

Steering Committee Meeting Summary

DECEMBER 2, 2025, 3:00 – 4:30 PM CENTRAL TIME:

Summary of Meeting Themes:

- Mathematica shared that HHS has renamed the Adult and Disability (AD) Waiver to the Adults with Disabilities Waiver. They renamed the waiver to clarify that it serves people with a qualifying disability while older adults whose primary disability is related to aging can access services through the Elderly Waiver.
- Mathematica recapped key Steering Committee milestones in 2025 and asked Steering Committee members to share thoughts about their experience on the committee.
 - Members are proud of progress in key areas, including:
 - Improved case management ratios
 - Reorganizing waivers so services are based on individual needs rather than disability labels
 - Transitioning to independent assessors for greater fairness and consistency
 - Adopting interRAI assessments to standardize assessments
 - The committee views communication as a major opportunity for 2026. Members pointed to the importance of educating legislators and reaching invested in Iowans. They stressed the need for clear, consistent communication with the public, legislators, providers, and case managers to help manage expectations and prevent misinformation about proposed changes. They also noted that using physical mail may not be the best way to share information.
 - Members noted that provider capacity is a crucial factor in service access. Educating members about Consumer Choice Options (CCO) is a useful solution for limited provider access. However, paying providers a “good” rate is important.
 - One member said that waiver services do not have a rate mechanism that prompts legislators to update rates regularly.
- Mathematica shared that public comment for Phase 1 of HOME will occur between December 22nd and January 31st. After the December Steering Committee meeting, Iowa HHS needed to move the public comment period starting to January 5, 2026 and running through February 6th. Iowa HHS has scheduled three informational sessions in January to summarize major updates underway and provide instructions for the public to submit comments.
 - As part of public comment for Phase 1 of HOME, Iowa HHS will also post “quick guides” to inform the public about the HOME waivers, assessments, services, and public comment period.
- Iowa HHS provided a legislative update. The legislative services agency posts information related to the Medicaid budget online. HHS shared that the legislature is interested in Medicaid for Employed People with Disabilities (MEPD).

- Members asked whether taking advantage of rural health funds might be an option to address workforce shortages.
- For steering committee next steps, current members should confirm their interest in continuing to serve on the committee in 2026. HHS also asked the committee to do two things:
- Please recommend new members to serve on the steering committee next year by asking them to email: HOMEwaivers@hhs.iowa.gov
- HHS will continue to spotlight partners in the HOME newsletter and asked members to consider volunteering to be featured. If interested in learning more, please email William.Linder@hhs.iowa.gov.
- The next steering committee meeting will be in February 2026.