



POLICY PRIORITIES 2021

PROTECTING AND ENHANCING CIVIL RIGHTS

Every person with a developmental disability has the right to self-determination, equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency regardless of how significantly the person is impacted by their disability.

The Council will work to ensure civil rights including identification and reduction of racial and ethnic inequalities and disparities are protected and enhanced. The Council will work to ensure the full and robust implementation of state and recent federal policies that enshrine the values of the Americans with Disabilities Act including but not limited to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Home and Community-Based Services Settings Rule, Every Student Succeeds Act and Achieving Better Life Experience Act.

GUARANTEEING ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Every student has the right to be safe in school and to receive a quality inclusive education with their peers that prepares them for post-secondary education and/or competitive integrated employment (CIE). Students with disabilities must be provided a free and appropriate public education and have access to the same opportunities for learning, in the classroom and online, as students without disabilities.

Every person with a developmental disability should have the opportunity to be employed in CIE. Policies, service delivery practices and financing must set expectations for CIE, microenterprise training and/or self-employment. People with developmental disabilities must have access to information, benefits counseling, transition planning, job training, career exploration and information and support for inclusive post-secondary education. New or expanded pathways to CIE must be developed and supported, including apprenticeships and internships. The Council supports the phasing out and elimination of subminimum wage and/or segregated employment.

The Council will work to ensure the full and robust implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Every Student Succeeds Act and other federal and state policies to ensure that students with developmental disabilities are provided the services and supports needed to receive quality inclusive education.

The Council will work to ensure the full and robust implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and California's Employment First Law. The Council will work to ensure that policies and practices improve opportunities for and incentivize CIE. The Council will work to create incentives and supports for all types of employers and contractors for hiring. The Council will work to make California a model state employer.

PROMOTING ACCESS TO QUALITY SUPPORTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Every person with a developmental disability should have access to and be fully supported to fully participate in their communities. Having access to and receiving quality and individualized services is the cornerstone for people with developmental disabilities to be safe, healthy and to promote self-determination, interdependence and inclusion. Services and supports in the community require adequate wages for providers. The state must restore rates. A planned and systematic approach to rate adjustments must prioritize and incentivize quality services. Disparities in access, outcomes and quality for all services and supports must be addressed. Complexities in the service delivery systems must be reduced.

The Council will work to continue to restore the Department of Developmental Services programs cut in 2009. The Council will work to make meaningful improvements to the service delivery system to reduce disparities, increase transparency and accountability and increase quality outcomes. The Council will support efforts to provide adequate wages to providers for inclusive and quality supports. The Council will work to ensure successful implementation of the Self-Determination Program.

ENSURING SAFETY IN THE COMMUNITY

Every person has a right to be safe. Every person with a developmental disability must be provided emergency preparedness training, training in personal safety, how to recognize crimes and how to protect themselves. Law enforcement personnel, first responders, emergency medical professionals and the judicial system must be trained in how to work with people with developmental disabilities (including those who are suspects, victims or witnesses of crimes) during the course of their duties.

The Council will work to ensure people with developmental disabilities are safe, free from abuse and neglect and have access to services and supports in their communities during all types of disasters or emergencies. The Council will work to ensure an adequate safety net for people in crisis and access to adequate crisis intervention services.

IMPROVING HOUSING AND COMMUNITY LIVING

Every person with a developmental disability should have the opportunity to live in the community. Permanent, affordable, accessible, safe and sustained housing options must be continually developed. Statewide inclusive living options for individuals with developmental disabilities must be increased and enhanced through access to housing and subsidies that are paired in a timely manner with needed services and supports.

The Council will work to implement the policy recommendations in the Statewide Strategic Framework for Housing. The Council will work to create a dedicated housing fund to support integrated community housing for people with developmental disabilities.