Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Office On Disability

A Presentation on:
How to Start a Local Commission on Disability In Your Community

- ✓ MGL Chapter 40 Section 8J
- ✓ MGL Chapter 40 Section 22G
- ✓ Local COD Case Studies
- ✓ MOD As a Resource

Process for Starting A Commission on Disability in Your Community

Commission Established Under MGL Chapter 40 Section 8J

- A city/town needs to **first** adopt MGL Chapter 40 Section 8J, which formally establishes a Commission on Disability (COD) in the community. The formalized COD acts as an advisory board to their appointing authority.

Adoption of MGL Chapter 40 Section 22G

- A city/town, that has adopted MGL Chapter 40 Section 8J, can **then** adopt MGL Chapter 40 Section 22G, which allows funds collected from HP parking fines to be given to the COD. MGL Chapter 40 Section 22G allows the COD to use the collected funds "*solely for the benefit of persons with disabilities*..."

Use of HP Parking Funds Collected to Hire Police Details

- One way the COD's use the collected funds is to hire police details whose sole purpose is to monitor HP parking within their community. The COD's work with the Police to hire details and use the funds to pay for those details.

How Chapter 40 Section 22G Fines Are Used Solely to Benefit Persons with Disabilities

Alternatives to Police Details

- COD's, in the past, have set up a HP Parking Patrol where certain COD Members are "deputized" to capture all the appropriate information for a person illegally parked, including pictures and affidavit, and submit to the local Police Department for a ticket to be issued. PLEASE NOTE, even though some COD's still do this, MOST COD's are hiring police details instead..

Other Uses of HP Parking Fines Collected

- COD's have used HP Parking fines for the following purposes:
  - Barrier Removal
  - Education
  - Assistive Technology
  - Fairs/Events

Case Studies

Burlington Disability Access Commission

- They recently started hiring police details to monitor HP parking in their community. They have been so successful, Channel 7 did a news story on their program.
- At the last COD meeting I attended in May, they have raised over $130,000.
- This program has allowed the Police to catch numerous people using the placards illegally.

Fall River Commission on Disability

- They have, because of the success in hiring police details, decided to hire 2 full time police officers to monitor HP parking within the community.
- They fund about 70% of the cost of the officers.
- The amount they collect varies, but as of January, they had collected over $200,000.

Case Studies

Watertown Commission on Disability

- They have produced an Accessible Dining Guide for restaurants in Watertown.
- Provide closed captioning for Town Council Meetings.
- Provide SPEDPAC Funding.
- Provide CART Reporting to other Town Agencies.
- Offer Programs in the Schools to raise awareness.

Agawam Commission on Disability

- The COD has purchased HP Parking signs for municipality and local businesses to install.
- Offer training and speakers to discuss disability related topics and raise awareness.
- Funded poured rubber surface for playgrounds.

- **Other Notable Commission on Disabilities Hiring Police Details**
- Waltham, Framingham, Leominster, Scituate, Beverly, and Lynn

Related Laws

1. Municipalities can adopt the provisions set forth within MGL Chapter 40 Section 8J, which duly establishes a municipal Commission On Disability. The municipality then has the option to adopt MGL Chapter 40 Section 22G, which allows the fines collected from HP parking fines to go to and be used by the Commission On Disability.
2. MGL Chapter 40 Section 21:
   a. Allows the Police onto private property to enforce the parking.
   b. Has specific signage language (Handicapped Parking: Special Plate Required. Unauthorized Vehicles May Be Removed at Owner's Expense) that must be present for a ticket to be issued
   c. Allows tickets to be imposed for people who are parked blocking the curb cut.
3. MGL Chapter 40 Section 22:
   a. Allows people with HP plates or placards to park at timed zones longer than stated time.
4. MGL Chapter 40 Section 22A:
   a. Exempts people with HP plates or placard to not have to feed physical parking meters.

MOD As A Resource

Questions?

Please Utilize MOD as a Resource

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