

Key provisions of The Autism Omnibus Bill

This bill reflects the state legislature's commitment to address the needs of the growing numbers of people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in the Commonwealth. Stakeholders dedicated an enormous amount of effort advocating for passage of the bill, and ADDP is thrilled that on August 6, 2014, the Governor signed the Autism Omnibus Bill into law.

The bill includes the following key provisions:

- A requirement that MassHealth cover medically necessary treatments for children with ASD who are under 21 years old – including ABA therapies as well as dedicated and non-dedicated AAC devices;
- Extension of Department of Developmental Services (DDS) eligibility to many persons with Autism, Prader Willi Syndrome and Smith-Magenis syndrome;
- The creation of an Autism Endorsement for special education teachers to enable them to voluntarily gain in-depth knowledge about the complexities of educating students with ASD;
- The creation of tax-free saving accounts (called "Achieving a Better Life Experience" or ABLE) to help families cover anticipated disability-related expenses for individuals with ASD and other physical and developmental disabilities;
- Requiring DMH and DDS to develop and implement a plan to provide services to individuals who have both a mental illness and a developmental disabilities; and
- Establishing the Autism Commission as a permanent entity.

To read a copy of the legislation follow this link:

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2014/Chapter226>