

What is the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act)?



In every state and territory, programs made possible by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act) give individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) and their families the power to help shape policies that affect them.



DD Act programs lead important research and test new creative ways to provide services to people with DD. They work to bring the latest information and resources to those who can put it to the best use, including self-advocates, families, service providers, and policymakers.



DD Act programs also investigate cases of abuse and may serve as legal advocates for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

The latest version of the DD Act, The DD Act of 2000, emphasizes the rights of people with DD using:

Independence

Being able to make their own choices and have control over their own lives

Productivity

Having employment that pays a competitive wage

Integration

Living and thriving in the community of their choice

Self-Determination

Acting or causing things to happen as you set and work toward goals in your life.



State of the States
In Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

The State of the States in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Project is a national longitudinal comparative study of financial and programmatic trends in spending on supports and services for people with intellectual/ developmental disabilities (IDD) in the United States. The project is funded by the U.S. Administration on Community Living as a Longitudinal Data Project of National Significance.

Source: Tanis, E.S., et al. (2025). The State of the States in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Kansas University Center on Disabilities, Life Span Institute, University of Kansas. www.stateofthestates.ku.edu

What are the DD Act Programs?



University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDDs)

- Understand the needs of people with DD and their families
- Find solutions to the challenges they face
- Do research, share knowledge, and create better services and supports

Examples: KU Center on Disabilities, Munroe-Meyer Institute



Projects of National Significance (PNS)

- Run special projects and research to improve the lives of people with DD
- The ongoing longitudinal data PNS tracks helps guide the following:
 - Policy changes and legal decisions
 - Investments in quality programs and services
 - Strategic planning for states and the nation

Examples: The State of the States, Residential Information Systems Project (RISP), StateData



The State Councils on Developmental Disabilities (DD Councils)

- Advocate for the needs and rights of people with DD
- Work to change systems that affect the lives of people with DD
- Help communities build skills and work together

Examples: Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities, Florida Developmental Disability Council



State Protection and Advocacy Systems (P&As)

- Protect the rights of people with DD
- Offer legal help, advocacy, and education to support people with DD
- Their goal is to make sure no disabled person is left out or goes without support

Examples: Disability Rights Center of Kansas, Iowa Protection and Advocacy, Inc.



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