



## Talking Points: Ask Us About Our SOCs!

### What are SOCs?

SOCs stands for standard occupational classifications, which are categories that the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) uses to divide the entire U.S. workforce when collecting data from employers. These data are used to measure trends and activity in the labor market and play an important part in informing public and private decision-making – such as predicting potential labor shortages.

### What do disability service providers want with SOCs?

Providers seek the creation of a new standard occupational classification for direct service professionals (DSPs), a workforce which assists people with intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD) with living life like everyone else. For example, DSPs help people with IDD find employment, perform daily living tasks, and live in the community with their family/peers instead of in state-run institutions. Currently, there is no SOC for DSPs. There are SOCs for home health aides and personal care aides, and while these positions have some overlap with DSPs, descriptions meant for other fields do not adequately capture the full scope and complexity of the DSP occupation.

### What will creating a new SOC accomplish?

- By providing data that more accurately reflects the job market, a SOC for DSPs will help state and federal agencies better understand a workforce that is facing explosive demand... at a time when recruitment and retention are low, with a 45 percent national turnover rate.
- State and federal agencies need a stronger understanding of DSP duties, working conditions, labor costs, etc. because the SOC is crucial to developing reimbursement rates and policies affecting this workforce.
- Ideally, this improved data will lead to decisions that increase employment nationwide in a sector vital to the health and survival of people with IDD.

### How can my Congressional office help?

By participating in a sign-on letter requesting that the Bureau of Labor Statistics develop a standard occupational classification for direct service professionals, your office will contribute to the well-being of people with IDD as well as the local and national economy.

To learn more, please contact Ms. Esme Grant Grewal, Senior Director of Government Relations at ANCOR, the national trade association for IDD providers, at [egrant@ancor.org](mailto:egrant@ancor.org) or (202) 579 7789.