



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

2023 Public Policy Priorities

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council creates change to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need.

This is our mission and we do that when we work with and advise leaders in state government and the state legislature.

Education

- Promote policies that improve outcomes for students with disabilities. This means they have access to the general education curriculum, appropriate assessments, and the services and supports they need to succeed.

- Advocate for school policies and practices that help staff understand and respond to trauma. This creates a positive, safe, and supportive school where students learn, and they are less likely to go to prison after school.

Trauma is when something bad happens. It may have a lasting impact on a person.

- Advocate for policies and practices that better support children and youth with developmental disabilities and their families during all academic transitions.

Community Supports

- Advocate for a good plan and funding to reduce the Developmental Disabilities Administration's (DDA) waiting list for community services.
- Ensure that DDA policies and practices support all transitioning youth and that there is enough funding to put the policies and practices into action.

Transitioning Youth (TY) are young adults with developmental disabilities who need support to get a job, go to college, and participate in their communities.

- Advocate for service provider rates that ensure high quality supports.
- Improve services and supports for people with developmental disabilities.
- Support projects and policies that increase opportunities for people to live, work, and meaningfully engage in their communities.

<p style="text-align: center;">Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to have jobs they want, in the community, alongside co-workers without disabilities. • Increase support for community-based employment. • Advocate for policies and practices that better support students with developmental disabilities to explore different careers and have work experiences so they are more prepared to work after school. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Healthcare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support medical, dental, and behavioral healthcare policies and services that meet the needs of children and adults with developmental disabilities.
<p style="text-align: center;">Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for the closure of all state-funded institutions for people with intellectual disabilities. • Support expansion of high-quality community options. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Family Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to formal and informal supports for people with developmental disabilities and their families. <p><i>Informal supports are provided by family, friends, and the community. Formal supports are provided by paid professionals.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support efforts to make sure the new paid family and medical leave law is put into action effectively and efficiently and works well for everyone, including people with developmental disabilities and the people and agencies that support them. • Advocate for a good plan to reduce and improve the Autism Waiver registry, and improve the quality of services so more children and their families get the services they need.
<p style="text-align: center;">Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for policies that increase access to reliable and accessible transportation throughout Maryland. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Leadership and Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support people with developmental disabilities to be leaders and advocates so they can shape public policies, programs, and services that affect their lives.
<p style="text-align: center;">Supported Decision Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support efforts to educate people with developmental disabilities, families, and others about supported decision-making, which is a way for adults to get help from other people to make choices and decisions for themselves. 	

Diversity	Housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support efforts that reach diverse and underserved people and regions of the state. • Make sure information and resources are accessible. This includes plain language, different languages, large print, and braille. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for policies, practices, and funding that support more housing options that are affordable and accessible to people with disabilities and allow people with and without developmental disabilities to live in the community together.
Early Childhood Education	Criminal Justice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to early childhood education where children with and without disabilities can learn and play together so all children are ready for school. Advocate for the services and support necessary to make this possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for policies and practices in jails and prisons so they better support people with developmental disabilities. • Support efforts that increase what professionals in the criminal justice system know and understand about people with developmental disabilities. This includes attorneys, judges, professionals in the court system, and people who work in jails and prisons.
Civil Rights	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for laws and policies that ensure people with developmental disabilities have the same rights as other Marylanders. 	
Recreation	Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead efforts to increase access to parks, playgrounds, and other recreation where people with and without disabilities can play together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead efforts to increase access to technology for people with disabilities. <p>Issues are listed in random order.</p>

The Council can provide information, perspective, ideas, and analysis about how legislation will affect people with developmental disabilities and their families.

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The Council is a statewide organization established through the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act. One of the Council's roles is to inform legislators about how legislation and budget decisions affect the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families.

This document is available in alternate formats.