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Having an increase in wages as a dsp would be key to my future in this industry. Its challenging to make minimum wage for something that is so essential of a task in our society especially when housing is not available for workers at this income level. We almost all need care at some point in our lives so dsps are doing vital work and deserve to make enough wages to afford housing in their area.

In order to maintain a socially distanced facility work hours have changed from ~130 hours every 2 weeks to ~224 hours every 2 weeks for the past year. I have pay stubs to back this up. Having a social life and family time is not something I have been able to do unless on vacation or when I was recovering for 2 and a half months after having a baby last year. If I was to ever just work 40 hours I could not make enough money to survive for long.

It does not feel as though Maine values it's dsp workers. Although most people I meet have respect for the job I do and are shocked at how low the wages are for the average worker. I have been told "I don't know how you do it" so many times. I am not alone. I know many others in my position who feel the same way.

A minimum increase of 125% of the minimum wage would be a great place to start in helping retain employees, increase recognition, increase care level for clients, and help put respect and dignity into the title of dsp.