



Increase the Capacity of the Developmental Disabilities Council to Lead Efforts to Create a More Racially Equitable Service Delivery System

The Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) plays a key role for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families by providing advice and recommendations to the Washington State Legislature for improving service delivery systems. For that reason, the I/DD community counts on the DDC to be a leader in helping create a more racially equitable service delivery system. The DDC also plays a leading role in ensuring the service delivery system adheres to the principles of “nothing about us without us”, which means people with I/DD and others with lived experiences must be included and centered in all discussions and decisions about issues that affect them.

Like many other organizations, the DDC has made efforts to embed principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into its programs, operations, and leadership practices, particularly over the last year. As a fellow Developmental Disabilities Network Partner, Disability Rights Washington (DRW) believes the DDC could benefit from additional resources to expand and enhance its capacity to understand racial and other systemic inequities in the service system for people with I/DD, as well as support other individuals and organizations in strengthening their own understanding and practices.

We believe it is our collective responsibility to ensure the DDC has the resources necessary to expand and enhance its capacity to fulfill this critical leadership role. This investment would support our community’s efforts to transform the delivery of services for people with I/DD. We believe the Legislature should supplement the federal funding of the DDC in an estimated amount ranging from \$750,000 to \$1,000,000 per biennium for the DDC to lead and coordinate strategies including, but not limited to:

- Hiring a full-time equity coordinator to lead the development and implementation of an Equity Plan that would guide the DDC and the I/DD community more broadly;
- Supporting the DDC’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee to play a strong and meaningful role in the development and implementation of the Equity Plan;
- Contracting with consultants, including experts with lived experience, to:
 - ◊ Support the DDC’s efforts to solicit and incorporate input from diverse communities. Facilitators should have experience with creating and facilitating spaces that are equitable, accessible, trauma-informed, and power-balanced;
 - ◊ Support the DDC’s efforts to create and strengthen mutually-beneficial relationships with diverse communities across the state;
 - ◊ Assess data collection needs throughout the service delivery system, identify instances and themes of racial and disability-related inequities, and recommend solutions to address the identified problems;
- Providing stipends and other supports to reduce financial barriers to full participation of marginalized people and communities;
- Conducting regular DEI-related trainings for DDC staff, DDC members, partner organizations, and other individuals in the I/DD community; and
- Preparing and presenting an annual report to the DDC, Department of Commerce, Office of Equity, the Legislature, and other interested parties regarding progress on the Equity Plan, key findings, and recommendations.

[Sign on in Support](#)

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