

Many Voices / One Vision



The Community Advocacy Coalition for Developmental Disabilities

January 27, 2026

The Honorable June Robinson, Chair
Members, Senate Ways & Means Committee

The Honorable Timm Ormsby, Chair
Members, House Appropriations Committee

Opposition to Proposed Changes to DDCS Waiver Eligibility

The Community Advocacy Coalition for Developmental Disabilities (CAC) is a statewide alliance representing self-advocates, families, and service providers. We are committed to ensuring people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) can live safely, participate meaningfully, and thrive in their communities. We are **opposed to the governor's proposal to change functional eligibility** criteria for support from Developmental Disabilities Community Services (DDCS)

Individuals and families will be pushed into crisis as they lose essential, preventative support. We recognize the difficult fiscal decisions you need to make, but pulling services is both harmful and fiscally unsound. The need for support does not go away, and loss of care cannot be absorbed by families.

Loss of Medicaid Match and Increased State Costs

DDCS services are primarily funded through Medicaid and come with significant federal matching dollars. Reducing eligibility **reduces federal revenue**. At a time when federal Medicaid funding is uncertain, this proposal would unnecessarily forfeit dollars while increasing pressure on the state general fund.

Cost-Shifting to Crisis Systems

The proposal assumes savings by serving fewer people, but in practice, it just **shifts costs**. When individuals lose access to community-based supports, the need does not disappear. It escalates. Families turn to hospital emergency rooms, crisis stabilization services, law enforcement, homelessness systems, and inpatient care. These settings are far more expensive than community-based services and are widely acknowledged to be less effective and less humane. Preventative support is not a luxury; it is a cost-containment strategy.

Families Losing Support Before Crisis Occurs

The individuals most affected by this proposal are those with lower, but still critical, support needs. These are often people living with family members who rely on limited DDCS services to maintain stability, employment, housing, and safety. Raising eligibility thresholds means families must wait until situations

deteriorate significantly before help is available. This approach undermines family caregivers, increases burnout, and places individuals at greater risk of institutionalization or system involvement that could have been avoided.

Impact on Children and Long-Term Outcomes

The proposed changes would also increase eligibility thresholds for children, requiring substantially higher levels of need before services are available. Early and consistent supports are foundational to long-term independence, health, and community participation. Delaying access until needs intensify contradicts decades of evidence showing that early intervention reduces long-term costs and improves outcomes for both children and families.

Our Request

We respectfully urge the Legislature to **reject any changes to DDCS waiver eligibility**. Preserving access to Medicaid-funded community services protects federal revenue, prevents costly crises, supports families, and upholds Washington's longstanding commitment to serving people with disabilities in the community.

The Community Advocacy Coalition remains committed to working collaboratively with legislators to identify solutions that address fiscal challenges **without shifting costs onto families, emergency systems, or people with disabilities themselves**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

The Community Advocacy Coalition for Developmental Disabilities

Member Organizations

Allies in Advocacy
Association for County Human Services
AtWork!
Benton Franklin Parent Coalition
Bridge of Promise
Community Advocacy Coalition
Community Employment Alliance
Community Living
Community Residential Services Association
Developmental Disabilities Ombuds
Disability Rights Washington
Hispanic Disability Support SWWA (Pasitos Gigantes)
Kittitas County Parent Coalition
Life Enrichment Options
Max Higbee Center
Northwest Center
Olympic Neighbors
Open Doors for Multicultural Families

Parent Coalition Grant/Adams Counties
PAVE
PC2
Peace Northwest
People First of Washington
Followitz Property Group
Prevail
SafeinHome
Self -Advocates In Leadership
Sherwood Community Services
Spokane Disability Collaborative
Tavon Learning Center
The Arc of King County
The Arc of Snohomish County
The Arc of Spokane
The Arc of Tri Cities
The Arc of Washington State
The Arc of Whatcom County
Thurston Mason DD Coalition
WA Parent to Parent
Walla Walla Valley Disability Network

Washington Multicultural Services Link
Washington State Developmental Disabilities
Council
Wee Care Coalition
Wise Board
Work Opportunities

Non-Member Organizations

Able Opportunities, Inc.
All Aboard of America
Cares of Washington
Centerforce
Columbia Ability Alliance
Compass Career Solutions
Cascade Connections
Elmview
Entrust Community Services
Exceptional Foresters, Inc.
Fox & Associates
Holly Ridge Center
Mainstay at Seattle Central College
Morningside
Northwest's Child Inc.
Orion
Sunrise Services
Summit Community Center
Tierra Learning Center
Total Living Concept
Trillium
Vadis
Washington Vocational Services