

**Why did DODD decide to close two Developmental Centers?**

It is not a sustainable use of state resources to continue to operate 10 Developmental Centers (DC). Since 2007, the number of individuals living in DCs has decreased from 1,600 to approximately 900, a decline of more than 40 percent, with all but two DCs currently serving less than 100 individuals. This is because there are more opportunities for Ohio's citizens with developmental disabilities to receive the supports they need in their own homes, including offering Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waivers and opportunities to live in smaller Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF). This trend will continue, and DODD plans to assist at least 90 people per year in moving into a smaller setting.

Also, it is the RIGHT THING to do for Ohio's citizens with developmental disabilities –

- Living in small homes provides natural interactions and relationships with the community
- Natural interactions with the community enhance personal growth experiences
- With Home and Community-Based Waiver services, individuals, with their family and guardians, can choose from a wide variety of services that are driven by their personal desires and needs
- The waiver is “portable” and allows for free choice of provider – this promotes quality
- An individual, family, or guardian can change their provider and remain in their home
- Encouraging choice, along with community experiences, builds independence under supervision and structure, leading to more independence

**Why did you choose to close Montgomery Developmental Center (MDC) and Youngstown Developmental Center (YDC)?**

The decision to close two DCs, and identify which DCs to close, was not one we made easily. All of Ohio's DCs deliver quality care, provided by dedicated and caring staff. The factors we used to make the decision to close these particular centers included the proximity of centers to one another, the local community's ability to meet the demand for services, and the potential of a closing center to be sold and repurposed for other uses.

**How soon will the two Developmental Centers be closed?**

The Montgomery and Youngstown Developmental Centers are scheduled to close by July 1, 2017; however, they could close sooner than anticipated. If this happens, appropriate notifications will be made.

**How Many residents will be affected?**

Montgomery: Approximately 94 residents

Youngstown: Approximately 86 residents

**How many staff will be affected?**

Montgomery: Approximately 183 staff

Youngstown: Approximately 214 staff

### **Who can I call if I have questions?**

You can talk with your Developmental Center Superintendent, or call DODD's Budget and Developmental Center Closure hotline toll-free at 855-611-6446 (OHIO), or 614-728-5311. You can find more information online at [DODD.Ohio.gov/OurFuture](http://DODD.Ohio.gov/OurFuture).

### **I live at a center that will close. What are my choices?**

Residents of DCs that will be closing have the option to move to another DC, to a small ICF, or into the community with a [Home and Community-Based Services \(HCBS\) waiver](#). Waivers allow individuals to live in community settings of their choice with supports, rather than in an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) or other facility.

### **Why is Ohio downsizing Developmental Centers at a faster rate than other states?**

Downsizing of Ohio's DCs is below the national average. According to the new *State of the States in Developmental Disabilities Project* (2013), from 2011-2013, Ohio has reduced the number of people living in DCs by 13 percent compared to the national average of 17 percent. Also, in the last four years (2011 – 2014), 29 percent of the total DC population, or 373 people, have moved. In the last ten years (2004 – 2014), 47 percent of the total DC population, or 818 people, have moved.

### **Why are you eliminating services for the most vulnerable people?**

DODD is closing two DCs, not eliminating the option of DCs. The other eight centers will remain open and continue to provide quality services to its residents, as well as technical assistance, short-term stabilization services, and support to their local region.

### **What will you do to ensure the health and safety of the people who move out of a Developmental Center?**

DODD will work with individuals and families to review their options, and help them select a home that best meets their needs. This may include another DC, an ICF, or a home in the community. Each person who leaves a DC and moves to an ICF or into the community will receive follow-along services to ensure their health and safety.

### **How soon will we have to make a decision about where I want to move?**

It is important to make decisions as soon as possible so the DC can work with you to prioritize choices for another DC, or to begin planning for a new community home with a new provider of services. DC staff and others will be working with you to make the best and most informed choice.

### **What if I move and I'm not satisfied – can I move again?**

Yes. An individual can choose to move at any time. One of the benefits of a waiver is that it is portable, maximizing the available options. While readmission to a DC will be an option, generally it would be considered short-term for stabilization purposes only.

**What can I be doing now?**

The best thing to do is to begin considering your options. Some recommended steps are:

1. Attend a family meeting at the center to learn more about your options. Information about the meetings will be sent in a letter from the superintendent.
2. Attend an individual meeting with staff from the DC and DODD to go over your options, and get insights from those that closely serve you. You will be contacted to set up this meeting.
3. Once you learn what options are available, visit as many as possible, and/or talk to those staff, family, friends, and others that can provide insight into your questions and concerns.

**Why move into the community when there are so many others waiting for community options?**

Transitioning individuals from DCs into the community does not take away the opportunity for those waiting for services. The money used to serve people in DCs will follow them into the community when they choose to make that transition.

**Will there be start-up funds if I choose waiver services?**

If you move to a home with waiver services, you are eligible for start-up funds via the **HOME Choice** Program. The Community Resource Coordinator and County Board staff will assist you with this option.

If you go to another DC or private Intermediate Care Facility (ICF), those facilities provide everything needed for a smooth transition.

**What is the future of the other eight Developmental Centers?**

Over the past seven years, the census at the DCs has continued to reduce by an average of 90 people a year, with a census of 919 on December 31, 2014. There is no plan to close any of the other eight centers.

**Why have you spent significant Capital Funds at a center only to close it?**

Capital funds have been spent at operating centers to ensure the dignity, health, and safety of those living and working at the DCs. The use of these funds for capital improvement have been carefully reviewed and monitored to ensure the facilities meet all health and safety standards. The Department will continue to ensure that people living in our facilities live in safe, well maintained houses. The use of capital funds also preserves the value of the buildings so they can be rented or sold in the future. In the current biennium, capital dollars for the DCs are limited to essential projects.

**Has the Department of Justice (DOJ) or Disability Rights Ohio (DRO) required the closing of the centers?**

No. While neither the DOJ nor DRO required a DC to be closed, DRO is demanding that Ohio's system become less reliant on institutional service models. Closing two DCs may reduce the state's exposure under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA, passed by congress in 1990 and signed into law by President George H. W. Bush, requires agencies to provide services in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the qualified individuals with disabilities."

**Some Community Providers continue to dis-enroll individuals with significant behavioral challenges. With the reductions of centers, who will serve these very difficult individuals?**

Private and public providers currently do, and will continue to serve individuals with challenging issues. Additionally, DODD will continue to provide short-term stabilization services to individuals and families.

**How are you going to support residents who have lived at MDC and YDC who are elderly and/or have lived there for many years?**

All residents who move will receive follow-along services to ensure their health and safety.

**Since Youngstown Developmental Center provides day services and employment, how will individuals receive these services after they move?**

DODD will work with you and your family or guardian to develop a comprehensive transition plan to meet your day and residential needs. During the transition planning, all needed services will be discussed. The transition plan will outline the services that will be received following their move. Day services are eligible for payment through Medicaid.

**How does the Department plan to manage or sell the DCs?**

Plans for the property and grounds of any closing DC will be managed by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, Office of Real Estate Planning.

**Will unemployment increase in the communities when developmental centers are closed?**

It is difficult to know how the closure will impact unemployment. While the jobs at the closing DC will be abolished, we expect that jobs will be created as new residential options are developed. It is anticipated that many individuals currently living in the closing DCs will remain in the area, thus continuing the need for related jobs in the Dayton and Youngstown communities. DODD will actively work with affected staff to find them jobs in the public and private sector.

**For staff, when will the Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP) be available?**

The ERIP will be available for all eligible staff at the official public announcement, February 20. The ERIP will then remain open and accessible to eligible staff until the closure occurs.

**How many years will be purchased?**

DODD is planning to purchase through the ERIP one year of service credit.

**If an eligible staff member elects not to accept the ERIP, can he/she change his/her mind?**

Employees may elect to accept an ERIP at any time prior to the closure of the center where they were employed.