

Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities

2021 Position Statements

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) draws from the values identified in the Federal Developmental Disabilities Act in evaluating and responding to current and future policy and funding issues that might affect the developmental disabilities community. We support legislation that advances the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all facets of community life by eliminating barriers, creating opportunities, empowering people, and promoting innovation.

Housing

TCDD supports the position that all people with developmental disabilities have the right to safe, accessible, affordable, and integrated housing. Home and community-based care services and supports should be widely available to ensure that individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to live and remain in the community throughout their lifespan. Furthermore, each person has unique needs and preferences, and adults with disabilities should have the opportunity to exercise self-determination and decide with whom and where in their community they would like to live.

Service Coordination

TCDD supports the position that the full inclusion of people with disabilities in community life requires that they are informed about and understand the array of service and support options available to them, and that they meaningfully participate and lead in the planning and directing of the services they receive.

Emergency Preparedness

TCDD supports the position that people with developmental disabilities deserve respectful, prompt, and efficient assistance during “shelter in place,” evacuation, and relocation resulting from a natural disaster or emergency event. Individuals must have access to appropriate and accessible transportation, shelter, medical and mental health care, and information on temporary support services.

Access to Health Care

TCDD supports the position that all people, regardless of their disability, age, or income level, should have access to affordable, comprehensive health care. The Council supports efforts and initiatives to increase the accessibility, affordability, and effectiveness of health care for everyone.

Children and Families

TCDD supports the position that all children belong in families where they feel loved and cared for, with the opportunity to learn to be successful and the potential for independence. To ensure this, families should have access to supports and services necessary to provide sustained care throughout the lifespan of a child, a sibling, or an adult family member with disabilities.

Community Living

TCDD supports the position that all individuals with developmental disabilities, regardless of age, should have resources and timely access to opportunities and the supports necessary to make their own decisions and be included in community life, have interdependent relationships, live in homes and communities, prevent unnecessary institutionalization and isolated settings, and make contributions to their families and communities.

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Employment

TCDD supports the state's Employment First law. People with developmental disabilities have the right to pursue and obtain meaningful employment with competitive wages, job training, professional growth, and career enhancement. Opportunities for employment in the community, and the supports needed to seize those opportunities, must be readily available to people with disabilities without discrimination or segregation.

Transportation

TCDD supports the position that transportation options – including paratransit, rideshare services, and autonomous and semi-autonomous vehicles – are essential to quality of life and integration into the community, and must meet the needs of individuals with disabilities in a safe, reliable, convenient, affordable, timely, and accessible manner.

Criminal Justice

TCDD supports the position that people with developmental disabilities – whether as victims, suspects, or witnesses of a crime – have the right to impartial justice, fair treatment, and reasonable accommodations in all areas of the criminal justice system.

Education

TCDD supports the position that all students with developmental disabilities have a right to an appropriate, individualized, and quality education, alongside their non-disabled peers, that empowers and prepares them for life post-graduation.

Guardianship and Supported Decision-making

TCDD supports increasing opportunities for and protecting the self-determination and civil rights of people with developmental disabilities. Independent or supported decision-making must be the first and preferred option for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including when guardianship is being explored.

Transition from School to Adult Life

TCDD supports the position that students with disabilities should be equipped to enter postsecondary education, the workforce, and their communities ready to pursue opportunities that are both relevant and meaningful. Students with disabilities should be given opportunities to develop the self-advocacy skills necessary to foster independence and fulfillment in life after graduation.

Personal and Civil Rights

TCDD supports the position that all people with developmental disabilities are entitled to human, personal, and civil rights, including the right to privacy. The Council recognizes that people with developmental disabilities are at a higher risk of having their civil rights violated; therefore, the equal protection and enforcement of their rights are crucial, as is the liberty to exercise those rights.