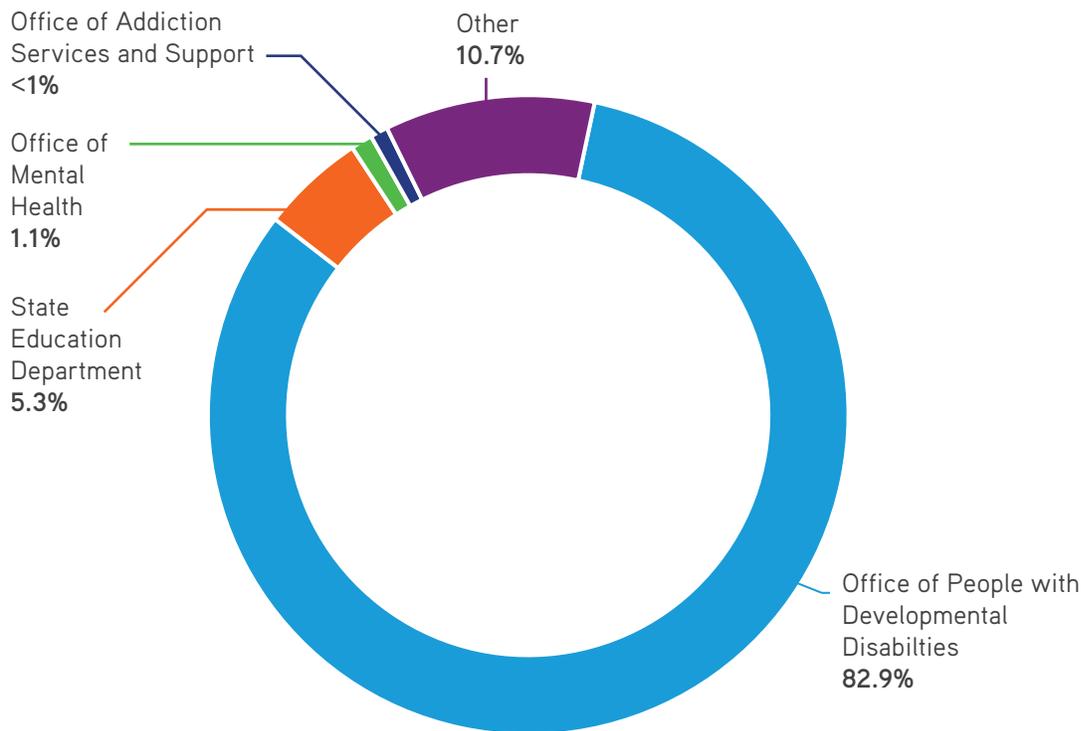
The direct effect refers to the employment, income, and revenue generated by the providers and member agencies themselves. Indirect effects reflect the business-to-business transactions that occur as providers purchase goods and services in the supply chain. A provider supports jobs at a technology company, for example, if it purchases IT services. Induced effects capture the household spending that occurs when employees go out and spend their wages on things like food, rent, or entertainment. In addition, the results are presented in several ways along each of these three effects: output represents total economic activity; labor income includes employee compensation, benefits, and proprietor income; and value added represents the sector’s contribution to New York’s gross domestic product.

### The Disability Services Economy

- Across New York State, 408 organizations received reimbursement for services from OPWDD. These organizations reported \$9.0 billion in revenue related to their OPWDD programming. Providers reported that the funding supported a staff of 98,482 employees earning \$4.8 billion in salaries and wages.
- Since 2018, gross revenue has increased 34 percent from \$6.7 billion to \$9.0 billion, total wages and salaries have increased 37 percent from \$3.5 billion to \$4.8 billion, and statewide economic impact has increased 9 percent from \$14.3 billion to \$15.6 billion. The number of employees and organizations has remained stable, with employees increasing 3 percent (95,402 to 98,482) and the number of organizations decreasing 4 percent (427 to 408).

- For 262 of the 408 organizations, OPWDD was the primary funding source, accounting for more than 50 percent of their total revenue. Among these organizations, 82.9 percent of funding came from OPWDD, 10.7 percent from other sources, 5.3 percent from NYSED, 1.1 percent from OMH, and less than 1 percent from the Office of Addiction Services and Support. [Figure 2](#) presents the revenue sources for disability service providers.
- For 64 of the 408 organizations, OPWDD funding represented less than 10 percent of their total revenue.

**FIGURE 4 | Gross Revenue by Source for Voluntary Nonprofit Providers**



*NOTE:* Includes providers who received at least 50 percent of revenue from OPWDD.

*SOURCE:* Consolidated Fiscal Report filings.

## Economic Impact of Disability Services Programming

In 2023, voluntary, nonprofit providers in New York State received \$9.1 billion in Medicaid funding related to services supported by the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). This study is based on detailed provider data for how \$9.0 billion of that spending was allocated and employed. That \$9.0 billion generated a total of \$15.6 billion in economic activity statewide ([Table 1](#)).<sup>30</sup> This includes \$9.0 billion in revenues generated by the providers, \$2.0 billion in indirect output through their suppliers, and \$4.6 billion generated as employees spent their earnings. These services supported 194,186 jobs. It is important to note that the direct effect of 161,636 jobs shown in [Table 7](#) is higher than the 98,482 employees reported by the organizations themselves. This

is because the IMPLAN model’s estimate includes not only the staff working directly on contracts but also the overhead, administrative, and management staff required to support them. The total number of employees and jobs supported in 2023 is similar to the total number of employees (98,482) and jobs supported (194,977) in 2018.

**TABLE 7 | Five-Year Change in Economic Impact**

	2018 Estimate	2023 Estimate	Five-Year Change
Economic Impact Generated	\$14.3 billion	\$15.6 billion	9.1%
People Employed	95,402	98,482	3.1%
Salaries And Wages	\$3.5 billion	\$4.8 billion	37.1%
Organizations	427	408	-4.7%
Gross Revenue	\$6.7 billion	\$9.0 billion	34.3%
Jobs Supported	194,977	194,186	-0.4%
Labor Income	\$8.0 billion	\$9.3 billion	16.3%

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

Broken down by region, disability service organizations in the New York City (NYC) region generated the largest economic impact among any of the 10 Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs). In 2023, 133 disability service providers in NYC (nearly one-third of all providers statewide) supported a total of 66,707 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) and accounted for \$5.3 billion in economic output statewide.

Providers in the Mid-Hudson (73 providers) and Long Island (47 providers) regions, both of which neighbor NYC, reported the second- and third-highest levels of activity. Taken together, the New York City, Mid-Hudson, and Long Island regions represented approximately 65 percent of all employment impacts and 66 percent of statewide economic output generated by disability service providers. The concentration of activity in these three regions aligns with the fact that their residents accounted for over two-thirds of the state’s population as of 2023.<sup>31</sup>

**TABLE 8 | Disability Services Economic Impact in Total, 2023**

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	161,636	\$7,026,289,203	\$6,560,066,137	\$8,955,387,935
Indirect Effect	8,408	\$647,702,185	\$1,242,729,189	\$2,068,302,004
Induced Effect	24,143	\$1,605,568,147	\$3,057,932,076	\$4,582,447,333
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>194,186</b>	<b>\$9,279,559,535</b>	<b>\$10,860,727,402</b>	<b>\$15,606,137,272</b>

NOTE: Employment figures generated by IMPLAN include administrative and overhead staff. Therefore, the estimated 161,636 staff is higher than the 98,482 staff reported in the Consolidated Fiscal Report filings. Numbers in columns and rows may not sum to the total due to rounding.

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

In addition, disability service providers generated an estimated \$2.4 billion in tax revenue for federal and state governments in 2023, as well as over \$200 million in local taxes. As nonprofits, these organizations are exempt from corporate, property, sales, and excise taxes. The bulk of this revenue is generated through employment taxes and income taxes withheld from paychecks. The firms and the employees with whom they conduct business generate further tax revenue.

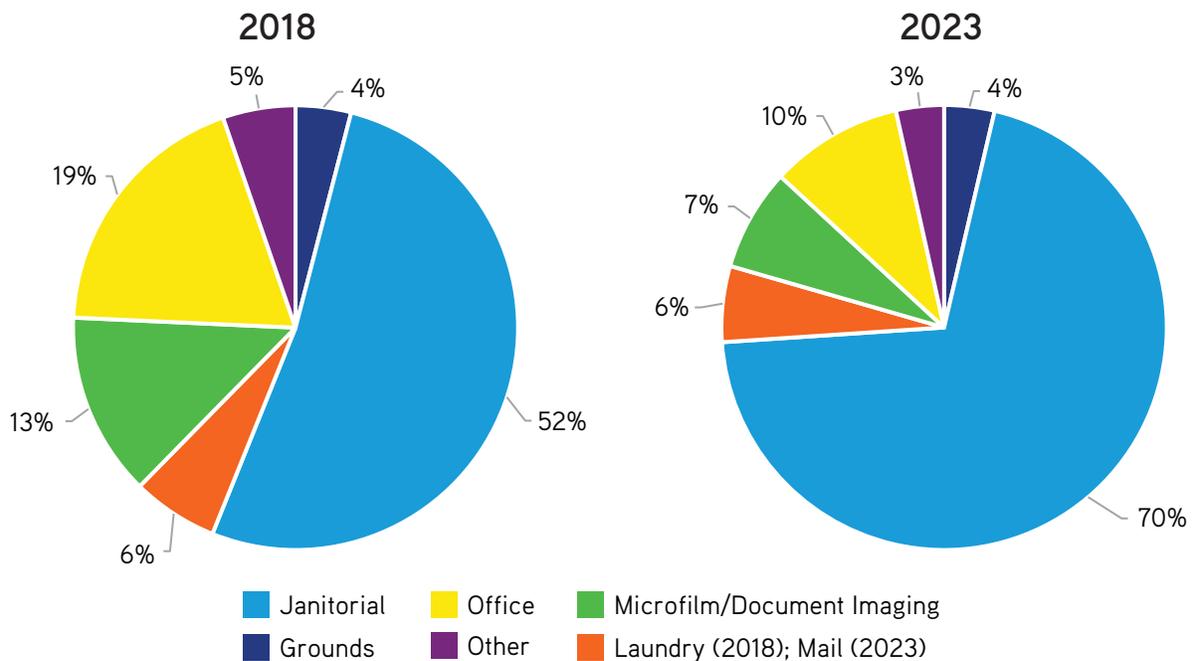
The \$15.6 billion economic impact is a conservative estimate of the total impact of disability services supported by voluntary, nonprofit providers. In addition to the \$9.0 billion of OPWDD funding identified in the provider data, providers that receive that funding also receive \$2.2 billion in revenue from other state agencies, including OMH (\$986 million), the State Education Department (\$775 million), and the Department of Health (\$365 million). It is impossible to distinguish how much of this revenue is spent on disability services compared to other services, so it is omitted from the analysis above. However, because 262 providers receive most of their revenue from OPWDD, it is likely that their other funding sources also support disability services, so the true economic impact is likely higher than the \$15.6 billion estimate.

## Economic Impact of Social Enterprises

NYSID provides services across a range of industries. [Figure 3](#) shows how the distribution of the value of the top service-related contracts has changed since 2018. Janitorial-related contracts increased from 52 percent in 2018 to 70 percent in 2023, with total labor hours in janitorial services increasing by 21 percent over this period. A few other categories, like office support and document imaging, made up a smaller share in 2023, while laundry and grounds declined. The change in industry composition of NYSID contracts is directly related to the changes in state policy that support the employment of people with disabilities. The significant decrease in 14(c) certificates, workshop transformation, and the Preferred Source Modernization Act have resulted in higher wages and more integrated jobs, with the decline in goods-based contracts and increase in service-based contracts.

In 2023, NYSID contracts employed 4,794 people with disabilities who earned \$79.8 million in wages. The average hourly wage was \$21.78. Altogether, contracts facilitated by NYSID supported an estimated total of 3,312 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs in New York in 2023 ([Table 9](#)).<sup>32</sup> These contracts generated \$470 million in total economic output, including \$292.4 million in value added and \$212.8 million in labor income. Most of this impact came through the direct effect. NYSID member agencies accounted for 2,333 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs. These positions were tied directly to contract activity and produced \$263.3 million in output, \$157.3 million in value added, and \$136.9 million in wages and benefits paid to workers.

**FIGURE 5 | Top Service Categories in NYSID Contract Sales, 2018 and 2023**



*SOURCE:* Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis of NYSID data, based on invoiced service contract sales for fiscal years 2018 and 2023.

Below are the main findings from the multiplier analysis:

- NYSID contracts directly supported 2,333 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs. Over three-quarters of the labor was provided by workers with a disability. The remaining positions consisted of staff from member agencies and corporate partners who manage contracts and work with employees with disabilities.
- NYSID contracts generated \$136,892,274 in labor income, which encompasses employee salaries and wages, the value of benefits, and proprietor earnings. Based on NYSID data, workers with disabilities earned \$79.8 million in wages, accounting for over half of the total labor income. The remainder of the income represents the salaries of nondisabled workers and fringe benefits, such as health insurance, retirement contributions, and taxes.
- Beyond direct employment, NYSID contracts created ripple effects throughout the economy. To fulfill the contracts, organizations purchase supplies and services that stimulate additional activity in the supply chain. These indirect effects supported 436 additional jobs and \$100,972,743 in economic output.
- Employment generates spending power for workers who support local businesses through their everyday purchases (e.g., rent, food). This household spending, known as induced effects, supported 543 additional jobs and \$105,735,834 in economic output.
- The largest effect was felt in the New York City region (\$196.3 million), followed by the Capital Region (\$92.3 million), Long Island (\$94.2 million), and the Mid-Hudson region (\$24.6 million).

**TABLE 9 | Contracts NYSID Economic Impact in New York (2023)**

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	2,333	\$136,892,274	\$157,296,017	\$263,291,666
Indirect Effect	436	\$38,258,264	\$63,841,094	\$100,972,743
Induced Effect	543	\$37,663,030	\$71,257,111	\$105,735,834
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>3,312</b>	<b>\$212,813,569</b>	<b>\$292,394,221</b>	<b>\$470,000,242</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

Altogether, NYSID’s 2023 activity generated an estimated \$76.3 million in taxes, with \$45.6 million (60 percent) accruing to the federal government, \$14.3 million (19 percent) to the state, and the remaining \$16.4 million (21 percent) to local governments. On average, every hour worked by a person with a disability in New York generated \$128 in economic activity.<sup>33</sup>

[Table 4](#) tracks how NYSID’s operations have changed between 2013 and 2023. The value of products and services rose from \$210 million in 2013 to nearly \$292 million in 2023, a 39 percent increase. Earnings for workers followed a similar trend, with average hourly wages rising from \$13.03 to \$21.78. While wages and revenues climbed, the number of total employees with disabilities has recently declined, falling by 27 percent between 2018 and 2023. During the same period, total labor hours by disabled employees dropped 15 percent. One reason for the decline in total hours worked is the reduction in workshop employment and 14(c) waivers discussed above. There was also a significant decline in NYSID employment during the COVID-19 pandemic due to closures in OPWDD vocational and rehabilitative services, as well as limited access to group homes to help prevent the spread of the disease to vulnerable residents. Average hourly wage across contracts also increased substantially over the same period.

**TABLE 10 | NYSID Operational Metrics, 2013, 2018, and 2023**

Metric	2013	2018	2023	Growth 2013–18	Growth 2018–23
Value of Products and Services/Revenues	\$210,198,701	\$254,209,197	\$291,586,890	21%	15%
Earnings	\$54,924,603	\$68,734,567	\$79,800,000	25%	16%
Average Hourly Wage	\$13.03	\$15.95	\$21.78	22%	37%
Disabled FTEs	2,026	2,072	1,762	2%	-15%
Average Hours Worked	607	657	765	8%	16%
Disabled Labor Hours	4,213,771	4,310,446	3,665,789	2%	-15%
Number of Total Employees with Disabilities	6,941	6,565	4,794	-5%	-27%

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis of NYSID data.

## 7. Economic Impact by Region



### Capital District

Metric	Value
Number of Agencies	33
Total Agency Revenue	\$1,207,179,847
OPWDD Revenue	\$591,422,109
OPWDD Personnel	336,429,997
OPWDD FTE	6,484

#### NYSID Activity

Hours worked: 511,940

Disabled employees: 682 (14.2% of disabled workforce)

Average weekly hours: 14.4

#### Disability Services Economic Impact in the Capital Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	10,537	\$465,833,026	\$435,274,982	\$591,422,109
Indirect Effect	563	\$38,331,885	\$75,078,735	\$130,723,708
Induced Effect	1,950	\$116,006,509	\$230,388,783	\$353,629,215
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>13,050</b>	<b>\$620,171,420</b>	<b>\$740,742,501</b>	<b>\$1,075,775,032</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

#### NYSID Economic Impact in the Capital Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	499	\$22,943,673	\$26,085,501	\$48,957,164
Indirect Effect	105	\$7,912,794	\$13,227,020	\$21,854,784
Induced Effect	118	\$7,087,730	\$14,044,921	\$21,518,090
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>\$37,944,197</b>	<b>\$53,357,442</b>	<b>\$92,330,038</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

## Services

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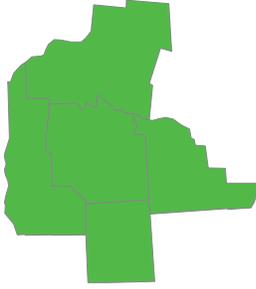
Assembly  
Document Destruction  
Electronic Recycling  
Grounds  
Janitorial  
Laundry  
Mail  
Meals  
Messenger  
Microfilm/Document Imaging  
Miscellaneous  
Office  
Reproduction

## Member Agencies

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Action Window Cleaning  
Altamont Program, Inc., The  
Catholic Charities  
Community, Work, & Independence, Inc.  
E-Bizdocs  
Image Data, Inc.  
Janitronics, Inc.  
NYSARC Inc.—Warren, Washington, & Albany Counties  
Pine Ridge Industries  
Plaza Linen Services  
Rayben Enterprises, Inc.  
Second Chance Opportunities, Inc.  
Securescan LLC  
Teamwork  
The Center for Disability Services, Inc.  
Unity House of Troy, Inc.





## Central New York

Metric	Value
Number of Agencies	25
Total Agency Revenue	\$568,235,223
OPWDD Revenue	\$217,863,621
OPWDD Personnel	117,511,911
OPWDD FTE	2,611

### NYSID Activity

Hours worked: 86,685

Employees: 165 (3.4% of disabled workforce)

Average weekly hours: 10.1

#### Disability Services Economic Impact in the Central New York Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	4,237	\$166,293,832	\$155,074,816	\$217,863,621
Indirect Effect	244	\$16,275,604	\$31,464,578	\$55,712,578
Induced Effect	719	\$39,970,711	\$79,822,415	\$124,538,907
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>5,199</b>	<b>\$222,540,148</b>	<b>\$266,361,809</b>	<b>\$398,115,106</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

#### NYSID Economic Impact in the Central New York Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	43	\$2,355,009	\$2,809,432	\$5,010,631
Indirect Effect	11	\$817,568	\$1,348,955	\$2,248,316
Induced Effect	12	\$692,585	\$1,379,604	\$2,147,239
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>\$3,865,162</b>	<b>\$5,537,991</b>	<b>\$6,406,186</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

## Services

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Grounds

Janitorial

Laundry

Mail

Microfilm/Document Imaging

Miscellaneous

Reupholstery

## Member Agencies

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Ames Linen Service

Clean Textile Systems, LP

Continuum Professional Service, Inc.

Image Integrator, LLC

J.M. Murray Center, Inc.

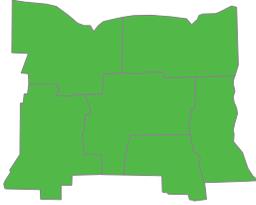
Katapult Solutions, Inc.

Madison County ARC

Onondaga County ARC

Oswego Industries, Inc.





# Finger Lakes

Metric	Value
Number of Agencies	29
Total Agency Revenue	\$963,444,338
OPWDD Revenue	\$573,651,357
OPWDD Personnel	327,439,181
OPWDD FTE	7,197

## NYSID Activity

Hours worked: 107,831

Employees: 213 (4.4% of disabled workforce)

Average weekly hours: 9.7

### Disability Services Economic Impact in the Finger Lakes Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	10,672	\$44,280,585	\$415,503,531	\$573,651,357
Indirect Effect	617	\$41,344,453	\$80,075,105	\$142,014,335
Induced Effect	2,085	\$118,151,336	\$232,642,898	\$365,699,377
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>13,374</b>	<b>\$604,776,374</b>	<b>\$728,221,535</b>	<b>\$1,081,365,068</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

### NYSID Economic Impact in the Finger Lakes Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	56	\$2,295,537	\$2,936,551	\$5,400,222
Indirect Effect	12	\$881,591	\$1,470,140	\$2,474,433
Induced Effect	13	\$766,447	\$1,506,534	\$2,362,709
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>\$3,943,576</b>	<b>\$5,913,225</b>	<b>\$10,237,364</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

## Services

Document Destruction

Grounds

Laundry

Meals

Microfilm/Document Imaging

Office

## Member Agencies

Abbey Industries

ARC Glow

Genesee County ARC

Hilltop Industries

Laico Industries & Services

Mozaic Chapter, NYSARC, Inc.

Northcoast Window Cleaning, LLC

Rochester Rehabilitation Center





## Long Island

Metric	Value
Number of Agencies	47
Total Agency Revenue	\$3,473,809,132
OPWDD Revenue	\$1,278,089,914
OPWDD Personnel	694,797,683
OPWDD FTE	13,791

### NYSID Activity

Hours worked: 417,233

Employees: 631 (13.2% of disabled workforce)

Average weekly hours: 12.7

#### Disability Services Economic Impact in the Long Island Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	21,325	\$1,025,378,227	\$962,067,476	\$1,278,089,914
Indirect Effect	1,333	\$93,736,977	\$175,593,307	\$308,871,617
Induced Effect	3,923	\$261,515,909	\$487,968,895	\$743,398,521
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>26,581</b>	<b>\$1,380,631,113</b>	<b>\$1,625,629,697</b>	<b>\$2,330,360,052</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

#### NYSID Economic Impact in the Long Island Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	432	\$23,590,292	\$30,134,263	\$51,308,592
Indirect Effect	96	\$8,036,368	\$13,476,599	\$21,982,697
Induced Effect	110	\$7,367,264	\$13,740,280	\$20,889,566
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>638</b>	<b>\$38,993,925</b>	<b>\$57,351,143</b>	<b>\$94,180,855</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

## Services

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Assembly

Commodities—Servicing Apparel

Document Destruction

Grounds

Inventory

Janitorial

Laundry

Mail

Microfilm/Document Imaging

Miscellaneous

Office



## Member Agencies

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A-1 Professional Cleaning & Maintenance

Adults & Children with Learning and  
Developmental Disabilities

AHRC Business Services

Alternative Earthcare Tree & Lawn Systems

American Maintenance

American Security Shredding Corporation

Carlstrom & Ritter, Inc.

Corporate Source, Inc.

Imaging and Microfilm Services, LLC

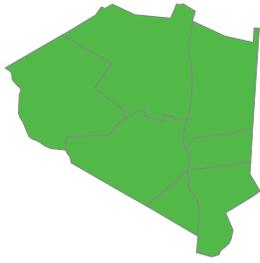
Kellermeyer Bergensons Services, LLC

Landtek Group, Inc.

Maryhaven Center of Hope

Mayco Building Services, Inc.

Seery Systems Group



## Mid-Hudson

Metric	Value
Number of Agencies	73
Total Agency Revenue	\$2,433,847,613
OPWDD Revenue	\$1,555,188,096
OPWDD Personnel	837,573,942
OPWDD FTE	16,944

### NYSID Activity

Hours worked: 287,011  
 Employees: 443 (9.3% of disabled workforce)  
 Average weekly hours: 12.5

#### Disability Services Economic Impact in the Mid-Hudson Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	26,536	\$1,211,223,417	\$1,132,303,856	\$1,555,188,096
Indirect Effect	1,544	\$110,758,287	\$208,594,906	\$358,554,366
Induced Effect	3,664	\$239,236,673	\$457,203,826	\$684,092,024
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>33,744</b>	<b>\$1,561,218,377</b>	<b>\$1,798,102,588</b>	<b>\$2,597,834,486</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

#### NYSID Economic Impact in the Mid-Hudson Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	133	\$6,084,348	\$7,761,696	\$14,296,702
Indirect Effect	27	\$2,205,180	\$3,641,903	\$5,931,144
Induced Effect	23	\$1,515,125	\$2,892,926	\$4,324,959
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>\$9,804,653</b>	<b>\$14,296,424</b>	<b>\$24,552,805</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

## Services

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Electronic Recycling

Grounds

Janitorial

Laundry

Mail

Meals

Microfilm/Document Imaging

Office

## Member Agencies

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ACCESS: Supports for Living, Inc.

Digiscribe International, LLC

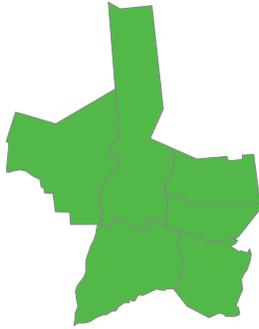
Gateway Community Industries

Jawonio, Inc.

LCS Companies of New York, Inc.

The ARC Greater Hudson Valley





# Mohawk Valley

Metric	Value
Number of Agencies	16
Total Agency Revenue	\$721,574,165
OPWDD Revenue	\$541,180,335
OPWDD Personnel	317,173,644
OPWDD FTE	6,319

## NYSID Activity

Hours worked: 112,757  
 Employees: 275 (5.7% of disabled workforce)  
 Average weekly hours: 7.9

### Disability Services Economic Impact in the Mohawk Valley Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	10,261	\$418,013,530	\$389,113,232	\$541,180,335
Indirect Effect	540	\$35,139,398	\$68,072,698	\$124,068,794
Induced Effect	1,612	\$87,217,012	\$171,910,702	\$271,590,535
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>12,413</b>	<b>\$540,369,940</b>	<b>\$629,096,632</b>	<b>\$936,839,665</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

### NYSID Economic Impact in the Mohawk Valley Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	75	\$4,056,094	\$5,492,923	\$10,610,201
Indirect Effect	24	\$1,723,467	\$2,831,510	\$4,776,848
Induced Effect	20	\$1,128,261	\$2,214,253	\$3,476,138
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>\$6,907,821</b>	<b>\$10,538,687</b>	<b>\$18,863,187</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

## Services

- Grounds
- Janitorial
- Laundry

## Member Agencies

- Century Linen & Uniform, Inc.
- Herkimer County ARC
- Human Technologies Corp, Inc.



# New York City

Metric	Value
Number of Agencies	133
Total Agency Revenue	\$6,267,295,120
OPWDD Revenue	\$3,150,843,323
OPWDD Personnel	1,548,794,156
OPWDD FTE	31,789

## NYSID Activity

Hours worked: 1,898,279

Employees: 1,923 (40.2% of disabled workforce)

Average weekly hours: 19.0

### Disability Services Economic Impact in the New York City Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	57,299	\$2,471,127,452	\$2,301,708,797	\$3,150,843,323
Indirect Effect	2,547	\$246,135,642	\$474,341,475	\$717,986,907
Induced Effect	6,860	\$559,202,310	\$1,029,748,224	\$1,466,459,369
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>66,707</b>	<b>\$3,276,465,404</b>	<b>\$3,805,798,496</b>	<b>\$5,335,259,599</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

### NYSID Economic Impact in the New York City Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	924	\$67,421,217	\$74,006,676	\$114,439,384
Indirect Effect	138	\$15,041,303	\$25,086,200	\$37,028,915
Induced Effect	209	\$17,109,065	\$31,487,246	\$44,817,541
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>1,271</b>	<b>\$99,571,586</b>	<b>\$130,580,123</b>	<b>\$196,285,840</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

## Services

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Document Destruction

Electronic Recycling

Grounds

Inventory

Janitorial

Laundry

Mail

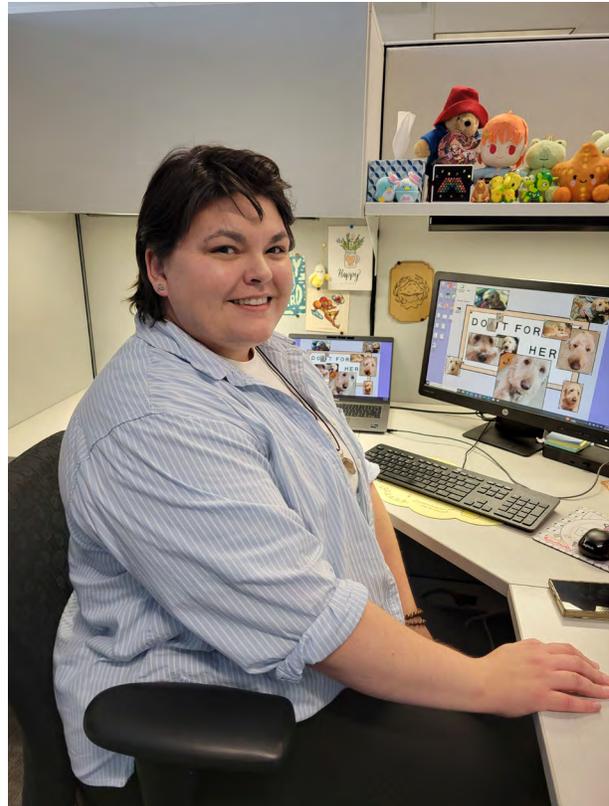
Meals

Messenger

Microfilm/Document Imaging

Miscellaneous

Office



## Member Agencies

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AHRC, NYC

Caso, Inc.

Fedcap Rehabilitation Services, Inc.

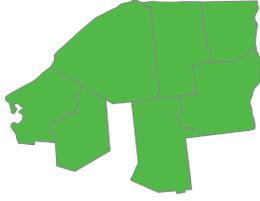
Goodwill Industries of Greater New York

The Osborne Association

PSCH, Inc.

Skyway Window Cleaning Corp.

Wildcat Service Corp.



# North Country

Metric	Value
Number of Agencies	9
Total Agency Revenue	\$318,171,982
OPWDD Revenue	\$227,090,189
OPWDD Personnel	134,056,802
OPWDD FTE	2,887

## NYSID Activity

Hours worked: 34,153  
 Employees: 87 (1.8% of disabled workforce)  
 Average weekly hours: 7.5

### Disability Services Economic Impact in the North Country Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	3,466	\$187,967,648	\$175,732,559	\$227,090,189
Indirect Effect	170	\$10,508,632	\$21,607,466	\$38,757,347
Induced Effect	621	\$31,674,659	\$66,263,924	\$103,014,662
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>4,256</b>	<b>\$230,150,938</b>	<b>\$263,603,949</b>	<b>\$368,862,198</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

### NYSID Economic Impact in the North Country Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	4	\$180,524	\$190,895	\$388,528
Indirect Effect	1	\$56,375	\$95,345	\$159,254
Induced Effect	1	\$38,465	\$79,584	\$122,882
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>\$275,363</b>	<b>\$365,824</b>	<b>\$670,664</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

## Services

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Document Destruction

Grounds

Janitorial

Meals

Microfilm/Document Imaging

Office

## Member Agencies

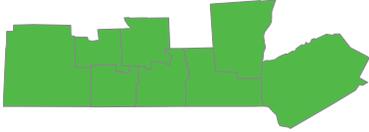
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North Star Industries

Seaway Industries

The ARC Jefferson-St. Lawrence





## Southern Tier

Metric	Value
Number of Agencies	19
Total Agency Revenue	\$323,575,497
OPWDD Revenue	\$167,747,813
OPWDD Personnel	96,962,429
OPWDD FTE	2,225

### NYSID Activity

Hours worked: 90,545

Employees: 156 (3.3% of disabled workforce)

Average weekly hours: 11.2

#### Disability Services Economic Impact in the Southern Tier Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	3,144	\$130,017,633	\$121,153,691	\$167,747,813
Indirect Effect	159	\$10,152,387	\$20,224,850	\$36,059,969
Induced Effect	457	\$24,774,426	\$50,337,681	\$78,147,605
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>3,760</b>	<b>\$164,944,445</b>	<b>\$191,716,222</b>	<b>\$281,955,387</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

#### NYSID Economic Impact in the Southern Tier Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	94	\$4,735,118	\$3,837,677	\$5,211,863
Indirect Effect	6	\$377,242	\$643,731	\$1,130,106
Induced Effect	17	\$931,542	\$1,894,271	\$2,941,152
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>\$6,043,903</b>	<b>\$6,375,679</b>	<b>\$9,283,121</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

## Services

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Grounds

Janitorial

Laundry

Mail

Meals

Microfilm/Document Imaging

Miscellaneous

Office

## Member Agencies

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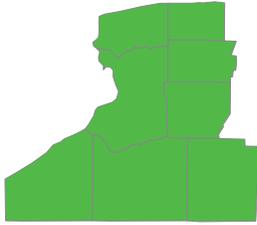
Bates Troy, Inc.

Capabilities, Inc.

Chemung County ARC

Sourcecorp BPS, Inc.





## Western New York

Metric	Value
Number of Agencies	24
Total Agency Revenue	\$1,036,426,966
OPWDD Revenue	\$652,311,178
OPWDD Personnel	369,873,773
OPWDD FTE	8,218

**NYSID Activity**  
 Hours worked: 117,486  
 Employees: 213 (4.4% of disabled workforce)  
 Average weekly hours: 10.6

### Disability Services Economic Impact in the Western New York Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	12,158	\$505,153,852	\$472,133,197	\$652,311,178
Indirect Effect	691	\$45,318,920	\$87,676,068	\$155,582,382
Induced Effect	2,252	\$127,818,604	\$251,644,727	\$391,877,118
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>15,102</b>	<b>\$678,291,376</b>	<b>\$811,453,991</b>	<b>\$1,199,770,678</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

### NYSID Economic Impact in the Western New York Region, 2023

Impact Type	Employment (FTE)	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	73	\$3,230,460	\$4,040,401	\$7,668,380
Indirect Effect	17	\$1,206,377	\$2,019,690	\$3,386,247
Induced Effect	18	\$1,026,546	\$2,017,592	\$3,135,555
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>\$5,463,383</b>	<b>\$8,077,683</b>	<b>\$14,190,182</b>

SOURCE: Rockefeller Institute of Government analysis.

## Services

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Electronic Recycling

Grounds

Janitorial

Mail

Microfilm/Document Imaging

Office

## Member Agencies

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Allentown Industries

Asset Recovery Company of America, LLC

Biel's Information Technology Systems

Cattaraugus Rehabilitation Center, Inc.

People, Inc.

The Resource Center

Suburban Adult Services

The ARC Allegany-Steuben

## 8. Persistent Challenges in Employment for People with Disabilities

As discussed above, New York has made significant positive policy changes since the last economic impact report was published in 2021, through the declaration of New York as an Employment First state and the Preferred Source Modernization Act. Despite these gains, there are persistent challenges facing people with disabilities in accessing high-quality employment. Three persistent barriers to employment include the administrative burden and other structural barriers that limit employment first policies, the impact of incarceration on people with disabilities, and the disincentive to work, earn, and save created by federal benefits policies.

### Transforming Employment First from Principle to Policy

In the 2019 report, the Rockefeller Institute made a series of recommendations for changes to state policies that would support expanding the employment of people with disabilities through NYSID contracts. New York has made some progress, especially through the Preferred Source Modernization Act discussed above, but there are still regulatory and statutory challenges that prevent the state from realizing its Employment First goals and expanding employment for people with disabilities.

A persistent barrier to increasing employment for people with disabilities through NYSID contracts is the administrative burden of participating in the Preferred Source Program. Currently, the Office of General Services (OGS) requires that agencies purchasing a commodity or service from NYSID valued at \$100,000 or higher obtain price approval from OGS.<sup>34</sup> This price review threshold is significantly lower than the threshold for the state's minority- and women-owned business enterprises (MWBE) program. The MWBE discretionary purchasing threshold was increased to \$1.5 million in fiscal year 2024–25.<sup>35</sup>

The FY 2027 executive budget calls for increasing the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) contracting approval threshold and discretionary buying threshold to \$300,000. This proposed threshold increase would expedite the ability of state agencies to procure goods and services. However, Preferred Source contracts above \$100,000 would still need OGS approval. Raising the price approval threshold for Preferred Source contracts to \$300,000 would significantly decrease the number of NYSID contracts requiring price approval and would decrease the administrative burden of these contracts at OGS, NYSID, and NYSID member agencies and corporate partners. The higher threshold would also bring Preferred Source contracting more in line with other advantaged contractors like MWBEs and in line with OSC-approved contracts. Increasing the price review threshold would also benefit local governments that want to use NYSID contracts in their procurement. Local governments, including New York City, which has its own extensive procurement infrastructure, are currently required to wait on OGS price approval delaying contract execution.

New York can also increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities by expanding both the jobs that qualify as “direct labor” for existing NYSID contract types

and the job titles and industries that are eligible for the Preferred Source Program. Currently, only direct labor—the people who physically complete the contracted service work or those who contribute directly to the commodities’ production process—are considered workers with disabilities for the purposes of Preferred Source contracts. This limitation undermines the goal of creating competitive and integrated career opportunities for people with disabilities within member agencies and corporate partners. People with disabilities who move into non-production jobs, including management, marketing, and administrative services, are not considered direct labor. This distinction potentially creates a disincentive for integrated workplaces to encourage workers with disabilities to move into other jobs within the company. Relaxing the direct labor rules would bring the Preferred Source Program more in line with New York’s direct employment program for people with disabilities, the 55-b/c program. The 55-b/c program works as a gateway, allowing people with disabilities who meet the qualifications for a state job to bypass the open competitive exam process. Workers hired through 55-b/c have no restrictions on their career with the state and can move into more advanced positions over the course of their career as they meet minimum job requirements and pass promotional exams. Allowing for the same type of career pathway in Preferred Source contracts would similarly promote skill acquisition and career advancement for people with disabilities.

Likewise, expanding the services that NYSID contractors and corporate partners are allowed to provide to the state would increase the career opportunities for people with disabilities. NYSID is currently limited in the types of commodities and services that it is approved to provide through contracts.<sup>36</sup> The description of services is often detailed and may exclude similar service types or particular titles within a service type. For example, NYSID is an approved Preferred Source for Temporary Personnel Office, but exactly which services are included is much more complicated and determined by additional documentation.<sup>37</sup> This application and approval process requires a significant understanding of state job titles, as well as significant paperwork for individual title approval. NYSID and member agencies are currently limited by the job titles that they are permitted to supply, which has, in part, led to the increase in janitorial contracts over the last five years. Janitorial services accounted for 52 percent of service contracts in 2018 and increased to 70 percent in 2023. In contrast, office services fell from 19 percent of service contracts to 10 percent over the same period.

The Preferred Source Program is highly regulated. NYSID and its member agencies and corporate partners report that they direct significant staff time and effort toward assuring compliance with existing contract mandates. They argue that time and effort would be better spent in direct dialogue with the state on how to meet its employment first goals. The Preferred Source Program accounts for less than 1 percent of state procurement but has a significant impact on the 1.25 million working-age New Yorkers with a disability. These workers are more than three times as likely to be unemployed as their nondisabled peers. A systematic review and discussion of New York’s programs and policies aimed at supporting employment for New Yorkers with disabilities, including the Preferred Source Program, would support the state’s Employment First goals. This review or round table should include professionals from NYSID’s regulating agency, the New York State Education Department ACCESS-VR,

as well as the other agencies that support disability services, including OPWDD, OMH, and the Office for Addiction Supports and Services (OASAS). It should also include input from the Chief Disability Officer, Employment First Office, and OGS.

## Incarceration and People with Disabilities

People with disabilities are significantly more likely to be incarcerated than their peers. Data from the 2016 Survey of Prison Inmates (most recent year available) show that 40 percent of state and 29 percent of federally incarcerated people report having a disability. Nearly a quarter of the state prison population (24 percent) specifically reports a cognitive disability. Incarcerated women have higher rates of disabilities than men, with 50 percent of women in state prisons reporting a disability and 37 percent reporting a cognitive disability. By comparison, 39 percent of men reported any disability and only 23 percent a cognitive disability. Disability incidence is not confined to older incarcerated people. Disability incidence ranges from a low of 32 percent for incarcerated people between 25 and 34 to a high of 70 percent for people 65 and older. Many of the incarcerated people with disabilities had been diagnosed before incarceration. Twenty-five percent of people incarcerated in state facilities report that they attended special education classes, 15 percent were told that they had a learning disability by a doctor, psychologist, or teacher, and over a quarter of those incarcerated (26 percent) reported an attention deficit disorder diagnosis.<sup>38</sup>

People with disabilities who have been previously incarcerated face a double barrier to employment, as both people who have been justice-involved and those with disabilities have higher unemployment rates than their peers. Researchers at Cornell's Yang-Tan Institute have made specific recommendations for improving the employment outcomes for young adults with disabilities who have been incarcerated, with the intent of also reducing recidivism, as employment is a strong predictor of staying out of prison. These recommendations center around providing vocational rehabilitation (VR) services in prisons and coordinating between VR programs inside prisons and during community supervision.<sup>39</sup>

Explicitly including formerly incarcerated people with disabilities or justice-involved youth with disabilities in programs to support employment for people with disabilities could aid in both reducing recidivism among adults and preventing youth from first-time incarceration.

## Federal Policy for SSI, SSDI, and other Social Safety Net Benefits

Section 6 of this report discusses the economic impact of NYSID and disability service providers in New York, including the direct effect of these organizations as well as the multiplier effect of that impact on the larger community and the payment of federal and state taxes by employees. While the estimates capture the impact of additional taxes paid to the government, they do not capture the federal revenue savings from not paying cash benefits to working people with disabilities who would otherwise qualify for benefits. Increasing employment for people with disabilities both increases

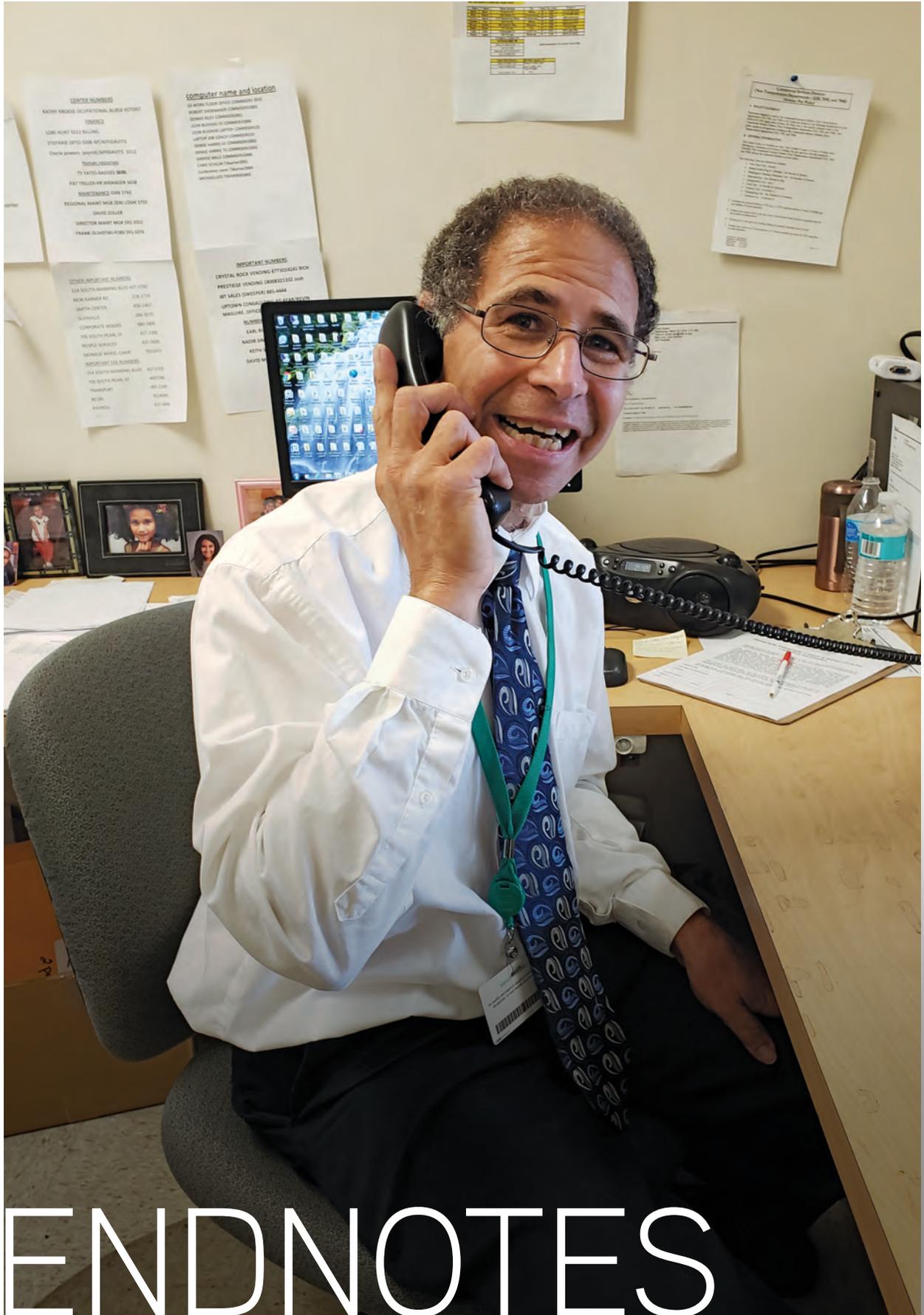
tax revenue from income and payroll taxes and reduces government spending on income supports. New York has made significant progress in supporting employment for people with disabilities and helping them earn more and transition off benefits programs when possible. However, action is currently needed at the federal level to reform these benefits programs for people with disabilities in order to better support employment.

The two primary income supports for people with disabilities are Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). These are both federal programs, although they are partially administered at the state level. Both programs have earnings and asset limitations to qualify. The earning limits can create a disincentive to work because people with disabilities may be risk-averse and do not want to lose a steady source of income even if they can earn more by working. The earnings limits are also monthly, which means workers may have to reduce their hours during a three-paycheck month in order to not be pushed over the earnings limits and begin the process of losing benefits.<sup>40</sup> The New York minimum wage is also more than double the federal minimum wage (last updated in 2009<sup>41</sup>), which means that a minimum wage worker in New York can work only half as many hours as a worker in Mississippi and still qualify for SSI. These significant limitations on hours and earnings during the transition period off SSI can prevent a person with a disability from pursuing career advancement or taking on more hours.

Asset limits for SSI also present significant barriers to independent living for people with disabilities. When SSI was established in 1972, most benefits and exemption amounts were not indexed to inflation. The asset limit was last raised in 1989 from \$1,500 for an individual and \$2,250 for a couple to \$2,000 for an individual or \$3,000 for a couple, and that limit has remained unchanged since. If the asset limit had been indexed to inflation, the current individual asset exclusion would be \$4,915.86. The current asset limit prevents people with disabilities receiving SSI from having any significant savings or being able to plan for large purchases. Increasing earnings and asset limits for SSI and SSDI would allow more people with disabilities to save for their future and continue to receive Medicaid and other supports while transitioning into higher-paid employment.

## 9. Conclusion

NYSID member agencies and voluntary, nonprofit disability service providers play a critical role in New York's economy. Providers have an economic impact of \$15.6 billion and employ over 98,000 people while supporting almost 200,000 jobs. In addition to that impact, NYSID member agencies and corporate partners generated an economic impact of \$470 million, employing 4,794 workers with disabilities. Together, the economic impact is over \$16 billion. In many communities, providers are among the top employers and support both people with disabilities and the community as a whole through their outreach and programming. They work not only to support people with disabilities through social enterprises but also to provide employment in traditional businesses and the larger community. The support that providers offer is also crucial to the impact of NYSID member agencies and corporate partners in providing high-quality jobs to people with disabilities and producing goods and services for state and local governments and the private sector.



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- 5 *Ibid.*
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- 32 Many employees are part-time, so the total number of employees with disabilities working on NYSID contracts is higher than the full-time equivalent job number.
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