



Protect Our Right to Employment

How do we ensure that individuals have the adequate supports and individualized services needed to work and build relationships in the community?

January 28, 2026

Summary: Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities desire to lead rich and meaningful lives. Historically, people with I/DD have been excluded and rejected from participating in everyday settings and activities, like work, school, community recreation, and social activities. This exclusion, compounded by limited transportation options, can lead to isolation and loneliness for individuals with I/DD.

Inclusion Matters: Creating an inclusive community benefits everyone, fostering diversity and enriching the lives of individuals with I/DD.

Equal Opportunities for Employment: Investing in job opportunities and employment supports promotes a path to self-sufficiency and enhances quality of life. Hiring people with disabilities is not only a socially responsible decision but also a smart business move, leading to increased workplace morale and employee engagement. Employment supports are cost effective, it is the only service that gives the individual more. Employment create tax payers, helps people get off other government benefits, and makes it less likely that individuals will end up in higher cost settings like institutions or hospitals.

Breaking Isolation: Community Inclusion services are essential to combat isolation and loneliness among individuals with I/DD. Supported Employment and Community Inclusion are the only waiver services where staff are required to support the individual to build individualized relationships with members of the public.

What We Need:

We understand the budgetary constraints this legislative session. Please protect the Right to Employment and Community Inclusion.

- Protect our employment networks by preserving rates so that job developers and job coaches can facilitate real jobs with competitive wages.

- Protect Community Inclusion program rates so individuals can do things they enjoy and have the appropriate supports to access them.
- Prevent eligibility changes to waivers, so that individuals will still have access to Supported Employment and Community Inclusion services.

What to Watch for This Session:

- [**HB 1493/ SB 5681 - Lowering the Age of Eligibility for Supported Employment & Community Inclusion**](#)

Please Protect our Employment and Community Inclusion Services so we can create a more inclusive and equitable society where individuals with I/DD have the necessary supports to thrive in employment and community life.

For more information contact The Arc of WA: cathy@arcwa.org