

August 1, 2000, on increasing the salaries and benefits of direct service workers, given that direct service workers employed by community-based providers do not receive the same level of salaries and benefits as State employees with comparable training and responsibilities. These direct service workers are essential since they have the most direct contact with clients. With an enhanced salary and benefits package, community-based providers would be able to improve the recruitment and retention of direct service workers, leading to a higher quality of services. Therefore, the department shall submit a report that includes the following items related to the salary and benefits packages of direct service workers employed by community-based providers in the developmental disabilities, mental health, and addictions fields:

- (1) A comparison between the salary and benefits packages of direct service workers employed by community-based providers and State employees with comparable training and responsibilities. The department may survey community-based providers or use the research of the Community Services Reimbursement Rate Commission to develop this comparison;
- (2) The level of funding needed to raise the level of salary and benefits packages of community-based providers to the State level; and
- (3) A plan on how enhancements to salary and benefits packages would be implemented. The plan shall include goals and timetables.

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