

Disability advocates call Medicaid cut a threat

By Sarah Ladd
Kentucky Lantern

FRANKFORT — Kentuckians with disabilities and their loved ones and advocates came to Frankfort Friday and pleaded with elected officials to find a way to protect the services they receive through Medicaid waivers.

Several spoke during a legislative subcommittee meeting, which was formed to handle issues surrounding waiver waitlists, and many more spoke at a town hall meeting and rally on the Capitol Annex steps. Organizers estimated hundreds attended these events.

Laura Orsland, the mother of a son with disabilities who founded the HIVE in Bowling Green to support “people with developmental disabilities and those who care for them,” said the looming 4% cuts to the providers who help her family and others “is not just a number to us. It’s a threat.”

“It is a warning,” she said. “It is the sound of one more piece of stability slipping away.”

A June 8 letter from the Cabinet for Health and Family Services informed various providers they would see a 4% reduction in Medicaid reimbursement starting Aug. 1. Reductions are set to target the following waivers, in addition to

providers in other sectors:

Home and Community Based Waiver, which provides services to Kentuckians 65 and older or those who are physically disabled and need a nursing facility level of care.

Michelle P. Waiver, which provides services for Kentuckians with intellectual or developmental disabilities who need nursing facility or immediate care facility level of care.

Model II Waiver, which provides services for people needing ventilator support 12 or more hours a day, are on a physician-monitored weaning program and need a nursing facility level of care.

Supports for Community Living, which provides services for Kentuckians with intellectual or developmental disabilities who need immediate care facility level of care.

Meanwhile, families who need waiver services said it’s already difficult to find providers able to care for them and their loved ones.

Leslie Hoffmann, the deputy commissioner of the Department for Medicaid Services, said there were nearly 19,000 people on waitlists for Medicaid waivers as of July 13, with only around 1,000 spots available.

Year over year, the cost of waiver services and

Medicaid claims have increased from around \$492,000 per person in 2020 to around \$607,166 in 2025, Hoffmann said in a presentation to members of the Waiver Waitlist Management Subcommittee on Friday morning. Total annual expenditures for these services hit nearly \$1.9 billion in 2025 even as many spend years on waitlists waiting for care.

Dr. Steven Stack, the secretary for the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, said solutions to the waitlist and other issues come back to money.

“If you shed tears over the size of the Medicaid budget now, some of the ways we could make all of these problems go away would make you shed buckets of tears about how much larger the cost would be,” he said.

“I AM A PERSON”

Grace Anna Rodgers, a singer who has Michelle P. Waiver services and uses a wheelchair, told those gathered for the Friday afternoon town hall: “Don’t ever feel sorry for yourself, because we are still human beings.”

“A lot of people see people like me as somebody who, ‘oh she’s in a wheelchair, she can’t do anything,’ but we thrive and we love to do things,” she said. “I play piano, I sing and I love doing it. I am a person.”



Hundreds of Kentuckians with disabilities and their loved ones and advocates came to Frankfort and pleaded with elected officials to find a way to protect the services they receive through Medicaid waivers. July 17, 2026.

Claire Mynear, who has autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), obsessive compulsive disorder and other diagnoses, said she waited 15 years to get her Michelle P. Waiver.

“I need the services to help me to be able to do the things like to be independent and see friends and do things that I like to do out in the community, and that helps me be able to go out when I have services,” said Mynear, 34. “I like doing a lot of Special Olympic sports and stuff.”

Gov. Andy Beshear has blamed the budget passed by the General Assembly this year for forcing his hand toward the cuts, while lawmakers have said he could better manage the money they provided.

Judi Gerding, the founder and CEO of The Point Arc in Northern Kentucky, questioned the state’s spending priorities.

“Kentucky has been known for horses and bourbon. Let us channel that same energy and wealth into becoming the nation’s leading state for our most vulnerable people,” she said. “What good are new buildings, parks and highways if the people who need them most cannot access or benefit from them?”

Several families asked that leaders find a way to work together and reverse the cut.

“I’m asking everyone who has a voice in this decision to look beyond the blame and look at the result. Forget the political back and forth for a minute, and look at the human beings standing in the middle of it,” said Orsland, the Bowling Green advocate.

“Look at the disabled adults who depend on these services to live. Look at the parents who are terrified of what happens next. Look at the siblings, the workers, the families, the people whose lives hang in the balance,” she said. “My son is not a line item, and my family is not a talking point. People with disabilities are not statistics. They are multidimensional, sentient human beings that deserve dignity, safety and care. And they deserve better than cuts that make life harder, lonelier and more fragile.”

State unemployment rate rises in June

By Tom Latek
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT — Kentucky saw an increase in the state’s unemployment rate in June, according to the Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS), an agency within the Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet.

The preliminary June 2026 jobless rate was 4.7 percent, up 0.2 percent from the 4.5 percent reported in May, and up 0.1 percentage points from one year ago.

The U.S. seasonally adjusted jobless rate for June 2026 was 4.2 percent, which was down from the 4.3 percent recorded for May, but up from the 4.1 percent recorded in June 2025, the U.S. Department of Labor reported.

Labor force statistics, including the unemployment rate, are based upon estimates from the Current Population Survey of households. The survey is designed to measure trends in the number of people working and includes jobs in

viduals who are self-employed.

Kentucky’s civilian labor force was 2,097,681 in June 2026, an increase of 616 individuals from May. The number of people employed in June was 1,999,481, a decline of 4,175 from May. The number of unemployed was 98,200, an increase of 4,791 from May.

University of Kentucky Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) Director Mike Clark said, “The increase reflects a weaker labor market as fewer workers reported having a job and more reported that they were actively looking for work. The estimated number of Kentucky workers employed has decreased during each of the first six months of 2026.”

In a separate federal survey of business establishments that excludes jobs in agriculture and people who are self-employed, Kentucky’s seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment increased by 100 jobs to 2,030,400 in June compared to May.

Kentucky’s nonfarm employment was down 6,600 jobs or 0.3% compared to June 2025.

“Businesses reported slightly higher total nonfarm employment levels for June,” Clark noted. “The difference was small suggesting that total employment was essentially unchanged from May. However, several sectors including professional and business services, education and health services, and manufacturing reported weaker employment. These losses were offset by large employment gains in arts, entertainment and recreation.”

Kentucky’s statewide unemployment rate and employment levels are seasonally adjusted. Employment statistics undergo sharp fluctuations due to seasonal events, such as weather changes, harvests, holidays, and school openings and closings. Seasonal adjustments eliminate these influences and make it easier to observe statistical trends.

TRIPPLE HEADER!!
ABSOLUTE REAL ESTATE AUCTION
With On-Line Bidding

Live Sales Saturday, July 25th at 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, & 12:00 Noon
(All 3 Houses will be sold from 208 Beech Street, Danville, KY 40422)

ONLINE BIDDING LIVE NOW @VipAuctionKy.HiBid.com

We have been authorized to offer at
PUBLIC OUTCRY by the Mr. Donald Haydon Estate
this Tripple Header Absolute Real Estate Auction
Which Includes:

208 Beech Street (10:00 AM) – This 2 Bedroom, 1 Bathroom home situated on a large Partially Fenced lot includes Living / Dining Room, Kitchen, Breakfast Nook, Enclosed Back Porch, Central Heat & Air Conditioning, Single Car Attached Garage, Single Car Detached Garage w/ Large Workshop.

130 Nichols Street (11:00 AM) – This 2 Bedroom, 1 Bathroom House Situated on a Large Pass-Through Lot Includes Living Room, Eat-In Kitchen, Foyer, Enclosed Back Porch, Central Heat & Air Conditioning, Outdoor Storage Building.

211 Nichols Street (12:00 Noon) – This 2 Bedroom, 1 Bath Home includes Living Room, Eat-In Kitchen, Central Heat & Air Conditioning, Enclosed Back Porch.

Open Houses – Sunday, July 19th, 2:00 - 4:00 PM

NOTICE: Potential bidders may conduct a Lead Based Paint Test; the successful bidder must sign a waiver at the auction. Announcements made at the sale will take precedence over any prior oral or written statements. Not responsible for accidents. Sold AS IS-WHERE IS with no warranties expressed or implied.

TERMS: 10% down at auction, balance and possession with deed on or before August 28th, 2026. TAXES- The 2026 real estate taxes will be prorated to the day of closing. There will be a 10% Buyers Premium added to the winning bid to determine the final sale price.

REMEMBER: TIME- 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, & 12:00 Noon
DATE- Saturday, July 25th, 2026
PLACE- 208 Beech Street, Danville, KY 40422

Say NO to News Deserts

Support your local newspaper!

V.I.P. AUCTION CO.
317 West Main • Danville, KY • (859) 236-1852
www.vipauctionky.com
George Coomer, CAI - Principal Auctioneer • Nina Kirkland - Principal Broker
Jerry Asbery - Auctioneer • Robert Hignite - Apprentice Auctioneer
“We’ll Do The Crying and You Do The Buying”