

Our Plan for 2027–2031

This is a short, plain-language summary of the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council State Plan.

The Council's work is organized into three goals:

1. Advocacy
2. Systems Change
3. Capacity Building

The full State Plan has more detail. This version explains the main ideas in a simpler way.

Goal 1: Advocacy

The Council wants people with developmental disabilities and their families to have a stronger voice in decisions that affect their lives.

We will work on five areas.

Objective 1 Self-Advocacy

We will support people with developmental disabilities to speak up for themselves, understand their rights, and take leadership roles.

We will support training, mentoring, peer leadership, and accessible information.

We hope more people with developmental disabilities will feel confident speaking up and taking part in decisions.

Objective 2 Community Leadership

We will help develop new leaders from many different communities.

This includes people from Tribal, rural, immigrant, multilingual, and other communities that have not always been well represented.

We hope more people and families will take part in advocacy, leadership, boards, and community decision-making.

Objective 3 Justice, Crisis, and Institutional Settings

We will work with disability services, behavioral health, crisis systems, law enforcement, courts, and other partners.

The goal is to help people get the right support before they end up in jail, hospitals, institutions, or other restrictive settings.

We hope more people can stay in or return to their communities with the support they need.

Objective 4 Information for People and Families

We will continue to improve Informing Families.

We will work to make information easier to find, easier to understand, more accessible, and available in more languages.

We hope people and families will be better able to understand services, rights, eligibility, and how to get help.

Objective 5 Statewide Advocacy

We will strengthen the Community Advocacy Coalition.

The coalition brings organizations and advocates together to share information and work on common public-policy priorities.

We hope advocacy organizations, people with developmental disabilities, and families will work together more effectively and have more influence on policy decisions.

Goal 2: Systems Change

The Council wants public systems to work better for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

We will work on four areas.

Objective 1 Better Coordination Between Systems

We will bring together developmental disability, behavioral health, aging, crisis, healthcare, and other systems.

We hope people will experience fewer gaps, fewer unnecessary crises, and services that are easier to use.

Objective 2 Equity, Access, Belonging, and Rights

We will look at whether policies and programs work fairly for people from different communities.

We will pay special attention to barriers faced by people who have been underserved or excluded.

We hope people will have better access, stronger rights protections, and more opportunities to participate in decisions.

Objective 3 Tribal, Rural, and Community Partnerships

We will build stronger relationships with Tribal governments, Tribal organizations, rural communities, and community-based organizations.

We will support local ideas, listening sessions, partnerships, and community-led projects.

We hope local priorities will have a stronger influence on statewide policy, funding, and planning.

Objective 4 Strengthening Evaluation and Data

We will improve how we measure the work we fund and support.

We want to know what is working, what is not working, and what people are experiencing.

We hope this information will help the Council make better decisions about funding, policy, and future projects.

Goal 3: Capacity Building

The Council wants people, organizations, and communities to have the skills, tools, partnerships, and resources they need to create lasting change.

We will work on six areas.

Objective 1 Community Innovation

We will support community-led projects that try new ideas.

Projects may focus on housing, employment, health, technology, assistive technology, workforce needs, or other emerging issues.

We hope successful ideas can grow, continue, or be used in other communities.

Objective 2 Dan Thompson Memorial Trust

We will help review and guide investments from the Dan Thompson Memorial Trust.

We will bring community perspectives into decisions about which projects should receive support.

We hope these investments will improve inclusion, housing, employment, health, and community participation.

Objective 3 Council Leadership and Public Trust

We will improve how the Council supports members, shares information, involves the public, and carries out its work.

We hope Council members will feel better prepared to lead and the public will have greater trust in the Council.

Objective 4 Autonomy, Healthy Relationships, and Safety

We will support work related to personal choice, healthy relationships, sexual health, consent, safety, and supported decision-making.

We hope people with developmental disabilities will have more information and confidence to make choices and get help when needed.

Objective 5 Aging

We will strengthen planning and supports for older people with developmental disabilities and aging family caregivers.

This may include housing, aging in place, long-term planning, and better coordination between disability and aging systems.

We hope people and families will have more options and better information to plan for the future.

Objective 6 Civic and Public Engagement

We will help people with developmental disabilities and families learn how public policy and government decisions are made.

We will support training and tools that help people communicate with policymakers and take part in advocacy.

We hope more people will feel confident participating in civic and public life.

How We Will Know if the Plan Is Working

We will use information such as:

- surveys;
- interviews;
- community feedback;
- project reports;
- participation information;
- stories and examples;
- policy changes; and
- other measures.

We want to know whether people are benefiting, whether systems are improving, and where we need to make changes.

Working With Others

The Council cannot do this work alone.

We will work with:

- people with developmental disabilities;
- families;

- advocacy organizations;
- community organizations;
- Tribal Nations;
- state agencies;
- local governments;
- service providers; and
- other partners.

The Big Picture

The Council wants Washington to be a place where people with developmental disabilities:

- have real choices;
- can speak up and lead;
- can find and use information;
- have their rights respected;
- can live and participate in their communities;
- can get the support they need;
- can build relationships;
- can take part in civic life; and
- can plan for the future.

The State Plan gives the Council a direction for its work from 2027 through 2031.