

About the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD)

BPDD is Wisconsin’s state developmental disabilities council, authorized under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act). Every state and territory have a state Developmental Disabilities Council.

Federal law outlines a unique role for state Councils that includes:



Serving as an independent advisor to the Governor and legislature on public policy issues that impact people with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD)



Charging councils with advocacy, capacity building, and systems change to improve self-determination, independence, productivity, and **integration and inclusion in all facets of community life** for people with I/DD.



Engaging with people with disabilities and their allies to understand pressing needs and identify emerging issues impacting the state’s I/DD community.



Funding innovative and pilot projects—based on data driven strategic planning—that test best practices and inform state and federal policies and practices leading to greater independence and self-sufficiency for people with I/DD



Encouraging citizen engagement and participation so that the voices of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are part of policy decisions.

The Governor appoints BPDD’s board members. 60% of BPDD’s board are people with I/DD and family members from across the state. BPDD’s work is driven by a five-year state plan, which is created based on statewide input from the disability community. 70% of BPDD’s federal funding is spent on local projects in accordance with needs identified in the state plan.

BPDD’s Unique Role



The role of state councils is to seek continuous improvement across all systems—**education, transportation, health care, employment**, etc.—that touch the lives of people with disabilities. Our work requires us to have a long-term vision of public policy that not only sees current systems as they are, but how these systems could be made better for current and future generations of people with disabilities.

BPDD has relationships with people with disabilities and their families across the state. We routinely host community conversations, outreach to diverse communities, fund local initiatives, and provide information and training to empower citizens to be more engaged on issues affecting people with I/DD.

BPDD is an independent state agency and is available as a resource to Wisconsin’s executive, legislative, and judicial branches on disability and disability policy issues. BPDD is also connected and can draw upon a national network of disability experts and data sets to understand how federal actions may impact Wisconsin, and other states’ approaches to disability issues.

BPDD's federal charge to improve the lives of people with I/DD

BPDD is Wisconsin's state developmental disabilities council, authorized under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act). Every state and territory have a state Developmental Disabilities Council.

Federal law outlines a unique role for state Councils that includes:

In keeping with other federal laws and policy—including the Americans with Disabilities Act—our charge is to work towards people with disabilities having the same rights and responsibilities as people without disabilities.

BPDD's federal charge includes advocacy, capacity building, and systems change to improve self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life for people with developmental disabilities. What do these terms mean?



Self-determination means freedom for people with I/DD to: explore their interests; develop skills; have new experiences—including making and learning from mistakes; make decisions about their lives; have relationships; and choose support staff and others they want to support them.



Independence means maximizing the control people with I/DD have over their lives, including: managing their money; living independently; choosing where to live and with whom; being able to get where they need to go on their schedule; and having a job in the community that matches their skills and interests.



Productivity means having full or part-time work at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits similar to those without disabilities performing the same work, and fully integrated with co-workers without disabilities.



Integration and Inclusion means having the same expectations and opportunities for people with disabilities as people without disabilities. People with disabilities need the same access to and preparation for education, community participation, and community employment as people without disabilities; outcomes and expectations for people with disabilities include independence, decision-making, living and social skills.

What does BPDD do to advance advocacy, capacity building, and systems change?

The federal DD Act charges BPDD and other DD Councils with outreach, training, technical assistance, supporting and educating communities, interagency collaboration and coordination, barrier elimination, system design and redesign, coalition development and citizen participation, informing policymakers, and demonstration of new approaches to services and supports.