



# Five-Year State Plan

## 2022-2026

*Background and Process*

## **About State Councils on Developmental Disabilities...**

State Councils on Developmental Disabilities (Councils) are federally-funded, self-governing organizations charged with:

- identifying the most pressing needs of people with developmental disabilities in their state, and
- advancing public policy and systems change that help these individuals gain more control over their lives.

Councils do this by conducting advocacy, systems change, and capacity-building efforts that promote self-determination, integration, and inclusion.

Councils do not provide direct services, but sometimes they fund special projects and demonstrate efforts that do. Key Council activities include conducting outreach, providing training and technical assistance, removing barriers, developing coalitions, encouraging citizen participation, and keeping policymakers informed about disability issues.

Council members are appointed by the governor – more than 60 percent of a Council's membership consists of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) or their family members. Advocates and state agency representatives also serve as members. This diversity enables Councils to better analyze and improve systems and services within a state and ensure that the voices of people with developmental disabilities and their families are heard.

*What is a developmental disability?*

*Developmental disability is lifelong. It is a severe, chronic disability that occurs before an individual is 22 that is likely to continue indefinitely and results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas: self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. Diagnosed medical conditions may include autism, Down syndrome, intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, epilepsy, mental health issues, and others.*

## **Here in New Jersey...**

The mission of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities (NJCDD) is to assure that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families participate in the design of, and have access to, needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion in all facets of life through culturally-competent programs.

Our vision is that all individuals with I/DD are participating, equally-included members of their communities who:

- make real choices and have control over their own lives.
- have the freedom to strive, excel, and make mistakes.
- are in a position to achieve personal goals and affect policy and process decisions that affect their lives.

- have the same rights, privileges, responsibilities, and opportunities of citizenship as any other New Jersey resident.

### **The 5-Year Plan...**

The work of the NJCDD is driven by a five-year strategic plan. The plan offers a framework for volunteer Council members and paid Council staff as they determine and carry out projects, initiatives, and activities to support New Jersey residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

In accordance with the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000, the NJCDD develops and implements goals and objectives every five years. The 5-Year Plan addresses identified unmet needs through systems change and capacity-building efforts that promote self-determination, integration, and inclusion for people with developmental disabilities.

The plan includes goals and objectives that will guide and focus the Council's work over the five-year period. The work in the proposed plan is aligned around NJCDD's motto: Advocate. Collaborate. Educate.

### **How are the goals determined?**

In developing this plan, the NJCDD gathered and considered a great deal of information.

We conducted a Comprehensive Review and Analysis that includes data related to several key areas: state demographics, housing, employment, transportation, formal and informal supports, education, early intervention, childcare, interagency coordination, recreation, quality assurance, and health care. We also reviewed reports, white papers, and other planning documents issued by our DD Network partners, the Office of the Ombudsman for Individuals with I/DD and Their Families, and others.

As part of that analysis, and to help guide us in identifying unmet needs and setting priorities, we sought input from the public. We would like to thank more than 1,000 NJ residents who responded to our survey, which was offered in four languages; scores of individuals and agencies who provided written comments; 233 guests who registered for our five public hearings, one of which was conducted in Spanish; Spanish-speaking advocates who took part in two focus groups; and more than 40 stakeholders who shared their expertise and perspectives on race, diversity, and equity through an Ad-hoc Committee on Equal Access to DD Services. We also thank stakeholders who sent written and oral testimony; Council members who took part in more than 12 hours of topic-focused work group discussion; and NJCDD's Planning Committee, who spent countless hours guiding the process.

In this five-year planning cycle, there is a special focus on efforts designed to address the needs of an increasingly diverse New Jersey. This plan focuses on disparities faced by individuals with I/DD and their families who are Black and those who speak Spanish, two groups identified in our research as particularly underserved, and/or who experience disparity in service access or outcomes. NJCDD also heard from advocates in rural and urban areas about unmet needs, and has planned activities for system change in those communities.

# Public Input

The NJCDD gathered public input from people with ID/DD and their families

## Outreach and Engagement Strategies

### Online Survey

NJCDD administered a survey in four languages. More than 1,000 people responded.



### Public Hearings & Comments

NJCDD hosted five public hearings including one in Spanish. More than 230 individuals registered for these virtual events.



### Focus Groups

NJCDD facilitated input from diverse communities through focus groups and an ad hoc committee on equal access to DD services.



## The public input highlighted areas of need:

Employment - Housing - Health - Transportation  
Advocacy & Leadership - Quality Assurance  
Language Access and Cultural Competency



# Using Public Input and Data

The NJCDD used the public input along with state and federal data to identify barriers and unmet needs of individuals with ID/DD and their families. This information was used to determine the State Plan goals and objectives.

**Public Input**



The icon depicts a computer monitor displaying a 'SURVEY' form, three people seated at a table, and a group of seven people with one person pointing towards them.

**Research**



**NJ State Data & Public Reports**

The icon shows a simple outline map of the state of New Jersey.

**Research**



**Federal Data**

The icon shows an outline map of the United States with state boundaries.

**Determine Areas of Need**



The icons represent a handshake, a row of three houses with a sun rising behind them, a medical bag with a cross, and a person in a suit with a speech bubble.

**2022-2027 State Plan**

**Goals & Objectives**