

NEBRASKA COUNCIL ON
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



DRAFT

Executive Summary

Five-Year State Plan

Goals and Objectives

October 2022 – September 2026

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities State Plan, 2022-2026

Each State Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council is required to submit a 5-Year State Plan to the Administration for Community Living's (ACL) Administration on Disabilities (AoD) outlining the intended use of federal funding allocated for its basic operational grant. State Plans are focused on improving the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities through full inclusion and participation in all aspects of community life. The federal government expects DD Councils to identify goals that can be achieved in five years using available resources. Federal law mandates that the State Plan address some or all of the Areas of Emphasis established by Congress in the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (DD Act).

The Areas of Emphasis are as follows:

Child Care - Community Supports - Early Intervention - Education - Employment - Health Related Housing - Quality Assurance - Recreation - Transportation

There are three required goals or objectives that must be included in every Council's State Plan:

1. Self-Advocacy – the DD Act requires that we have a self-advocacy goal every year of the State Plan that includes:
 - Support to a statewide self-advocacy organization,
 - Facilitating people with developmental disabilities providing leadership training to their peers, and
 - Activities to promote the participation of people with disabilities in cross-disability and culturally diverse leadership coalitions.
2. Targeted Disparity – looking at disparity in services based on a minority status of some kind. A State Plan goal or objective must address underserved and unserved groups of people in order to try to see what the causes are for a service disparity, and to then try to address it with specific actions.
3. Collaboration – while the DD Act has always called for collaboration among the DD Network partners (Disability Rights Nebraska, Munroe-Meyer Institute University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities [UCEDD], and the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities), we are asked to show more strategic activities so they can better see what collaborations are happening where the entire DD Network is involved.

The Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities (Council) spent many months collecting public input through surveys, interviews, and focus groups. More than 500 people with disabilities, families, professionals, and advocates provided feedback in a needs assessment survey distributed state wide during the summer and early fall of 2020. The goal of the survey distribution was to have a broad geographic distribution, language and ethnic diversity, and multiple developmental disabilities' representation. The Needs Assessment report was published in October 2020 and is available on the Council's [website](#).

Data collected for the 2020 Needs Assessment identified both overall priority areas and specific needs identified by family members, care providers, and self-advocates as highly important for the Council to address. Specific needs identified as important include issues related to direct service providers, waiting lists and the availability of services, the need to bolster family supports, unmet behavioral health needs,

and intentional outreach to support unserved and underserved populations, as well as individuals who do not have family support. While priority areas were ranked to provide a broad view, the Council considered the importance-level ratings for specific needs within each area to identify themes, such as the availability of and accessing services in multiple service areas, in order to identify specific goals and objectives.

In order to best utilize Council funding resources, Council members and Council Planning Committee members reviewed the feedback to determine the goals and objectives that address the priorities and themes identified statewide. The State Plan is developed in accordance with requirements of the DD Act. This plan will be in effect for the 2022-2026 federal fiscal years beginning October 1, 2022 and ending September 30, 2026. The plan will be submitted to ACL/AoD, our federal oversight agency, by August 13, 2021.

Public Comment

The draft of the State Plan Goals and Objectives is now open for public comment. If you have comments or suggestions, please submit them to: Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities, PO Box 95026, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-5026, or email dhhs.ddcouncil@nebraska.gov by **January 15, 2021**.

After receiving feedback from the public comment period, the State Plan and any changes will be reviewed by Council members for final approval. If significant changes are made to the goals and objectives based on public comment, then the Council will re-release them in February 2021 for an additional round of public comment. After the DD Council approves the final goals and objectives, Council staff submit them to the federal government for approval.

Accessibility info: If you would like the State Plan Goals and Objectives draft in another format, please email dhhs.ddcouncil@nebraska.gov or call 402-471-2330 or 402-471-9570 (TTY).

SEE FOLLOWING PAGES FOR DRAFT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Draft Goals and Objectives

The Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities is dedicated to improving the **independence, productivity, and integration** of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). **Independence** means having choices available, being able to choose, and exercising control over one's own life. **Productivity** means making a contribution to one's own household, neighborhood, and community. It means working in the community and earning a living. **Integration** means being present in the community, participating in the life of the community, and being valued as a person, friend, family member, and neighbor. These individuals have the same rights as anyone – the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, the right to be treated with respect and dignity, and the right to control one's own life and destiny. With this focus on improving the independence, productivity, and integration of people with I/DD, the Council has drafted the following Goals and Objectives.

Additional Definitions

Diverse Identities refers to people of various races, cultural and ethnic heritages, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, sexual orientations, ages, and religions from diverse socio-economic and geographic backgrounds.

Competitive Integrated Employment refers to working for a competitive wage in a community-based job (i.e., a job that is not based in a community rehabilitation facility) at 20 hours a week or more. The employment must be in a work setting where, to the greatest extent possible, the employment typically involves interaction with co-workers and business associates who do not have disabilities and/or the general public. Integrated employment includes employment located in community businesses, self-employment, and ownership of micro-enterprises.

The 2022-2026 State Plan has four goals, each with a set of objectives. The Council will use the approved 5-Year State Plan to develop a detailed work plan for each year the State Plan will be in effect.

Goal 1. The Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities will collaborate with Nebraska DD Network Partners, state agencies, community programs, and other stakeholders to provide resources and improve competitive, integrated, and meaningful opportunities for employment, including self-employment with competitive wages, for Nebraskans with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD).

Objective A. Conduct a comprehensive Employment and Supported Employment Outcomes Study across the state of Nebraska to identify necessary systemic changes to Nebraska's employment support system. Findings will be used to educate individuals with DD and families so they can help advocate for systemic changes and remove barriers, and will be shared with leadership at Nebraska VR, Division of Developmental Disabilities, and the Nebraska Legislature.

Objective B. Advance a Nebraska Employment First Initiative to increase resources, access, options, and opportunities for competitive, integrated employment at a living wage for all people with disabilities. Facilitate the education of Nebraskans about the Employment First initiative and its expectations. People with disabilities and their families will be included on Employment First planning committees.

Objective C. Coordinate three employer-to-employer events to increase the number of persons with developmental disabilities employed in integrated settings at minimum wage, particularly in rural areas and/or in Spanish speaking communities. Promote job creation, hiring, retention, and promotion of individuals with I/DD, and collaboration to support and encourage self-employment opportunities for individuals with I/DD.

Goal 2. Increase and strengthen the knowledge of individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families to promote and encourage informed decision making about their choices leading to improved quality of life, increased independence, productivity, and full inclusion in their communities.

Objective A. Convene a workgroup across DHHS divisions, in partnership with families, to:

1. Create a plan to increase awareness of Nebraska programs that exist to provide families who have children with disabilities support.
2. Identify ways to assess whether current programs (both state and federally funded) are meeting the needs of children with developmental disabilities and their families.
3. Explore current Medicaid waivers and Medicaid State Plan services for adequacy.
4. Exploring natural supports and non-waiver services to support individuals and families who do not have access to waiver supports or are on the DD HCBS wait list.
5. Improve efforts to educate parents and families and professionals about the various services available through waiver supports. Continue supporting efforts to streamline waiver services to support person centered planning principles.

Objective B. Partner with Nebraska communities and/or community-based organizations for the development of three community-based events and activities or virtual gatherings to be held in rotating locations across the State each fiscal year. Events/activities will educate and inform English- and non-English speaking individuals with I/DD and their families, including immigrants and refugees, and professionals about important and emerging disability related issues, services and supports available in their communities and statewide, and how to use assistive technology in employment, education, recreation, behavior, etc.

Objective C. Address technology needs and lack of capacity to train parents on how to navigate technology and on the use of Assistive Technology by collaborating with a community services agency in non-English speaking communities to provide training and technical assistance.

Goal 3. By 2026, the capacity of communities and systems to fully include individuals with developmental disabilities will be increased so that people will have opportunities for greater independence and integration.

Objective A. People with I/DD are provided services and supports by professionals in a variety of service systems who are knowledgeable, trained, and supported. Enhanced training and support will address work force capacity issues and recruitment and retention in developmental disability services areas, with a particular focus on direct support professionals.

- Through 2026, support annual training opportunities for direct support professionals and frontline supervisors to increase skills.

Objective B. By 2026, increase the capacity of advocates and policy makers to address at least three emerging issues that impact individuals with DD and their families.

Objective C. Invest in respite trainings addressing needs of children and youth with developmental disabilities, and caregiver training for the aging with developmental disabilities population to improve access and family support.

Goal 4. The Council will collaborate with self-advocacy organizations, Network Partners, State Agencies, and other stakeholders to implement and expand the tenets of self-determination, increase the ability and opportunity for people to advocate for themselves and others, and increase the number of individuals who meaningfully participate in policymaking and leadership roles each year of the plan.

Objective A. Advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD of diverse identities and their families through active participation in statewide advisory committees and cross-disability workgroups; public policy advocacy; cross-systems dialogue; and DD Network collaboration.

Objective B. Collaborate among the Nebraska DD Network Partners (Disability Rights Nebraska, Munroe-Meyer Institute University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities [UCEDD], and the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities) to advocate for positive systems change impacting the lives and health of individuals with I/DD by:

1. Conducting monthly planning meetings to discuss trends, concerns, and challenges with a goal of system changes and improvements for Nebraskans with developmental disabilities.
2. Hosting training on a mutually selected topic for DD Network Partner members at the annual Tri-Board Meeting.
3. Continue leveraging joint advocacy efforts to strengthen and improve the newly developed Nebraska Olmstead Plan.

Objective C. Provide funding to continue to build People First of Nebraska, a statewide advocacy cross-disability coalition to address current and emerging systems issues of people with disabilities related to person directed planning and meaningful, productive community inclusion.

1. Strengthen support for an increased number of self-advocates through leadership development and coalition participation by expanding efforts statewide to reach, educate, and engage younger self-advocates and their families in the self-determination movement.
2. Increase opportunities for self-advocates who are leaders to train other self-advocates to become leaders and increase opportunities for participation in cross-disability, culturally diverse organizations.

Objective D. Children and adults with disabilities (especially those with co-occurring I/DD and mental health) and their families will have access to services, supports, and resources to receive services in both community and school settings that are least restrictive and respects their rights.