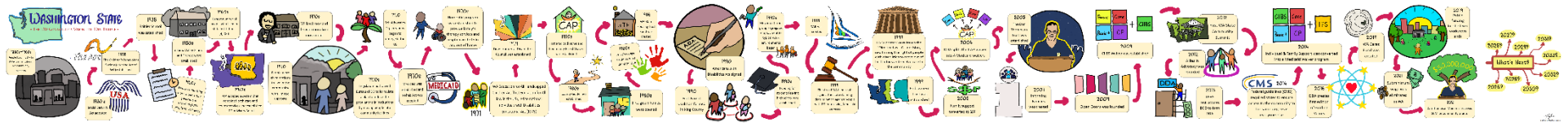


The History of National Activities, Events, and Policies Impacting People with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

collected by The Arc of Washington State, June 2025



1773 - “Publick Hospital for Persons of insane and Disordered Minds” - The first institution for people with disabilities was founded in Virginia

1935 - The Social Security Act was adopted

1950—1959

1950 - First meeting of the National Association of Parents and Friends of Mentally Retarded Children (National Arc)

1954 - Social Security Amendments include disability freeze provision, early disability policy

1960—1969

1961 - President’s Panel of Mental Retardation established by President John F. Kennedy

1963 - Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act passed.

1965 - Medicare and Medicaid created under Title XVIII and Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

1966 - President's Committee on Mental Retardation formalized by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

1966 - Title XIX Amendment to the Social Security Act was passed, establishing Medicaid services.

1970—1979

1972 - Federal Title XIX regulations were finalized.

1973 - The Rehabilitation Act was adopted Section 504 prohibits disability discrimination in federally funded programs.

1975 - Federal "Education for All" (Public Law 94-142) was adopted.

1975 - The Americans with Disabilities Administration (DD Act) was funded, providing each state with University Affiliated Programs, Protection and Advocacy and Developmental Disabilities Councils.

1978 - Rehabilitation Act reauthorized; emphasizes independent living and client assistance programs.

1980—1989

1981 - The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) allowed the state to apply for (1915 c) waivers to Medicaid to allow for federal Medicaid funds to be utilized for community services.

1984 - The Rehabilitation Act was reauthorized

1987 - Federal Title XIX regulations were revised

1987 - OBRA '87 includes nursing home reforms and emphasizes individualized care

1987 - The DD Act is reauthorized, including family support provisions

1990—1999

1990 - The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed

1990 - Education for All Act was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and was reauthorized

1992 - The Federal Rehabilitation Act was reauthorized for five more years with emphasis on employment outcomes and expanded services

1994 - The DD Act was reauthorized

1997 - IDEA reauthorized; strengthens inclusion and accountability.

1998 - Rehabilitation Act reauthorized with technology and employment emphasis.

1999 - On June 22, 1999 the US Supreme Court issued the “Olmstead v. L.C.” decision, re-affirming the right of persons with disabilities to move out of institutions and receive care in the community.

2000—2009

2000 - The federal Developmental Disabilities Act, including a family support section, was reauthorized for another seven years. Reauthorized with a focus on increasing community integration, employment opportunities, self-determination and person-centered planning

2003 - President’s Committee on Mental Retardation changed its name to President’s Committee on Intellectual Disabilities.

2004 - IDEA reauthorized to align with No Child Left Behind Act

2006 - DD Act reauthorized, continuing family and individual supports

2009 - The US faced a huge economic downturn. The federal government intervened by providing Federal Stimulus money

2010–2019

2010 - Congress enacts the Affordable Care Act (ACA), providing a major healthcare overhaul.

2010 - Congress passed Rosa's Law regarding Respectful Language

2014 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) reauthorizes the Rehabilitation Act.

2014 - DD Act reauthorized with new provisions on inclusion and advocacy.

2014 - The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) law was signed by President Barack Obama

2015 - Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Replaced the No Child Left Behind Act, setting new mandates for students with disabilities.

2020–2025

2024 - Autism CARES Act Reauthorized. Provides continued funding for autism research, training programs like the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Other Related Disabilities (LEND), and public awareness initiatives.