



MARYLAND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COALITION

Dedicated to the rights and quality of life for people with developmental disabilities in Maryland

Support Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and their Families

The following legislation affects individuals with developmental disabilities and their families:

HB 336/SB 592: Maryland Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Program - Materials for Individualized Education Program Meetings

Requires a local school system to provide to parents, at least annually at individualized education program (IEP) meetings, written information about Maryland ABLE. This information may be given to parents electronically or by hand.

- Maryland ABLE is a way for people with disabilities to save money. It can help people save for everyday needs and prepare for the future without losing federal, state, or local benefits.
- The Maryland ABLE Act was signed in 2016, but many people are still unaware of what Maryland ABLE is and how it may help them save money for their needs without affecting their benefits. This bill addresses that by requiring schools to provide parents with information about ABLE Accounts at least annually.
- Sponsor amendments also require local school systems to provide the information to parents at Individual Family Service Plan and 504 Plan meetings every year.

HB 432: Courts and Judicial Proceedings and Criminal Procedure - Technical Corrections - References to Intellectual Disability

Replaces references to “mental retardation” with references to “intellectual disability” in certain provisions of law.

- In 2009, Maryland passed Rosa’s Law and replaced outdated language with inclusive, person first language for people with intellectual disabilities. Rosa’s Law only changed language in certain sections of Maryland law. The Courts and Judicial Proceedings and Criminal Procedure statutes were notably missing.
- Fifteen years later, it is time for Maryland to take the last step to eliminate the use of the outdated, medical language that is too often used as an insult. Continuing to remove old references helps decrease any harmful effects and social stigma associated with the term.

DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES (DORS) BILLS

HB 1163/SB 859: State Department of Education - Division of Rehabilitation Services - Funding

Allows the Governor to include, in the annual budget, funding for the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) in the State Department of Education to ensure the state maximizes its ability to receive federal funds for DORS services.

- The Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) offers programs and services to help people with disabilities go to work.
- In order use the Federal funds provided to Maryland, the State must provide a certain amount of State funds. This is called the State Match and is required by the federal government.

HB 60: Rehabilitation Services - Disability - Definition

Changes the definition of "disability" that DORS uses to provide rehabilitation services in the State to align with the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Defines "disability" as any physical or mental impairment that constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment or independent living.

- The proposed definition aligns with federal law. The disability community advocated for Federal language changes that removed mention of "defect," "infirmities," and "incapacitation" which are outdated and offensive.
- While disability may result in the need for additional supports and services to meaningfully engage in employment or independent living, disability is a natural part of the human experience and does not diminish the right of people to meaningfully participate in society.

For additional information about the bills highlighted here, please contact:

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