



**District of Columbia Developmental Disabilities Council Releases Draft of the
New Five Year State Plan (FY2017–21)**

*Seeking and Welcomes Feedback from District Residents with Developmental Disabilities,
Their Families & General Public*

Media Contact:

Sudie Johnson

(202) 481-3879; Sudie.johnson@dc.gov

Friday, May 6, 2016

The District of Columbia Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) is pleased to be disseminating the draft of the new Five Year State Plan describing proposed objectives and activities for fiscal years 2017 through 2021. Producing this proposed State Plan represents the DDC's commitment to fulfilling our responsibility to our District residents with developmental disabilities and their families as authorized in the federal legislation, *Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000*¹, and ensuring continued funding support from the Administration on Disabilities (AoD) within the United States Department of Health & Human Services to the Government of the District of Columbia.

The DDC's mission is strengthening the voices of District residents with developmental disabilities and their families in support of greater independence, inclusion, empowerment and the pursuit of life as they choose. We have fifteen (15) Mayoral appointed members, of which two thirds are District residents with developmental disabilities or their family members. We strive to create change that eliminates discrimination and removes barriers to full inclusion through our advocacy.

The draft of the proposed Five Year State Plan for the District is mandated by AoD, and the development of the plan was based on extensive community outreach over the past several months. In developing of the initial draft, the DDC has:

- Developed and posted an online survey tool available in English and Spanish through the DDC website;
- Collected nearly 200 surveys from District residents with developmental disabilities, family members and friends representing all eight wards, and the survey results are posted online;
- Met with District residents and their families involved with the Supporting Families Community of Practice, Parents Advocacy Leaders (PALS) Group, and the Georgetown University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities' (UCEDD) Consumer Advisory Council to solicit input and feedback; and
- Conducted a community forum at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Public Library.

During the forum, participants identified areas of emphasis for the DDC's consideration: 1) Self-Determination, Advocacy, and Leadership; 2) Employment; 3) Education, and; 4) Community Living. Focus groups were conducted in support of these four areas of emphasis. Participants' suggestions, ideas, and proposed activities were recorded, and documents corresponding to the focus groups are posted through the DDC website.

¹ http://www.acl.gov/Programs/AIDD/DDA_BOR_ACT_2000/Index.aspx

The draft Five Year State Plan and its proposed objectives and activities are based on the District residents' feedback and recommendations captured from the surveys, DDC's participation at various community meetings, and the forum.

"District residents with developmental disabilities deserve a good quality of life," expresses DDC Executive Director Mathew McCollough. "This draft plan shows the DDC's commitment in identifying and addressing current 'gaps' or opportunities for improvement in supports and service delivery for our District residents with developmental disabilities and their families."

The draft Five Year State Plan will be available for a 45-day public comment period. District residents with developmental disabilities, family members and the general public are welcomed to submit comments to the DDC until **Tuesday, June 21, 2016**. Comments will only be accepted from DC residents. Community members have 4 ways of participating in the comment period:

By Phone: Contact Mathew McCollough (202-727-6744) or Sudie Johnson (202-481-3879)
By Fax: 202-727-9484
Email: Mathew.mccollough@dc.gov
Mail: DC Developmental Disabilities Council
441 4th ST NW; Suite 729 North
Washington, DC 20001

Public comments provided to the DDC will be posted through the organization's website at: <http://ddc.dc.gov/>.

Upon completion of the 45-day public comment period, the DDC will consider and incorporate additional information, new text, and revisions into the Five Year State Plan. An additional 45-day public comment period will be provided to solicit comment on the revised Five Year State Plan. The DDC will be conducting at least three community forums to ensure that District residents, family members and the general public can participate throughout the public comment periods.

The Five Year State Plan (FY2017-21) will be finalized and submitted to the Federal Government on or before August 16, 2016.

Please contact DDC Executive Director Mathew McCollough at Mathew.mccollough@dc.gov or (202) 727-6744 with inquiries about the DC Developmental Disabilities Council or the mandated Five Year State Plan (FY2017-21) process.

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A developmental disability is a severe and lasting mental and/or physical impairment that occurs prior to age 22 and is likely to continue indefinitely and result in substantial limitations in three or more of the following major life activities: self-care; speaking; understanding language; learning; mobility; ability to make decisions; financial independence; and/or ability to function without individually planned and coordinated services.