

# About the Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services Program (RYPAS)

## RYPAS Funding

In 1999 The West Virginia Legislature enacted the Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services Act to expand personal assistance services for persons with severe disabilities to enable them to **live in their own homes and communities** in lieu of more restrictive settings. Recipients of the RYPAS program are able to make decisions regarding the provision of services including, but not limited to, hiring, training, managing, paying, and terminating an assistant's employment.

In the state treasury a **special fund was created and designated** the "Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services Fund". This fund is an appropriated account within the division of rehabilitation services and all moneys are expended exclusively for the purposes of RYPAS.

These funds **may be used only** for the planning, designing, delivering and administering of personal assistance services and training.

Funds are disbursed in a manner that **ensures maximum consumer control** of the services provided under the program.

As of August 2019, the average nursing home cost for an individual in West Virginia is \$123,370 per year, according to [www.payingforseniorcare.com](http://www.payingforseniorcare.com). The current average cost for an individual on RYPAS living comfortably in their own home is \$18,336 per year.

## Who is Ron Yost?

**Ron Yost** was an advocate for disability rights in West Virginia for fifteen years.

This program was named in his memory by the legislators who sponsored the bill that created it. Ron was an individual with a severe disability himself, a spinal cord injury resulting in quadriplegia. He understood the need for such services and how much difference having an attendant or personal assistant can make in the independence and quality of life of a person with a disability.

**He was involved in establishing** the Employment Attendant Care Program, operated by the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services, and advocated for the Personal Assistance Services (PAS) program that would later bear his name. He had a great impact on his community in Huntington and on the disability community across West Virginia.

Thank you, Ron, for your **advocacy efforts and service** to the disability community in West Virginia.

## About

The Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services (RYPAS) Act, was passed by the WV Legislature in **1999**.

The statewide program is managed by a seven member, **consumer controlled** board. Board members are people with disabilities, most of whom have their own personal assistants.

RYPAS enables people with severe disabilities to live in their **own homes** and communities.

RYPAS recipients have **control** over their own care, become employers, pay taxes and **contribute** to society.

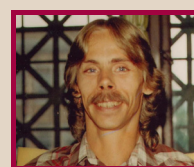
## How It Works

To qualify for RYPAS the applicant must have a severe disability that affects one or more major life activity, and:

- have a disability that will last for 12 months or longer
- need assistance to take care of the essential tasks of daily living
- not be currently receiving personal assistance services through any Medicaid program
- **meet the responsibilities of an employer** or have a designee that can
- manage your own financial and legal affairs or have a designee that can
- meet the income guidelines for adjusted annual income

The RYPAS program provides reimbursements to qualified applicants to pay personal assistants they hire. Recipients **may directly hire** an assistant or purchase services through a provider agency.

You may request an application by contacting our office or downloading it from the WVSILC website at [www.wvsilc.org](http://www.wvsilc.org).



# Impact of the Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services Program (RYPAS)

The RYPAS program provides financial assistance to **West Virginians** with severe disabilities so they may hire personal assistants to help them with everyday tasks that they cannot perform on their own.

Past qualified applicants have died while waiting for RYPAS services.

More funding is required to eliminate the waiting list so we may keep these **West Virginians** in their homes.

Recipients of RYPAS **employ** fellow West Virginians, pay state income taxes, are **active** in the community, **contribute** to society, are **healthier** and happier and **live longer** than their counterparts in nursing homes or institutions.

According to the latest information from [genworth.com](http://genworth.com), **nursing home costs** for an individual in West Virginia is **\$145,632** per year for a private room, and \$136,510 per year for a semi-private room. The current average cost for an individual on RYPAS living comfortably in their home is **\$24,648** per year.

For this 2021 FY, RYPAS has served **16** West Virginians with disabilities, providing reimbursements of **\$254,536**. Because of **COVID** restrictions, we can only reduce the waiting list when someone leaves the program.

For more information about the RYPAS program, visit [www.wvsilc.org](http://www.wvsilc.org) or call the **WV Statewide Independent Living Council** at 304.766.4624 or 855.855.9743



In Fiscal Year 2017 RYPAS received **\$54,870** in cuts directly affecting the number of individuals the program is able to keep in their homes.

West Virginia has the **highest percentage** of citizens with disabilities in the nation. It also has the fastest growing elderly population in the nation.

RYPAS is a good way for West Virginia to **help serve the needs** of people with disabilities and the elderly.

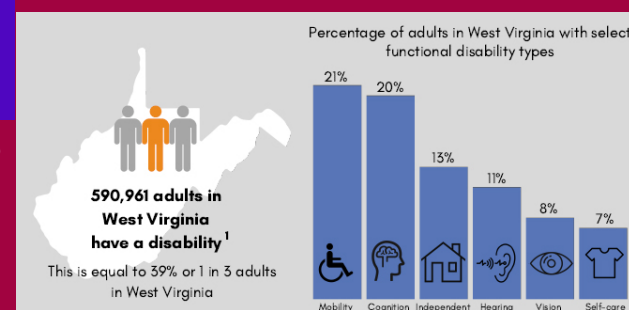
We call on the WV Legislators to reverse budget cuts to the RYPAS program to its previous **\$400,000**. Additionally, increase the program budget by **\$100,000** for an investment of **\$500,000**.



With this assistance, individuals are able to **live in their own homes** and communities.



Recipients of the RYPAS program report they would not be able to **remain in their own homes** without the financial support the program provides and they would be **forced into a nursing home** or another institutionalized setting.



## 2021 Annual Report July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

This Annual Report is respectfully submitted to:

- The Honorable James C. Justice, Governor
- The Honorable Craig Blair, President of the Senate
- The Honorable Roger Hanshaw, Speaker of the House
- Lee Cassis, Clerk, West Virginia Senate
- Steve Harrison, Clerk, West Virginia House of Delegates

Presented by:  
The Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services Board  
The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services

## Financial Overview

Funding	2020	2021
Budget Appropriation	333,828	333,828
Previous FY Carryover	76,363	111,151
Unicare Gift Carryover	2,185	2,185
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>412,376</b>	<b>447,164</b>

Expenditures	2020	2021
Recipient Reimbursements	200,543	254,536
Administrative Costs	22,134	21,546
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>222,677</b>	<b>276,082</b>

Recipient Overview	2020	2021
Total Recipients		
Number of Recipients	12	16
Average Age	63	65
Average Hours	228*	236*
Average Cost Each	\$1,653*	\$2,054*

Waiting List	2020	2021
Currently Waiting	3	8
Average Age	62	63
Average Hours	425*	311*
Average Funding Needed	\$3,047*	\$2,719*

\*Per Month

Counties Represented	Recipients	Wait List
Cabell	1	
Grant		1
Harrison	3	
Jefferson	1	
Marshall	1	
Mercer	1	
Mineral	1	
Monongalia	1	1
Preston		2
Putnam		2
Raleigh	1	1
Wood	3	
<b>Total Recipients</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>





## Program Summary

### Funding

The appropriation for the RYPAS Program during FY-2021 was \$333,828. Through contracts with the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services and the RYPAS Board, the Statewide Independent Living Council administered the funds for the operations of the Board, provided staff support to the Board and the Program, and served as the fiscal agent processing reimbursements to RYPAS recipients.

### Recipient Information:

During the fiscal year 2021, a total of 16 individuals received personal assistance services supported by the RYPAS program. Three people left the program; one person moved out of state and two people passed away. Three people in turn were added to the program. The RYPAS Board increased the reimbursement rate from \$7.25 per hour to \$8.75 per hour to match the state minimum wage.

As of 6/30/21 thirteen (13) recipients from ten (10) counties were receiving reimbursements<sup>1</sup>

- 1,348 hours per reimbursement period approved at \$8.75 per hour – 11 recipients
- 185.5 hours per reimbursement period approved at \$8.40 per hour – 2 recipient

### Waiting List Information:

As of 6/30/21: Seven (7) applicants, from five (5) counties, were waiting for services<sup>2</sup>

- Estimated 911 hours per reimbursement period needed at \$8.75 per hour
- Reimbursement period (26 periods/year) amount needed: \$7,971.25
- Annual reimbursement amount needed: \$207,252.50

## RYPAS 2021 FYE Financial Report

Line Item	FY 2021 Carryover Budget	FY 2021 Budget	Total Expenditures 7-1-20 to 6-30-21	Balance 6-30-21
RYPAS Reimbursements	111,151	310,461	142,597	
Virtual Assessments			788	167,076
SILC Administrative Fee		6,676	6,676	0
Contract Staff		14,060	14,060	0
Board Travel/Conference calls		657	0	657
Staff Travel		100	0	100
Board Training/Consultants		434	0	434
Printing		890	440	450
Postage		350	370	-20
Marketing		100	0	100
Misc.		100	0	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>111,151</b>	<b>333,828</b>	<b>164,931</b>	<b>111,151<sup>3</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup>based on sliding scale

<sup>2</sup>estimates prior to functional assessment

<sup>3</sup>details available upon request

## Board Recommendations

The RYPAS Board, after reviewing the satisfaction surveys, analyzing the current recipient list as well as the wait list, and studying the life cycle of a RYPAS applicant, recommends to the West Virginia Legislature the following to improve the RYPAS program and the lives of the individuals who receive RYPAS services.

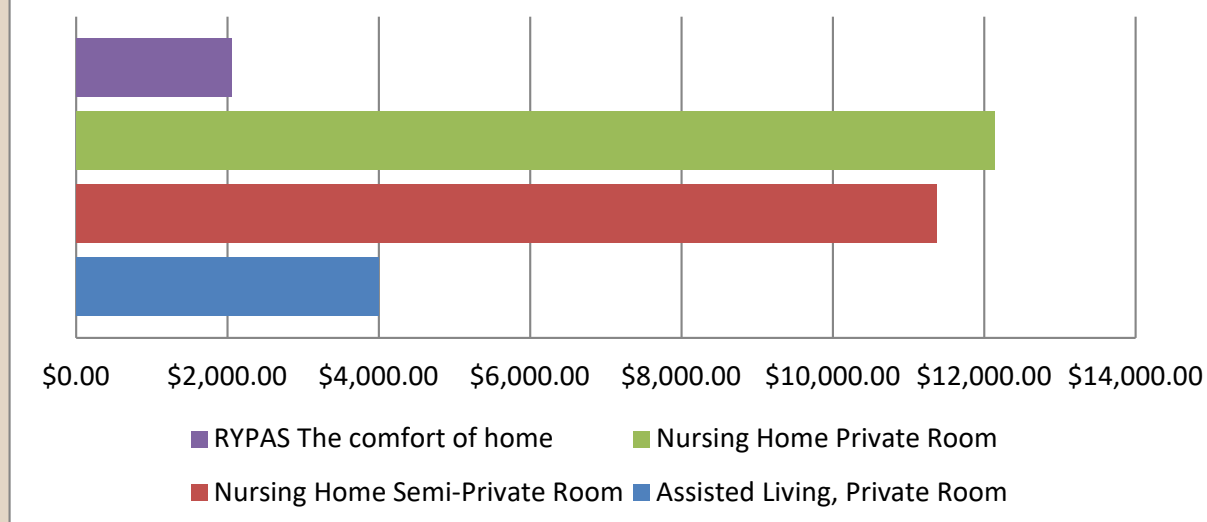
An increase in funding to:

- maintain/increase the reimbursement rate (currently \$8.75/hr) to keep in line with the state minimum wage, which will increase the likelihood that RYPAS Recipients will be able to find competent, reliable, and high quality personal assistants.
- perform outreach activities throughout the state to educate West Virginians about the program, who may qualify for RYPAS services
- perform outreach activities throughout the state to educate West Virginia organizations about the program, who serve individuals that may qualify RYPAS services
- to increase the number of individuals and counties served in West Virginia

The funding for these activities are recommended to enhance and restore RYPAS to previous levels that have not been realized in many years. Funding cuts, the reimbursement rate not keeping up with minimum wage, and no cost of living increases since the inception of RYPAS, have all been detrimental factors to the individuals who rely on the program that allow them to remain in their homes and communities instead of an institutional setting. This proves especially true for those RYPAS applicants who never make it off the waiting list.

Please increase RYPAS funding so together we can improve the lives of West Virginians with disabilities.

## 2020 WV Monthly Cost of Care



The world's population is aging at a faster rate than ever before and people are living longer. Every day until 2030, 10,000 Baby Boomers will turn 65 and 7 out of 10 people will require long term care in their lifetime.

~Genworth.com

## RYPAS Satisfaction Survey FY 2021

The RYPAS Board conducted a survey of consumer satisfaction with all the recipients of the RYPAS Program in West Virginia. Recipients were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the RYPAS Program and how RYPAS has affected their life and ability to live independently in their homes and communities.

The surveys were distributed to all RYPAS Recipients who were served during the October 2020 to September 2021 time period. A total of 13 surveys were mailed to recipients, and 13 were completed and returned. Thus, the response rate was 100% (13/13). An all time record response rate.

This section of the RYPAS Annual Report summarizes the responses to the survey.

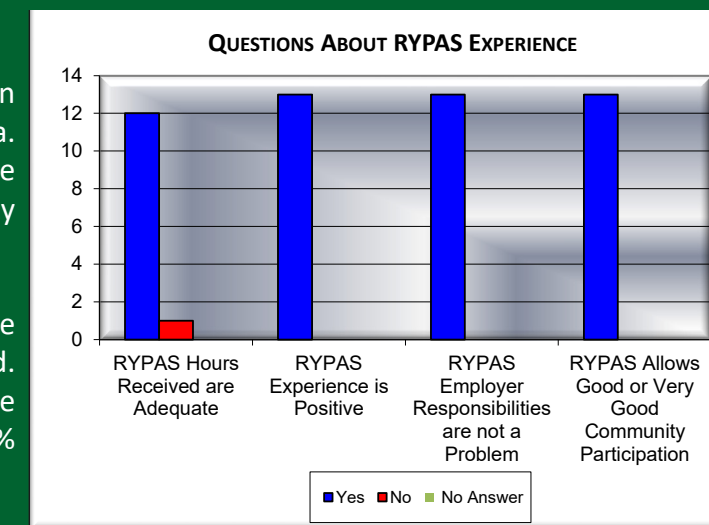


Chart A

### RYPAS Recipient Experience

As Chart A shows, 12 of 13 respondents stated that the hours they receive from RYPAS adequately meet their needs. All 13 respondents indicate their RYPAS experience is a positive one, employer responsibilities of being a RYPAS recipient are not a problem, and all 13 respondents also indicated that the RYPAS program allowed for good or very good community participation.

### What I Like Least About RYPAS

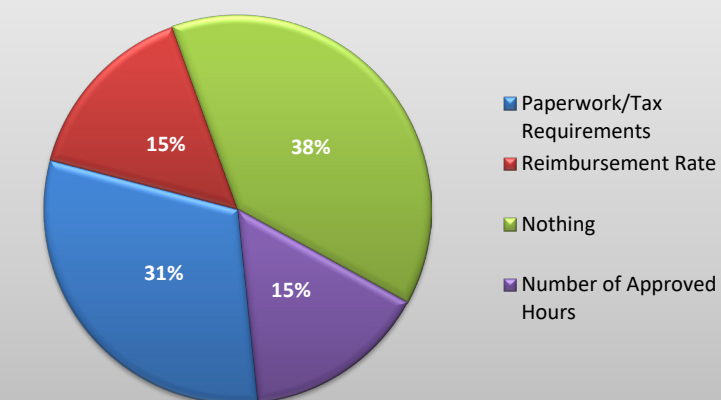


Chart B

which the RYPAS Board was able to raise from \$7.25 to \$8.75 per hour matching state minimum wage.

Although we cannot control IRS tax requirements, with your help, we can increase the reimbursement rate even more by increasing the funding provided to the RYPAS program.

### What RYPAS Recipients Like Most

As shown in Chart C, the majority of RYPAS recipients are simply grateful that the RYPAS program allows them the control to select and direct their personal assistants.

Recipients of the program also indicated that they enjoy the independence achieved through RYPAS reimbursements.

### What RYPAS Recipients Like Least

Chart B shows the RYPAS recipients who responded to the satisfaction survey least liked the paperwork and/or tax obligations and the reimbursement rate,

### What I Like Most About RYPAS

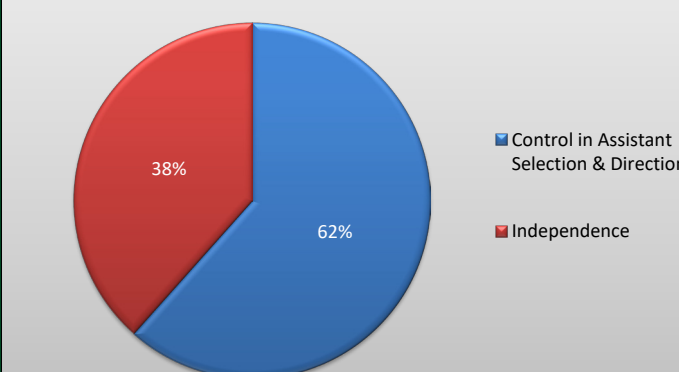


Chart C