

Founded by parents of children with intellectual & developmental disabilities (IDD) in 1946, The Arc Minnesota is a statewide, nonprofit advocacy organization that promotes and protects the human rights of people with IDD.

Alongside self-advocates, parents and family members, support professionals, and coalition partners, we work to advance policy solutions that create positive systems and social change for Minnesotans with IDD, and support public policies founded in the principles of human & civil rights, self-advocacy & self direction, and equity & true belonging.

Reform Minnesota's Guardianship Statute

It has been more than ten years since Minnesota's guardianship statute was updated, and many policies and practices have changed in this time – most notably, the shift toward less-restrictive alternatives such as supported decision-making.

Updating Minnesota's outdated guardianship statute, including changes that align with Uniform Law Commission recommendations, will help ensure that individuals retain their rights while maximizing self-direction.

Expand Access to Inclusive Child Care

Across Minnesota, parents of children with disabilities and medical complexities are struggling to access consistent, high-quality, accessible child care. By creating grants for childcare providers to establish or expand inclusive settings, we can support them in meeting children's individual needs, alleviate constraints on the homecare workforce shortage, and allow parents to work during the day.

Investing in grants for inclusive childcare will help ensure that children with disabilities receive support alongside their siblings and peers – resulting in long-term, positive benefits for all children, and building true belonging in community from an early age.

Promote Employment at Livable Wages for People with IDD

More people with disabilities – especially transition-age youth – are choosing competitive, integrated employment over less inclusive alternatives, but Minnesota does not have the service infrastructure to support their career goals. We must restructure and rebalance employment supports to utilize the skills and expertise of all people with disabilities, regardless of their age or support needs.

Enhancing collaboration across state agencies and developing recommendations to expand customized, competitive, integrated employment can help ensure that all Minnesotans with disabilities have access to meaningful employment opportunities.

Enhance Education & Career Pathways

Participating in post-secondary education programs, such as Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTPs), can help greatly improve outcomes for young adults with IDD. Those who participate in these programs are more than twice as likely to secure employment, and rely less on government programs and services. Currently, CTPs in Minnesota do not have enough capacity to educate the many transition-age youth who could benefit from these programs.

Expanding access to grants for Minnesota students with IDD to attend CTPs in border states will help them become better equipped to secure meaningful employment at competitive wages and live more independently – narrowing the school-to-services pipeline, reducing dependence on more formal, costly supports, and resulting in long-term cost savings.

Prevent Sexual Violence

Individuals with IDD experience sexual violence at a rate seven times higher than the rest of the population, and 66% of sexual violence incidents are perpetrated by someone they know - whether family member, intimate partner, or staff. We can help to address this public health crisis by incorporating sexual violence prevention into direct support staff orientation and annual training.

Training direct support staff about sexual violence prevention, and teaching them to identify the signs and symptoms of sexual abuse, can give them the skills necessary to help prevent sexual violence against people with IDD.

Improve Personal Care Assistance Services

Minnesota's Personal Care Assistance (PCA) program is one of the most cost-effective Medicaid programs in our state, accessed by nearly 43,000 older adults and people with disabilities statewide. However, low reimbursement rates and inadequate wages create instability for providers and force dedicated PCAs out of the field. Individuals lose their trusted, high-quality support professionals, and many have had to move into more costly institutional settings.

Creating a data-driven rate framework and implementing program integrity measures can help improve the quality of Minnesota's PCA program and ensure its sustainability for our friends, family members, and neighbors who depend on it.

Invest in Affordable, Accessible Housing Statewide

Affordable, accessible, inclusive housing options are critically important to ensure that individuals with disabilities develop true belonging in their communities, but we know that people are struggling to find housing statewide. Bonds for housing are not only a wise investment for the state, but increase individuals' choice in where they can live, reduce reliance on more costly, less inclusive settings, and help people out of homelessness.

Investing in the Homes for All Coalition's request for \$500 million in bonds for housing statewide will give more individuals with disabilities the opportunity to live in affordable, accessible, inclusive homes in their communities.