

# Create ongoing, designated funding to house and support people with IDD

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## Who is working on this issue?

The Arc of Washington and chapters

## Advocacy area

Housing

### The problem we are solving:

There are approximately 37,000 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) who are housing unstable in Washington state. They include older adults living with much older parents, families facing homelessness, individuals without support, adults who can no longer live safely in the family home, and people trying to leave acute care hospitals or state institutions.



Most adults with IDD live on extremely low incomes and do not qualify for market-rate rentals, leaving publicly financed housing as their only option. There will be ongoing need for rental assistance and development and maintenance of ADA accessible, affordable, and safe housing for the IDD community.



### Our proposed solution:

Establish a permanent revenue source for housing and housing-related services for people with IDD, such as the proposal in the Affordable Homes Act to set up an account for IDD housing and services.

### What is needed:

- Housing to support people with developmental disabilities, including acquisition, development, or construction of permanent housing, housing developments, or units, including new units in existing structures;
- Preservation, operations, and maintenance costs of housing for people with developmental disabilities;

- Housing-related services for individuals with developmental disabilities;
- Rental subsidies;
- Technical assistance to support nonprofit organizations in applying for this funding to expand the pool of eligible developers for construction and long-term sustainable maintenance for housing that meets the needs of people with developmental disabilities;
- Expenditures from the account must be grants or forgivable loans. For applications, the Department of Commerce must use an application form and evaluation criteria separate from the application form and criteria for the Washington Housing Trust Fund.
- The Department of Commerce must make efforts to enact the recommendations of the state housing needs study for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

## Why is this a good solution?

Housing is a HUGE problem for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). According to a [state report](#), 37,000 people in Washington with IDD have an unmet housing need and are at risk of homelessness.



We face:

- An expensive housing market, with rapidly increasing rents and scarcity of rentals available for people with extremely low income.
- Lack of stable, safe, and affordable options for adults with IDD whose parents are aging and not able to provide care in the family home.

We need reliable investment now and into the future.

Washington state has the lowest ratio of housing units per household in the nation. Compounding that, housing for people with IDD developed through the Housing Trust Fund has been minimal – just 28 units a year, on average, over the last decade. Development wasn't adequate in the 1990s and 2000s, either, but in those years, it ranged from 55 to 60 new units a year.

State and local governments have not been funding housing projects with our demographic in mind, and local homelessness prevention policy has failed to address the reality that most adults with IDD will always live on an extremely low income.

Because adults with IDD often need to stay eligible for federal assistance to access long-term services and support, they permanently live well below 30% area median income. Monthly income often ranges between \$700 to \$900. Local affordable housing efforts, meanwhile, often build for people living on 50% to 80% area median income.

The IDD community also needs ADA accessible housing, with features like extra-large bathrooms, kitchens, and doorways, noise mitigation, and durable construction. And people with IDD typically require residential support.

We are facing a crisis that needs sustained, reliable investment, with a designated revenue source.

A proposal last year would have updated real estate taxes to reduce taxes on most property sales, while assessing a modest (3%) tax on the portion of property sales over \$3.025 million. Proceeds would fund affordable housing, including a new Developmental Disabilities Housing and Services Account.

| What is the fiscal impact?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Is there a bill number?                                      | Is there a legislator working on this issue?                                                                                                              |
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| 2024's proposal would have generated \$257 million for the 2027-29 budget. \$38 million of that would have gone to IDD housing and related services, specifically, with \$252.7 million in all going to affordable housing accounts. Each year going forward, the state would have had about \$19 million annually to invest in IDD housing and related services | In 2024, <a href="#">HB 2276</a> and <a href="#">SB 6191</a> | In 2024, legislation was introduced by <a href="#">Rep. April Berg</a> (44th LD, Snohomish County) and <a href="#">Sen. Noel Frame</a> (36th LD, Seattle) |