



# Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council 2017 Annual Report to the Citizens of Massachusetts

*Providing opportunities for people with developmental disabilities and their families to enhance independence, productivity, and inclusion.*

## Our Purpose

The Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) is an independent agency funded by the federal government to work with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to better support people with developmental disabilities and their families.

## Our Beliefs

Individuals with developmental disabilities must have the opportunity to live full, productive and independent lives in the community. Disability is a natural part of the human experience that does not diminish the right of individuals with developmental disabilities to live independently, to exert control and choice over their own lives, and to fully participate in and contribute to their communities.

## Personal Stories Have the Greatest Impact

In July 2017 two Council members testified before the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities at the Massachusetts State House. Hillary Dunn Stanisz, a sibling of an individual with disabilities and Kathleen Amaral, a parent of a child with disabilities, shared their personal stories on why it is so important to establish a registry of caretakers found to have substantiated abuse against persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

In an emotional hearing, other families echoed Hillary and Kathleen as they advocated for a change to ensure the protection of the Commonwealth's most vulnerable citizens. The personal stories were heard loud and clear by the Committee and two of the three registry bills were reported favorably to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means.



Hillary Dunn Stanisz



Kathleen Amaral

***Want more information on legislative priorities?***

Visit us at:

<https://www.mass.gov/legislative-priorities>

## Our Report to the Citizens

We are pleased to present our annual *Report to the Citizens of the Commonwealth*. This report is also available on the Council website [www.mass.gov/mddc](http://www.mass.gov/mddc). We encourage you to give us feedback. Please send all questions and comments to [craig.hall@state.ma.us](mailto:craig.hall@state.ma.us).

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## ***Chances are you know someone with a developmental disability***

Although the exact number is unknown, it is estimated that over **157,000** citizens in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have a developmental disability.

## What We Do

- Work to improve the system of supports for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families by bringing advocates together with lawmakers to make sure people with developmental disabilities are included in public policy decisions.
- Foster partnerships with disability advocacy groups and support initiatives that help to build the self-confidence, interpersonal and leadership skills that people with developmental disabilities need to live independently and play active roles in their communities.
- Serve as an impartial educational resource, informing public policy at the local, state and federal levels, to better meet the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

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# State Plan Implementation Progress Report: Year 1

Goal	Objective 1 Status	Objective 2 Status	Objective 3 Status	Objective 4 Status	Objective 5 Status	Key Events & Outcomes (Our Measures)
<b>1. Advocacy and Leadership</b>	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Obj. 1.1– 58 students with developmental disabilities graduated from the five Self-Advocacy Leadership Series held.
<b>2. Supporting Families</b>	Met	Met	NA	NA	NA	Obj. 2.1– 50 parents attended the Supporting Families Day at the State House.
<b>3. Inclusive Communities</b>	Met	Met	Met	NA	NA	Obj. 3.2– More than 17,500 people were reached and more than 13,000 people “liked” and commented or shared information on the Council’s disability photo contest during Disability Employment Awareness month. More than 100 new people “liked” the Council’s Facebook page.
<b>4. Exercising Rights</b>	Met	Met	Met	NA	NA	Obj. 4.2– 159 new individuals participated in the Rev Up campaign with 32 registering to vote. There were 36,736 unique visits to the Rev Up web site.

*Note: This chart was derived from the preliminary data collected for the 2017 Program Performance Report. The full report will be published in the spring of 2018 and located at <https://www.ddsuite.org/search/>.*

## Independence College Leads to Employment

Christina Kalafaris, a graduate of the Council's Independence College (IC) initiative, credits the program with providing her the confidence and skills needed for her to obtain employment. Christina now works at McKinnon's, a family-owned grocery chain in Danvers, Mass.

Christina met with the hiring manager, and using the skills she developed and the resume she created during the IC “Explore, Prepare, Act” class, secured a job in the food preparation on the spot. Christina spoke at length during the 2017 Independence College graduation about her experience and how the skills she learned provided her with the tools and confidence she needed for career readiness.



State Senator Joan Lovely, Christina and SALS. trainer Lee Larriu,

Independence College is a non-traditional education opportunity that provides classes to people with developmental disabilities to enhance the skills they need to assist them in pursuing their individual goals for competitive and integrated employment, higher education, civic involvement, and personal independence. The Council, in partnership with Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong, plans to graduate 30 more students from the program in the next year.

## Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity is a major focus of the five-year State Plan. The Council awarded a Health Insurance Training Grant for underserved families from linguistic and cultural minority communities. The grantee will educate an estimated 140 families on how to access insurance coverage for autism treatment through MassHealth and other insurance. In year one the grantee identified primary partners who will sponsor the presentations, provided outreach to communities and developed training information in three languages: Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic. Trainings and webinars are scheduled for early 2018 in year-2 of the State Plan.

## Systems Change In Action

Working with Council policy staff, Council member Kate Brewer provided testimony for SB54: An Act creating a means for tracking the unmet need of individuals with developmental disabilities in the Commonwealth. Brewer provided the testimony to the Joint Committee on Children and Families, where sixteen legislators and 56 members of the public were educated about the impact of the bill on people with developmental disabilities. The bill creates a system of tracking the unmet service needs of individuals and the system will be maintained and operated by the Office of Disabilities and Community Services at the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. The bill was reported favorably to the Senate Ways and Means Committee.



Please visit our website, [www.mass.gov/mddc](http://www.mass.gov/mddc), for more information!



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# Revenue and Expenses

## Revenue

Source of Revenue	2017 Revenue (in \$)
Federal Funding	1,346,056.76
Commonwealth Non-Financial Match	245,312.33
Sub-Grantee Match	267,851.98
Developmental Disabilities Suite	77,381.52
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>1,936,602.59</b>

*The **financial mission** of the Council is to maximize the use of our federal awards, while leveraging additional resources from the Commonwealth, our grantees and other collaborations and partnerships, to meet our five-year State Plan goals and objectives.*

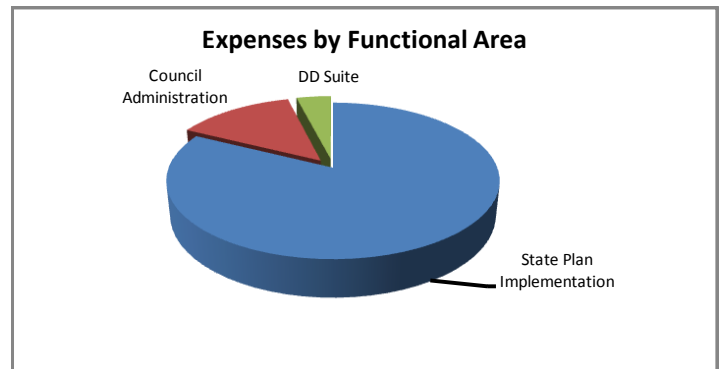
**Note:** The Council is funded through a federal formula grant and is authorized under Subtitle B of Public Law 106-402, the Developmental Disabilities Act of 2000, and through state Executive Order #512.

### Independent Audit

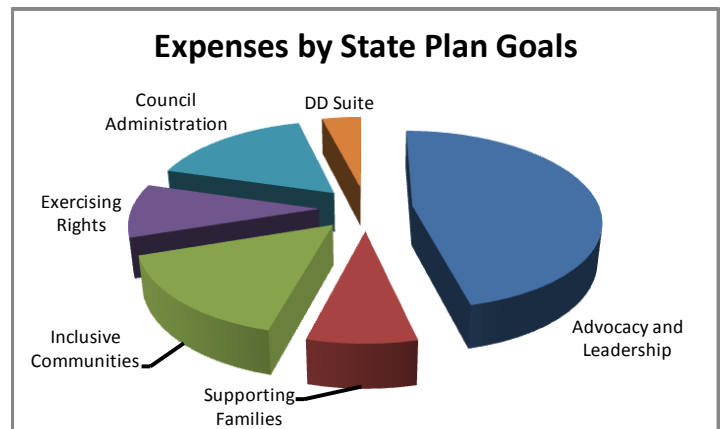
The Council participated in the independent audit, receiving a clean opinion. Complete financial information is available at [www.mass.gov/osc](http://www.mass.gov/osc).

## Expenses

By Functional Area	2017 Expense (in \$)
State Plan Implementation	1,595,050.23
Council Administration	264,170.84
Developmental Disabilities Suite	77,381.52
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,936,602.59</b>



By State Plan Area	2017 Expense (in \$)
Advocacy and Leadership	896,940.13
Supporting Families	151,566.60
Inclusive Communities	305,213.82
Exercising Rights	186,901.00
Council Administration	318,599.52
Developmental Disabilities Suite	77,381.52
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,936,602.59</b>



### A Model of Transparency

*The Council's 2016 report received the Certificate of Excellence in Citizen-Centric Reporting from the Association of Government Accountants for advancing government accountability. The logo recognizes the importance of a citizen focused initiative for financial reporting.*



### What We Do: Our Primary Program Areas

The Council has two primary program areas. The **functional area** divides the organization by our program and administrative activities.

The **state plan areas** identify the program activities we undertake to successfully meet our five-year State Plan goals and objectives.





# Looking Forward

## What is the State Plan for Massachusetts?

Development begins with the Council's State Plan Team, consisting primarily of citizen Council members. The team performs an evaluation of the prior plan reviews the needs identified by the community, and studies demographic and disparities data, including the American Community Survey.

Through a multi-pronged approach, the Council was able to ascertain the needs and priorities of the community, with an emphasis on those identified by people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Council uses four primary criteria to establish State Plan goals; the greatest areas of need, needs prioritized by the public, a clear and specific role for the Council, and long term impact. The process takes up to 18 months before submission for approval to the U.S. Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. The State Plan is evaluated annually and amended to reflect emerging issues when applicable.

The State Plan is available at [mass.gov/mddc](http://mass.gov/mddc).

## RISE in Boston Public Schools

The Council developed a new program to meet the needs of transition-aged adolescents with social, emotional and mental health challenges. Piloted in Boston Public Schools (BPS), Realizing Independence and Self-Empowerment (RISE) is an initiative that began with a request from BPS to tailor the existing Self-Advocacy Leadership Series to address the unique needs and challenges facing these students.

The revised curriculum was completed in the summer of 2017 and piloted in the fall to students at the McKinley Preparatory High School, Boston, Mass.



The RISE series runs for eight sessions, McKinley Preparatory High School once a week for two hours, and is taught in the students' classrooms with familiar peers and support staff present. During this series students learn about effective communication, goal setting, self-advocacy and emotion regulation through role plays, guest speakers and class discussion. At the conclusion of the pilot period in year 2 of the State Plan, the new series will be evaluated on its impact, outcomes and effectiveness.

## DD Network Partners - We're in This Together

The Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Network, known as the "DD Network" includes the Shriver Center, Institute for Community Inclusion, Disability Law Center and the Council. Our goals and objectives were developed to further the efforts of the DD Network. Specifically, the following Council objectives represent network collaboration:



- (1) people with developmental disabilities and their families are empowered to make choices about their needs through improved access to information and referral mechanisms,
- (2) individuals with developmental disabilities and their families are knowledgeable about their health care needs and the resources.

A third collaboration included in the five-year State Plan is continued support of the Gopen and Crocker Fellowships, which foster the leadership development of self-advocates and family members.

## Evaluating State Plan Success

The Council uses multiple methods to monitor progress and evaluate success. Each State Plan goal and objective has identified strategies, activities, outputs and expected outcomes. The Council utilizes the Developmental Disabilities Suite (DD Suite) project management system for tracking and reporting all Council projects and activities, which are directly linked to State Plan goals and objectives through DD Suite. This provides an effective mechanism for reviewing the current status of any objective at any time.

The Council also gathers qualitative feedback from our advocacy partners, individuals with developmental disabilities, families, advocates and others. This information, along with ongoing satisfaction surveys, is used to confirm whether our achievements are having the intended positive impact on the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and families.

## Maintaining High Customer Satisfaction

The Council conducts customer satisfaction surveys for projects and activities held or funded by the Council. Survey results help determine the impact of our efforts on the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their family members. The questions are mandated by the U.S. Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and the results are reported in the Council's annual Program Performance Report. In 2017 overall satisfaction again exceeded 98%.



Please visit our website, [www.mass.gov/mddc](http://www.mass.gov/mddc), for more information!



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