



Housing Development for People with IDD

Vibrant communities are places where people want to live, work and play, where businesses can grow to offer jobs, and where people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) are included and welcomed members. Building and maintaining safe and affordable housing that indirectly and directly offers supportive and accessible environments, encourages natural supports, and provides assistance to people with IDD and their families is critical to this goal. More importantly, it is essential that the barriers that prevent people with IDD from living in the community continue to be dismantled.

Most community-based housing for people with IDD is built with Housing Trust Fund money, often from a fund called the “DD Set-Aside”. The Housing Trust provides funds for affordable housing projects through a competitive application process, and has awarded millions in funding to help build or maintain nearly 400 units of affordable housing statewide especially for people with IDD. Unfortunately, our state has only a few developers interested in IDD housing, and the larger housing community needs to be invested in ensuring everyone is included in its design so that the most inclusive communities can be built.

To expand IDD housing, the state legislature is asked to consider this 22-23 Supplemental Budget request:

- a. Add \$2 M Technical Assistance to recruit and support additional affordable housing developers interested in specializing in DD affordable housing in WA State, including a national search. This funding will provide resources to help first-time IDD providers to obtain HTF funding, and recruit and support additional affordable housing developers to take interest in projects that include and/or specialize in DD affordable housing that meet the unique needs of this sector of the community. Funding may be used for toolkits, consultations, workshops, materials, and recruitment to enhance the pool of competitive applications and support smaller businesses and developers to apply for funds.
- b. Funding would include data sharing, research, and coordination between The Department of Commerce and the Developmental Disabilities Administration and align with recommendations of the 2022 DD Housing Study. Funding may also include marketing and development of affordable housing proposals for “smart” home features and devices that improve and increase the independence of people with IDD living in the community.

An additional \$3-5M in DD Set Aside for Housing Trust Fund is also requested for this biennium.

We must “move the needle” on the scale of affordable housing that meets the needs of people with IDD. The competition for housing funding is fierce and the IDD community needs technical experts to expand the developer pool and to offer best practices on effective ways to integrate these housing options into the broader affordable housing markets and communities.

For more information, contact The Arc of Washington State
Stacy Dym Stacy@arcwa.org

