



Five-Year State Plan Goals, Objectives, and Activities

For October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2026

for the U.S. Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

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Who is the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities?

Under the federal law, each state is authorized to establish a Developmental Disabilities Council. The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (the Board) serves as the Commonwealth's Developmental Disabilities Council.

The Board's mission is 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. The Board's vision is that Virginians with developmental and other disabilities direct their own lives and choose how they live, learn, work, and play.

The Board has historically organized its work into three main functional areas in order to achieve its mission and vision. These areas include policy advocacy, grant funding, and training programs. These areas collectively aim to achieve systems change and build the capacity of the disability services system.

What is a State Plan?

Developmental Disability Councils are required to develop five-year State Plans that provide a framework for how the Council will advance its mission. The current State Plan covers October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2026.

The current State Plan was developed by an ad hoc committee of the Board. The ad hoc committee considered relevant data, public input, and Board member knowledge of unmet needs. The ad hoc committee was also guided by four key factors: (1) priorities identified per the Developmental Disabilities Act and the relevant data, public input, and Board member knowledge of unmet needs; (2) purpose of Developmental Disability Councils per the Developmental Disabilities Act; (3) feasibility based on agency resources, staff expertise, and input from various external stakeholders; and (4) flexibility to adapt its strategy as information or resources change.

The current State Plan addresses five main topics. These topics include community supports, healthcare, quality assurance, education, and employment. The Board chose not to address four other topics that are allowable under federal law, given the Board's limited resources. These four areas are childcare, recreation, housing, and transportation.

The draft goals and objectives were subject to a 45-day public comment period in December 2020 through January 2021. The Board approved the goals and objectives at its March 2021 Board meeting.

What is in the Board's Current State Plan?

The Board's current State Plan goals, objectives, and activities are listed below. The Board has four goals and 17 objectives.

Goal 1 (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.

Objective 1-1 (Information Access): 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.

Activity 1.1.1: (FFY 2022) Fund grant project to assess how people access information regarding community services and supports, and the helpfulness of available information, and to make related policy recommendations. (FFY 2023-24) Continue to advocate for recommendations in the Board's FFY 2022 assessment of information access by convening a stakeholder group, including key state agency staff, to review the recommendations and develop implementation strategies.

Activity 1.1.2: (FFYs 2022-26) Share culturally and linguistically competent information on community supports and services that are available for people with developmental disabilities by providing more up-to-date and user-friendly information on the Board's website.

Activity 1.1.3: (FFYs 2024-25) Fund and/or monitor grant project to implement recommendations from the Board's FFY 2022 assessment of information access.

Objective 1-2 (Rural Access): 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.

Activity 1.2.1: (FFYs 2023-24) Assess the extent of, and contributing factors towards, disparities between urban, suburban, and rural areas in access to, and utilization of, paid and unpaid services and supports that enable community living, and advocate for related recommendations.

Activity 1.2.2: (FFYs 2022-25) Continue funding and/or monitoring grant to Emory & Henry College to increase access to assistive technologies through partnerships with early intervention programs administered by community service boards in the Southwest Virginia area.

Activity 1.2.3: (FFYs 2022-24) Continue funding and/or monitoring a grant with Brain Injury Services of Southwest Virginia to match people with developmental disabilities in Southwest, Central, and Southside Virginia with a trusted adult for socialization, community integration, and relationship building.

Activity 1.2.4: (FFYs 2024-26) Fund and/or monitor grant project to implement recommendations from the Board's FFY 2023 assessment of access to community services and supports in rural areas.

Objective 1-3 (Community Supports Barrier Reduction): By October 2026, the Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that reduce barriers to community living for Virginians with developmental disabilities.

Activity 1.3.1: (FFYs 2022-26) Advocate for culturally and linguistically competent policies and practices that seek to reduce barriers to community living.

Activity 1.3.2: (FFYs 2022-23) Assess consumer-directed services and supports within Virginia's Medicaid program and advocate for related policy recommendations.

Activity 1.3.3: (FFYs 2022-26) Fund and/or monitor a grant with VDDHH to facilitate development of the Support Service Providers workforce and connecting them to consumers who are deafblind.

Activity 1.3.4: (FFYs 2022-25) Continue funding and/or monitoring a grant with Virginia Commonwealth University to train community-based organizations in Central Virginia and Hampton Roads on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Objective 1-4 (Public Awareness): 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.

Activity 1.4.1: (FFYs 2022-23) Identify and fund a project for a culturally and linguistically competent public awareness campaign.

Activity 1.4.2: (FFYs 2024-25) Educate members of the news media on people with disabilities. Planned tasks include the creation of a resource guide and/or training curriculum.

Objective 1-5 (Emerging Issues): The Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that mitigate emerging issues related to community living for Virginians with developmental disabilities.

Goal 2 (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.

Objective 2-1 (Healthcare Advocacy): By October 2026, the Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that increase the ability of Virginians with developmental disabilities to access healthcare.

Activity 2.1.1: (*FFYs 2022-26*) Advocate for culturally and linguistically competent policies and practices that promote the health of people with disabilities.

Activity 2.1.2: (*FFYs 2022-25*) Continue funding and/or monitoring grant to James Madison University to educate stakeholders in rural communities across the Shenandoah Valley about inclusive wellness programming to transform the physical and emotional health of individuals with developmental disabilities.

Activity 2.1.3: (*FFYs 2024-26*) Share culturally and linguistically competent information with people with developmental disabilities and their family members on their right to access healthcare and available recourses when that right is violated.

Objective 2-2 (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.

Activity 2.2.1: (*FFYs 2023-24*) In collaboration with the DD Network, assess the physical, programmatic, and/or communications accessibility of healthcare providers across the state of Virginia and advocate for related recommendations for improvement.

Activity 2.2.2: (*FFYs 2024-26*) In collaboration with the DD Network, share culturally and linguistically competent information to healthcare professionals, both who are practicing and who are in training, on the rights of people with disabilities to access healthcare, best practices for offering accessible and person-centered healthcare, and/or community services and supports to which they can refer people with disabilities.

Objective 2-3 (Quality Assurance): 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.

Activity 2.3.1: (*FFYs 2022-26*) Advocate for culturally and linguistically competent policies and practices that promote the health and safety of people with disabilities.

Activity 2.3.2: (*FFY 2022*) In collaboration with the DD Network, continue participating in *Project Living Well*, a Developmental Disabilities Project of National Significance.

Activity 2.3.3: (*FFYs 2022-26*) Monitor health and safety trends in intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities, and make related recommendations as needed.

Objective 2-4 (Emerging Issues): The Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that mitigate emerging issues related to the health and safety of Virginians with developmental disabilities.

Goal 3 (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.

Objective 3-1 (School Inclusion): 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.

Activity 3.1.1: (*FFYs 2022-26*) Advocate for culturally and linguistically competent policies and practices that promote access to an inclusive school environment in K-12 and postsecondary education for people with developmental disabilities.

Activity 3.1.2: (*FFYs 2024-26*) Assess the impact of COVID-19 on learning among students with developmental disabilities, throughout the state, and provide related recommendations.

Activity 3.1.3: (*FFYs 2024-26*) Fund and/or monitor grant project to train parents of students with developmental disabilities about their rights to free and appropriate public education (FAPE), including during an emergency.

Activity 3.1.4: (*FFYs 2024-26*) Fund and/or monitor grant project to train school personnel in the broader school community on best practices for supporting an

inclusive, student-centered environment for students with developmental disabilities.

Objective 3-2 (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.

Activity 3.2.1: *(FFYs 2022-23)* Assess the extent of, and contributing factors for, disproportionate suspension, expulsion, and/or seclusion among students with disabilities who are black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and advocate for related recommendations.

Activity 3.2.2: *(FFY 2024)* Fund and/or monitor grant project to implement recommendations from the Board's FFY 2022 assessment of disproportionate suspension, expulsion, and seclusion.

Objective 3-3 (Employment Training): By October 2026, more Virginians with developmental disabilities, their family members, employers, school personnel, and/or other key stakeholders will receive training and information about the abilities of people with developmental disabilities to increase opportunities for competitive, integrated employment.

Activity 3.3.1: *(FFYs 2024-26)* Create and/or share culturally and linguistically competent information about competitive, integrated employment to address gaps identified through the Board's policy work.

Activity 3.3.2: *(FFYs 2024-26)* Fund and/or monitor grant project to train self-advocates and their family members about competitive, integrated employment.

Activity 3.3.3: *(FFYs 2024-26)* Fund and/or monitor grant project to conduct outreach and training to potential new employers to increase job creation, hiring, and retention of people with developmental disabilities in competitive, integrated employment.

Objective 3-4 (Employment Barrier Reduction): By October 2026, the Board will support culturally and linguistically competent initiatives that reduce barriers to Virginians with developmental disabilities obtaining competitive, integrated employment.

Activity 3.4.1: *(FFYs 2022-26)* Advocate for policies and practices that reduce barriers to competitive, integrated employment.

Activity 3.4.2: (FFYs 2024-26) Assess the barriers to competitive, integrated employment, including but not limited to barriers stemming from COVID-19, and make related recommendations to mitigate them.

Activity 3.4.3: (FFYs 2024-26) Assess barriers to the provision of transition services and supports for students with developmental disabilities and make related recommendations to mitigate them.

Goal 4 (Self-Advocacy): 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.

Objective 4-1 (Self-Advocacy Organization): 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.

Activity 4.1.1: (FFYs 2022-24) Continue funding and/or monitoring grant project with the Arc of Virginia to build the capacity of self-advocacy through expanding the membership and leadership of the ALLY Alliance.

Activity 4.1.2: (FFY 2023) Establish or strengthen a statewide self-advocacy organization led by individuals with developmental disabilities through direct funding or other support.

Objective 4-2 (Self-Advocates as Trainers): 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.

Activity 4.2.1: (FFYs 2022-26) Conduct an annual train-the-trainer event to train self-advocates on how to train other self-advocates to be leaders.

Activity 4.2.2: (FFYs 2022-26) Use self-advocates as leadership trainers in Board programs.

Objective 4-3 (Training and Development of Self-Advocates): 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.

Activity 4.3.1: *(FFYs 2023 and 2025)* Conduct a biennial Youth Leadership Academy in FFYs 2023 and 2025 for people with developmental and other disabilities.

Activity 4.3.2: *(FFYs 2022, 2024, and 2026)* Conduct a biennial Partners in Policymaking program in FFYs 2021-22, 2023-24, and 2025-26 for people with developmental and other disabilities.

Activity 4.3.3: *(FFYs 2022-26)* Implement the year-round Training Alumni Association to engage people with developmental and other disabilities, who are alumni of the Youth Leadership Academy and/or Partners in Policymaking program, in grassroots advocacy.

Objective 4-4 (Training and Development of Family Members): 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.

Activity 4.4.1: *(FFYs 2022, 2024, and 2026)* Conduct a biennial Partners in Policymaking program in FFYs 2021-22, 2023-24, and 2025-26 for family members of people with developmental and other disabilities.

Activity 4.4.2: *(FFYs 2022-26)* Implement the year-round Training Alumni Association to engage alumni of the Youth Leadership Academy and/or Partners in Policymaking program, who are family members of people with developmental and other disabilities, in grassroots advocacy.