



# Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

**FFY 2022-2026**

## **Developmental Disabilities Council Draft State Plan Goals and Objectives**

(For the period October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2026)

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*Alternate Format Copies of this Plan are Available, Upon Request*

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# Background

## What Is the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities?

The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (the Board) serves as the Commonwealth's Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council. Under federal law, each state is authorized to establish a DD Council, which receives funds to carry out initiatives for systems-change, capacity-building, and advocacy. Through these activities, the Board seeks to impact the independence, productivity, inclusion, and integration of people with disabilities in their communities. The Board's mission and vision are listed below.

**Mission:** To create a Commonwealth that advances opportunities for independence, personal decision-making and full participation in community life for individuals with developmental and other disabilities.

**Vision:** Virginians with developmental and other disabilities direct their own lives and choose how they live, learn, work, and play.

## What Does the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities Do?

The Board has historically organized its work into three main functional areas in order to achieve its mission and vision. A brief summary of these three functional areas is provided below.

**Policy:** The Board has the authority and responsibility to independently educate policymakers regarding legislative, regulatory, budgetary and other actions that affect individuals with developmental and other disabilities. The Board strives to be a valuable, reliable resource for information on people with developmental and other disabilities statewide. To that end, the Board engages in a multitude of inter-organizational workgroups, provides formal and informal public comments on proposed actions, and assesses the effectiveness of state programs and policies in meeting the needs of people with disabilities. For more information, please visit

- [this website](#) to see a listing of recent formal public comments;
- [this website](#) to see a listing of recent policy assessments and related recommendations; and
- [this website](#) to see summaries of recent trends in disability services by topic.

**Grants:** For nearly three decades, the Board has provided millions of dollars of federal funding, and has leveraged significant amounts of funding from local and state governments and the private sector, to promote systems change and capacity building efforts throughout Virginia. To that end, the Board identifies areas of need, evaluates prospective grants, monitors and provides technical assistance to ongoing grants, and publicizes grant project achievements.

**Training Programs:** Through its advocacy and leadership training programs, Partners in Policymaking (PIP) and the Youth Leadership Academy (YLA), the Board has trained hundreds of youth and adults with developmental disabilities and their family members to become leaders in their communities and at the state level. PIP graduates have obtained membership on the Council, on local School Boards, and on local Boards of Supervisors; and they have been a potent force of advocacy. Likewise, our YLA youth leaders have used their training to engage in ongoing advocacy activities designed to improve both their own lives and the lives of others. Since 2016, the Board has also operated the Training Alumni Association (TAA). TAA has given PIP and YLA graduates further opportunities to educate both themselves and community members on current policy issues, and to engage in grassroots advocacy for people with disabilities.

The Board supports these three main functional areas through other functional areas including communications, evaluation, and administrative support.

## **What Are State Plans?**

All DD Councils are required to develop five-year State Plans to enable them to effectively fulfill their mission. While the State Plan provides the “framework” for each Council’s work, it does not include all activities undertaken by the Board or its staff. As required by federal law, the plan primarily focuses on goals and objectives to which federal resources will be dedicated over the five-year period. State Plans are reviewed and updated annually, and progress toward goals and objectives is reported in December of each year for the previous federal fiscal year (FFY).

The Developmental Disabilities (DD) Act identifies nine “Areas of Emphasis” that DD Councils are allowed to address in their State Plans according to the needs of the state, input from individuals with disabilities, and the status of service delivery systems. DD Councils are not required to address all nine areas, and the only required area of emphasis is Quality Assurance to capture certain self-advocacy activities. The nine areas of emphasis are:

- Child Care
- Education/Early Intervention
- Employment
- Formal/Informal Community Supports
- Health
- Housing
- Quality Assurance
- Recreation
- Transportation

The DD Act also identifies strategies that DD Councils are allowed to utilize to address the areas of emphasis. These strategies include the following: outreach, training, provision of technical assistance, supporting and educating communities, interagency collaboration and coordination, coordination with related councils/committees/programs, eliminating barriers to service and systems design/redesign, building coalitions and citizen participation, informing policymakers, and demonstration of new approaches to services and supports.

## How Are State Plans Developed?

The Board develops goals and objectives that it believes will most effectively address priorities identified by various stakeholders, while taking into account limited resources and the need to allow for flexibility in an ever-changing environment. A summary of four primary factors that the Board considered when drafting these goals and objectives is provided below:

- 1) Priority issues identified by (a) the public via four public comment forums and an online survey in June 2020; (b) Board members via a preliminary survey in June 2020 and four State Plan retreat meetings in September and October 2020; (c) an analysis of relevant data; and (d) activities that are required per the DD Act.
- 2) Purpose of Developmental Disability Councils per the DD Act. According to the DD Act, the purpose of Developmental Disability Councils is to *“Engage in advocacy, capacity building, and systems change activities; ...enable people with developmental disabilities to be self-determined, independent, productive, integrated and included in all facets of community life.”*
- 3) Feasibility based on (a) agency resources, (b) staff expertise, and (c) input from external stakeholders including relevant state agencies, DD Councils in other states, federal technical assistance staff, and other key stakeholders.
- 4) Flexibility to adapt its strategy as new issues emerge, new information becomes available, or agency resources change.

Consistent with federal requirements, the Board’s draft FFY 2022-2026 State Plan goals and objectives are being released for a 45-day public comment period from December 17, 2020 through January 31, 2021. Comments will be considered by the Board at its March 2021 meeting, at which time the Board will determine if any changes should be made to the FFY 2022-2026 draft goals and objectives. In June 2021, the Board will approve the 5-Year State Plan for submission to the federal Administration for Community Living, Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities for approval. The approved plan will be effective October 1, 2021.

## Draft Goals and Objectives

The Board seeks public comments on the following draft goals and objectives selected by the Board for its FFYs 2022-2026 State Plan.

**DRAFT GOAL 1 (AREA OF EMPHASIS: COMMUNITY SUPPORTS):** By October 2026, more Virginians with developmental disabilities and their families, reflecting the state’s geographic and cultural diversity, will have increased ability to access paid and unpaid services and supports that enable community living.

**DRAFT COMMUNITY SUPPORTS OBJECTIVE 1:** By October 2026, the Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives to improve how people with DD and their families identify, understand, plan, access, and utilize available community services and supports.

**DRAFT COMMUNITY SUPPORTS OBJECTIVE 2:** By October 2026, the Board will support initiatives that increase the ability of Virginians with developmental disabilities who live in underserved rural areas to access culturally and linguistically competent services and supports that enable community living.

**DRAFT COMMUNITY SUPPORTS OBJECTIVE 3:** By October 2026, the Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that reduce barriers to community living for Virginians with developmental disabilities.

**DRAFT COMMUNITY SUPPORTS OBJECTIVE 4:** By October 2026, the Board will increase public awareness by sharing culturally and linguistically competent information and experiences about the contributions of Virginians with developmental disabilities to their communities.

**DRAFT COMMUNITY SUPPORTS OBJECTIVE 5:** The Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that mitigate emerging issues related to community living for Virginians with developmental disabilities.

**DRAFT GOAL 2 (AREAS OF EMPHASIS: HEALTHCARE & QUALITY ASSURANCE):** By October 2026, more Virginians with developmental disabilities and their families, reflecting the state’s geographic and cultural diversity, will have increased ability to access services and supports that enable health and safety.

**DRAFT HEALTHCARE & QUALITY ASSURANCE OBJECTIVE 1:** By October 2026, the Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that increase the ability of Virginians with developmental disabilities to access healthcare.

**DRAFT HEALTHCARE & QUALITY ASSURANCE OBJECTIVE 2 (DD NETWORK COLLABORATION):** By October 2026, the Board will collaborate with the DD Network to

identify, target, and reduce barriers that impede Virginians with developmental disabilities' access to healthcare through assessment, advocacy, and education.

**DRAFT HEALTHCARE & QUALITY ASSURANCE OBJECTIVE 3:** By October 2026, the Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that increase the ability of Virginians with developmental disabilities to be free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

**DRAFT HEALTHCARE & QUALITY ASSURANCE OBJECTIVE 4:** The Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that mitigate emerging issues related to the health and safety of Virginians with developmental disabilities.

**DRAFT GOAL 3 (AREAS OF EMPHASIS: EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT):** By October 2026, more Virginians with developmental disabilities, reflecting the state's geographic and cultural diversity, will have (1) increased ability to participate and learn in an inclusive school environment; and (2) increased ability to prepare for, and obtain, competitive, integrated employment and other career goals and opportunities.

**DRAFT EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE 1:** By October 2026, the Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that promote an inclusive school environment for Virginians with developmental disabilities, including opportunities for inclusive K-12 and postsecondary education.

**DRAFT EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE 2 (TARGETED DISPARITY):** By October 2026, the Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that reduce the percentage of school districts in Virginia that disproportionately suspend, expel, or otherwise seclude students with disabilities who are black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) from their typical learning environment.

**DRAFT EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE 3:** By October 2026, more Virginians with developmental disabilities, their family members, and employers will receive training and information about the abilities of people with developmental disabilities to increase opportunities for competitive, integrated employment.

**DRAFT EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE 4:** By October 2026, the Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that reduce barriers to Virginians with developmental disabilities obtaining competitive, integrated employment.

**DRAFT GOAL 4 (AREA OF EMPHASIS: QUALITY ASSURANCE):** By October 2026, more Virginians with developmental disabilities and their family members, reflecting the state’s geographic and cultural diversity, will be better able to advocate for themselves and others so that they are able to exercise maximum choice, independence, and control in their lives.

**DRAFT SELF-ADVOCACY OBJECTIVE 1:** Each year, from FFY 2022 through 2026, the Board will establish or strengthen a state self-advocacy organization led by individuals with developmental disabilities through direct funding or other support.

**DRAFT SELF-ADVOCACY OBJECTIVE 2:** By October 2026, the Board will use at least 15 self-advocates as trainers in the Board’s advocacy and leadership development programs, and promote opportunities for them to provide leadership training within other organizations.

**DRAFT SELF-ADVOCACY OBJECTIVE 3:** By October 2026, the Board will support training and development programs that result in at least 50 Virginians with developmental disabilities being actively engaged in public policy advocacy, and participating on cross-disability leadership coalitions.

**DRAFT SELF-ADVOCACY OBJECTIVE 4:** By October 2026, the Board will support training and development programs that result in at least 100 family members of Virginians with developmental disabilities being actively engaged in public policy advocacy.

**DRAFT SELF-ADVOCACY OBJECTIVE 5:** Implement the year-round Training Alumni Association to engage training program alumni, who are family members of people with developmental disabilities, in grassroots advocacy