



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

Annual Work Plan: Year 1 (FFY 2027)

October 1, 2026 - September 30, 2027

What is an Annual Work Plan?

The Council describes our goals in a plan we develop every 5 years. It is called our “State Plan.” Goals describe what the Council wants to see happen. The State Plan also includes the activities the Council will work on to reach our goals.

The Council cannot work on all the activities every year. We have work plans that describe what we will work on each year. The information below is about the first year, called “Year 1.” This covers October 1, 2026 – September 30, 2027.

Words to Know

- **Goals** describe what the Council wants to happen.
- **Objectives** are the steps that will help us reach our goals.
- **Activities** are more specific actions we will take to reach each objective.
- **Expected Outputs** are things like trainings, documents, or the number of people who learned something because of Council activities.
- **Expected Outcomes** describe the changes that will happen as a result of Council activities. This is the impact the Council will have.
- **Data Evaluation & Measurement** describes what the Council will do to understand what progress has been made on our objectives.





Goal 1

Children with developmental disabilities and their families have access to early supports, quality education, and services that prepare them for success in school and adulthood.

Objective 1.1: Increase the number of families who understand and use early intervention services and community supports that help children with disabilities take part in everyday activities with other children.

Major Activities:

1. Use Council funds for programs and trainings that increase knowledge of families about the benefits of early intervention, inclusive practices, and high expectations.
2. Partner with the Department of Veterans and Military Families to expand access to resources for military families.
3. Conduct outreach and research about best practices for educating healthcare professionals.

Expected Outputs:

1. At least 20 family members receive information, resources, or training on early intervention, inclusive practices, and high expectations.
2. 5 outreach efforts and training events for families.
3. 1 web-based resource is launched to provide information to military families.
4. The Council partners with at least 3 organizations to learn about best practices for educating healthcare professionals.
5. The Council identifies at least 1 best practice to educate healthcare professionals.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Family members are better able to say what service they want or what is important to them.



2. Family members are satisfied with training and related activities.
3. A best practice implemented to transform fragmented information for military families.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Requests for proposals developed and widely shared. Project(s) selected (outcome).
2. Review grantee reports for participation and implementation progress (output); use impact surveys with all major activities (outcome)
3. Track web-based engagement (output).

Objective 1.2: Improve access to early care and education for children with developmental disabilities, including those in rural areas.

Major Activities:

1. Advocate for policy changes that improve access to early care and education for children with developmental disabilities.
2. Advocate for incentives to increase access to child care, early childhood education, and out-of-school time programs in rural areas.
3. Advocate for full-day, publicly funded pre-K programs where children with and without disabilities learn together
4. Fund technical assistance for licensed child care providers, out of school time programs, and pre-K teachers to help them better support children with disabilities. Advocate for the MSDE to use more funds to do the same.

Expected Outputs:

1. The Council serves on 4 Committees, workgroups, or advisory councils that recommend improvements to policies and practices.
2. At least 2 incentives or policies created or changed.
3. At least 5 child care, Pre-K, and other programs receive training or technical assistance.



4. At least 50 early care and education staff receive training or technical assistance.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Early care and education policies improved outcomes for children with developmental disabilities.
2. The state improves and implements incentives or policies that increase access to early care and education.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Review quarterly Council status reports for committee, workgroup, and advisory council updates (output); as well as engagement with policy creation and/or changes (outcome)
2. Review grantee reports for participation and implementation progress (output); use impact surveys with all major activities (outcome).

Objective 1.3: Improve how students with developmental disabilities are educated and prepared for life after high school.

Major Activities:

1. Advocate for statewide teacher preparation and professional development requirements that support inclusive education.
2. Advocate for improvements to policies and programs that prepare students with disabilities for life after high school that are consistent throughout the state.
3. Partner with schools and agencies to provide information and training to students with developmental disabilities and their families about options after high school.
4. Identify opportunities to expand inclusive higher education at more colleges and universities across Maryland.



Expected Outputs:

1. The state changes at least 2 policies or procedures.
2. At least 2 new partnerships lead to students and their families receiving more information.
3. At least 50 students and their families get information about options after high school.
4. The Council identifies at least 1 opportunity to expand inclusive higher education.

Expected Outcomes:

1. 1 policy improvement to teacher preparation requirements.
2. 1 policy or program improvement related to transition after high school.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Review quarterly Council status reports for advocacy efforts and partnership engagement.
2. Review grantee reports for information resources and training for students with developmental disabilities and their families about options after high school (output).



Goal 2

Adults with developmental disabilities have employment, housing, and transportation options so they can live, work, and be part of their communities.

Objective 2.1: Increase employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

Major Activities:

1. Support and educate state agencies and businesses to change their policies and practices so more people with disabilities get and keep jobs.
2. Participate in the newly formed Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy.
3. Engage in and support communication strategies for people with developmental disabilities and their families that increase awareness and understanding of employment options where people with and without disabilities work together.
4. Develop and provide information to educators, service coordinators, and providers to increase awareness and understanding of employment options where people with and without disabilities work together.
5. Focus small grant funding on projects that provide technical assistance, peer support, and other activities to decrease barriers to employment for people with developmental disabilities.
6. In collaboration with stakeholders in rural areas and through research about best practices, identify approaches that address challenges unique to rural areas.

Expected Outputs:

1. The Council serves on 2 Committees, workgroups or advisory councils that recommend improvements to policies and practices.
2. At least 4 state agencies and businesses educated.
3. At least 2 state agencies and businesses change their practices.



4. At least 1 resource shared about employment options.
5. At least 100 people receive information about employment options.
6. At least 2 projects funded that decrease barriers to employment for people with developmental disabilities.

Expected Outcomes:

1. 1 Statewide practice or policy improved as a result of committee, workgroup or advisory council efforts.
2. 2 practices or policies improved to support employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.
3. People report greater knowledge, confidence, or ability to pursue or help people pursue employment.
4. People are satisfied with Council supported projects.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Review quarterly Council status reports for committee, workgroup, and advisory council updates (output); as well as engagement with policy creation and/or changes (outcome).
2. Review quarterly Council communications report reviewed for:
 - a. number of people receiving communication materials; and
 - b. number of resources shared (output).
3. Requests for proposals developed and widely shared. Project(s) selected (outcome).
4. Review grantee reports for participation and implementation progress (output); use impact survey with all major activities (outcome).



Objective 2.2: Increase access to affordable, accessible housing and transportation.

Major Activities:

1. Advocate for policies and incentives that support affordable and accessible housing.
2. Work with state and local agencies to make sure their policies and practices address the needs of people with disabilities.
3. Share information and support training for people with developmental disabilities, families, coordinators of community services, and others about housing options.
4. Advocate for policies that expand transportation options statewide and address transportation gaps for people with developmental disabilities, especially in rural areas.

Expected Outputs:

1. At least 2 housing and transportation policies created or changed.
2. At least 2 partnerships with agencies.
3. At least 100 people receive information or training on housing options.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Housing and transportation policies and practices are improved to better meet the needs of people with developmental disabilities.
2. Improved housing and transportation policies and practices are implemented.
3. More people with developmental disabilities can say what housing options they want and need.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Review quarterly Council status reports for state and local engagement (output) and for policy creation and/or changes (outcome).



2. Requests for proposals developed and widely shared. Project(s) selected (outcome).
3. Review grantee reports for participation and implementation progress (output); use impact surveys with all major activities (outcome).



Goal 3

People with developmental disabilities have the services, supports, and opportunities they need to live well in their communities.

Objective 3.1: *Increase the number of children and adults with developmental disabilities who receive the home and community supports they need and want.*

Major Activities:

1. Advocate for policy changes that reduce waitlists for the Developmental Disabilities and Autism Waivers.
2. Advocate for policy, practice, program, law, and regulation changes that support people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need.
3. Provide information to people with developmental disabilities and their families about local and state services and programs.
4. Support efforts that help people with disabilities get and keep technology so they can work, use telehealth, and rely less on support services.
5. Support DD Day at the Legislature with the DD Coalition.
6. Support statewide Community of Practice for Supporting Families (CoP) by helping to identify and plan statewide CoP projects and activities.

Expected Outputs:

1. The Council serves on 5 committees, workgroups or advisory councils that make recommendations for improvements.
2. The Council's advocacy results in at least 5 policies created or changed.
3. The Council's advocacy results in at least 5 laws and regulations created or changed.
4. The Council supports at least 5 promising practices.
5. At least 500 people attend DD Day at the Legislature.
6. The Council educates 188 legislators.



7. The CoP starts or improves at least 2 statewide projects or activities.

Expected Outcomes:

1. At least 10 laws, regulations, and policies improve.
2. More people with developmental disabilities receive community services and supports including access to technology.
3. Services and support for children and adults with developmental disabilities improve.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Review quarterly Council status reports for:
 - a. number of CoP projects and activities supported;
 - b. number of improvements to policies;
 - c. number of laws and regulations improved;
 - d. number of promising and best practices supported;
 - e. number of legislators educated; and
 - f. number of DD Day participants (output).
2. Review quarterly Council status reports for:
 - a. policy changes created and implemented; and
 - b. number of regulation changes created and implemented (outcome).

Objective 3.2: Increase the availability and quality of community based supports for people with developmental disabilities by strengthening the direct support workforce.

Major Activities:

1. Fund and support training for direct support professionals (DSPs) and coordinators of community services (CCSs).
2. Advocate for incentives to increase the number of DSPs in rural communities.



Expected Outputs:

1. At least 100 DSPs and CCSs trained.
2. At least 1 incentive implemented to recruit or retain DSPs and CCSs.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increase in workforce capacity.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Requests for proposals developed and widely shared. Project(s) selected (outcome).
2. Review grantee reports for participation and implementation progress (output); use impact surveys with all major activities (outcome).
3. Review quarterly Council status reports for number of incentives implemented.

Objective 3.3: Improve access to medical, dental, behavioral, and reproductive healthcare for people with developmental disabilities.

Major Activities:

1. Advocate for medical, dental, behavioral, and reproductive healthcare policies and services that meet the needs of children and adults with developmental disabilities.
2. Advocate for increased access to telehealth and dental care in rural communities.
3. Advocate for incentives to increase the number of medical, dental, and behavioral health professionals in rural communities.
4. Identify colleges and universities to partner with to train healthcare professionals to effectively treat and communicate with people with developmental disabilities.

Expected Outputs:

1. At least 1 healthcare policy or service improved or expanded.



2. At least 1 partnership developed to train healthcare professionals.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increase in access to healthcare, dental, and related services.

Data Evaluation & Measurement

1. Review quarterly Council status reports for:
 - a. number of policies improved or expanded; and
 - b. colleges and universities identified.

Objective 3.4: Increase opportunities for recreation and community connections for children and adults with developmental disabilities.

**Community connection means having relationships and being a part of the community.*

Major Activities:

1. Help communities increase the number of recreation spaces, including playgrounds, that can be used by people with and without disabilities.
2. Partner with and support the Department of Natural Resources to plan and design a pilot playground at Janes Island State Park.
3. Train Maryland Park Service personnel in making parks and open spaces welcoming and enjoyable for people with developmental disabilities.
4. Advocate for policies and programs that help people connect with others and feel part of their communities to reduce social isolation
5. Use social media to inform people about in-person and virtual recreation opportunities.

Expected Outputs:

1. At least 1 inclusive recreation space planned.
2. At least 25 people trained.



3. At least 1 policy or program that address social isolation.
4. At least 150 people reached by outreach promoting recreation opportunities.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Council efforts lead to program and practice improvements that increase access to recreation and community connections.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Review quarterly Council status reports for:
 - a. number of improvements to policies; and
 - b. number of systems change activities (output).
2. Progress on pilot playground.
3. Review quarterly Council status reports for the number of promising and best practices improved and number of professionals trained (outcome).
4. Track website and social media engagement related to recreation (output).

Objective 3.5: Improve safety for people with developmental disabilities by reducing risks in the community.

Major Activities:

1. Advocate for policies, practices, guidance, and laws that improve water safety.
2. Advocate for policies, practices, and laws that decrease the risk of wandering and elopement for children with disabilities.
3. Partner with Maryland Department of Disabilities to finalize and launch model IDD curriculum to support professionals in understanding how to interact, accommodate, and respond to the needs of people with developmental disabilities.
4. Support training for first responders on how to communicate with and treat people with disabilities.



Expected Outputs:

1. At least 1 safety-related policy, practice, or law improved.
2. At least 1 curriculum developed.
3. At least 50 first responders trained.

Expected Outcomes:

1. At least 2 safety-related policies, practices, or laws implemented.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Review quarterly Council status reports for the number of policies and practices improved or changed (outcome).
2. Review quarterly grant reports for the number of first responders trained.



Goal 4

People with developmental disabilities and families are leaders, advocates, and informed decision-makers.

Objective 4.1: *Increase opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to be effective advocates and leaders.*

Major Activities:

1. Support and fund People on the Go Maryland (POG) to provide leadership training to other people with developmental disabilities, educate policy makers, build partnerships and advocate on issues to bring about change.
2. Under their grant, POG supports people to serve on coalitions that include different types of people with disabilities and different backgrounds.

Expected Outputs:

1. POG provides at least 4 trainings.
2. POG trains 50 people with developmental disabilities.
3. Identify at least 1 coalition that includes different types of people with disabilities and different backgrounds.

Expected Outcomes:

1. At least 4 trainings are implemented.
2. People with developmental disabilities increase their leadership skills and use those skills in the community.
3. People with developmental disabilities are satisfied with POG trainings.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Review meeting and event sign in sheets for participation (output).
2. Review POG quarterly progress reports for information on trainings held (output).



3. Add questions related to POG activities to the Impact Survey and use with all major activities.

Objective 4.2: Prepare and support people with developmental disabilities and families to take part in advocacy and leadership activities.

Major Activities:

1. Fund and help lead the final year of Maryland Partners in Policymaking (Partners) for people with developmental disabilities and their family members.
2. Work with The Arc Maryland, POG, and Partners graduates to begin to build a statewide network of leadership program graduates.
3. Provide small grants to local and statewide organizations to increase knowledge and skills that people with developmental disabilities and their families use to advocate.
4. Fund projects and activities that educate people with developmental disabilities and their families about supported decision-making and alternatives to guardianship.

Expected Outputs:

1. 25 people with developmental disabilities and family members participate in Partners in Policymaking.
2. At least 50 people with developmental disabilities participate in small grant activities supported by the Council to increase their knowledge and skills. This includes people from different backgrounds and different parts of Maryland.
3. At least 300 family members participate in small grant activities sponsored by the Council to increase their knowledge and skills. This includes people from different backgrounds and different parts of Maryland.
4. Fund at least 1 project or activity that educates people with DD and their families about supported decision-making and alternatives to guardianship



Expected Outcomes:

1. People with developmental disabilities increase their advocacy because of Partners.
2. Family members increase their advocacy because of Partners.
3. People with developmental disabilities and family members are now participating in advocacy and leadership activities because of their participation in Partners.
4. People with developmental disabilities increase their knowledge.
5. 300 family members increase their knowledge about issues that are important to them.
6. People with developmental disabilities and family members are satisfied with Council-supported projects.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Review grantee reports for information about participation (output).
2. Review quarterly Council status reports for the number of small grants funded (output).
3. Review grantee reports for demographic information about the participants in small grant activities (output). This includes information like race, age, disability, and county.
4. Review grantee quarterly reports and Council surveys for information about:
 - a. people with developmental disabilities increasing their knowledge and skills;
 - b. family members increasing their knowledge and skills;
 - c. people with developmental disabilities and family members increasing their participation in advocacy and leadership;
 - d. people with developmental disabilities and family member satisfaction with Council activities (outcome).



Objective 4.3: Increase the number of people with developmental disabilities and families that receive information in ways that are easy to understand.

Major Activities:

1. Provide Council resources in multiple languages and plain language.
2. Use Council funds to help other agencies and organizations translate their resources into plain language and different languages.
3. Advocate for state agencies to provide their resources in multiple languages and plain language.
4. Share information about emerging issues that are important to people with developmental disabilities.

Expected Outputs:

1. At least 2,600 people receive materials meant to increase awareness.
2. Widely share at least 10 resources on priority topics.
3. At least 25 more people follow the Council on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and/or Instagram.
4. At least 50 people receive translated Council publications and resources.
5. Council participates in intra-agency collaboration to provide resources in multiple languages and plain language.

Expected Outcomes:

1. People with developmental disabilities increase their knowledge and awareness of issues that matter to them.
2. Families increase their knowledge and awareness of issues that matter to them and their family members.

Data Evaluation & Measurement:

1. Review quarterly Council status reports for:
 - a. the number of people that receive Council communications;



- b. types of communications;
 - c. resources the Council shared widely;
 - d. resources and materials produced; and
 - e. social media data (output).
2. Review quarterly Council status reports for the number of people with developmental disabilities and families who increased their knowledge and awareness of issues that matter to them (outcome).