

Program Performance Highlights

FFY 2012



Virginia Board for
People with Disabilities

Virginia's Developmental Disabilities Council



Introduction

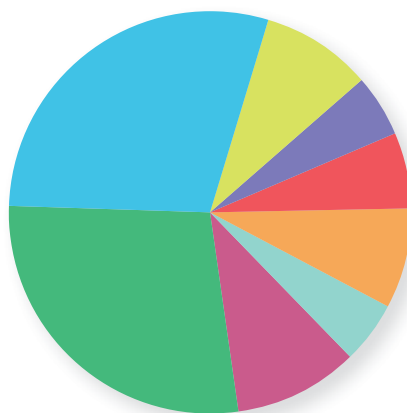
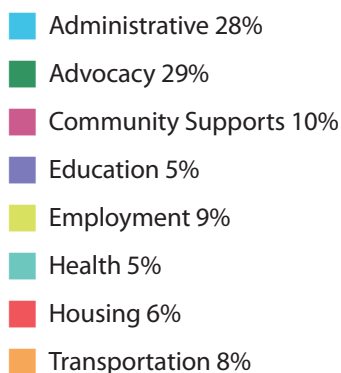
The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (the Board), as the state's Developmental Disability Council, is federally required to engage in "...**advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change activities** ..." to contribute to a coordinated, consumer and family-centered, consumer and family-directed, comprehensive system of community services." Every state and territory has a DD council, which advises elected officials and other policymakers on issues that affect the lives of people with developmental and other disabilities—housing, transportation, employment, education, and community living, among others. When people with developmental and other disabilities have appropriate supports and accommodations, they can be more independent in their local communities.

A developmental disability is a severe, chronic disability which occurs before the age of 22 and which results in "substantial functional limitations" in 3 or more areas of life activity—self-care, communication, learning, mobility, or ability to work or live independently. Examples include, but are not limited to: intellectual disability, autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, deafness, muscular dystrophy, or spina bifida.

How Did the Board Use its Funds?

During Federal Fiscal Year 2012 (FFY12), the Board spent a grand total of \$1,636,454, of which \$1,464,145 was from federal funds and \$172,309 from state funds. The Board, like all DD Councils, is able to draw down federal funding over a three year period, so expenditures vary by year according to Board goals and priorities. State funds were used only for administrative expenses, which are described in the

notes. Expenditures of federal funding by category are depicted in the pie chart below, which does not include the state funding. Through the Board's grants, contracts and programs, match funds from local, state and private sources totaled \$285,313. Since match funds are in-kind and cash contributions by other entities to accomplish the grant or other activity, these are not included in the chart.



Notes:

- ▶ All percentages are based only on total expenditures of federal funds (\$1,464,145).
- ▶ Administrative Costs include: salaries/benefits for administrative staff, IT costs, office supplies, rent, telecommunications, Board meetings/management, contractual services, premiums and other operational expenses.

What Did the Board Do in FFY 2012?

State policies, laws, and regulations together shape the disability services infrastructure, how services are provided, and how impact is determined. The Board looks for opportunities in which to offer meaningful policy and regulatory solutions or alternatives that promote community integration and inclusion. The Board also participates in advocacy and planning for community supports through regular participation in workgroups and liaison activities.

A landmark policy change occurred during 2012 that will impact individuals with intellectual (ID) and developmental (DD) disabilities for decades. After lengthy negotiations, in August 2012, a federal judge approved Virginia's Settlement Agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). The agreement addresses DOJ's findings that the Commonwealth was in violation of the Americans with Disabilities

Act and the U.S. Supreme Court Olmstead decision by failing to provide services to individuals with ID/DD in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. Virginia committed to shifting fiscal and other resources to expand community services and supports. This includes but is not limited to home-and community-based waivers, employment supports, and integrated housing options. The Commonwealth determined that in order to meet the terms of the Agreement, it could not continue to operate a dual system of services. Virginia plans to close four of its five state training centers over the next seven years and transition residents to the community. Individuals in nursing facilities and non-state operated institutions will also be moving to more integrated settings under the terms of the Agreement.



Policy & Regulatory Solutions

A key component of the Settlement Agreement is the development to a plan to increase the availability of integrated housing options for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Shifting and more effectively using state and other resources to support the development of integrated, accessible housing has been a Board goal for many years. As a result, the Board was identified in the Agreement as a required partner in the development of the housing plan. In this role the Board has helped:

- ▶ clarify housing targets,
- ▶ assess current and potential resources,
- ▶ document available resources for people moving from restrictive settings into integrated community settings, and
- ▶ identify implementation opportunities and barriers.

To assist in this effort and to facilitate coordination between the housing agencies and human service agencies, the Board funded a contract with the Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc. (TAC), a nationally known entity, to provide guidance on policy, program models and strategies to rebalance housing efforts. In addition to work in the housing arena, the Board set forth specific objectives designed to support the Settlement Agreement, serves on numerous DOJ related work/advisory groups, and has targeted grant funding to support this work.

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Policy & Regulatory Solutions

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The Board continued to monitor and comment on policies, regulations, legislation and budget actions affecting people with disabilities. A great deal of this work occurs through informal, collaborative avenues. However, the Board also develops formal comment. During FFY12, the Board was engaged in a number of key changes to policies affecting students with disabilities and received an ex officio appointment to the State Special Education Advisor Committee. The Board also provided written input and recommendations on proposed policy or regulatory actions regarding home and community-based waivers, Employment First, the state's auxiliary grant program (SSI Supplement) and a variety of housing issues. During FFY12, pursuant to House Joint Resolution 648, a workgroup was convened to study and report on the feasibility and appropriateness of amendments to the Uniform Statewide Building Code to provide accessible routes for persons with

disabilities into public and private buildings and facilities as well as to promote universal features in dwelling units. The Board was a required participant on the workgroup. Statutory code changes have been explored, including wider interior doors and adding universal design standards to the code.

The Board continued its efforts to move forward recommendations from its *2011 Assessment of the Disability Services System* in a variety of arenas. This past year, areas of concern and recommendations from the Board's 2008 and 2011 Assessments became the foundation of the Commonwealth's Community Integration Implementation Team's (Olmstead) Strategic Plan which was then submitted to the code mandated Advisory Commission and the Governor. It was also presented to the legislative Disability Commission.



Social Media

The Board continued to expand into social media. A re-designed website, featuring original content YouTube videos and a regularly updated feed from the Board's Facebook page, went live in FFY12. As individuals with disabilities continue to have greater accessibility to the Internet, the Board is shifting its messaging strategy to be more robust with newer technology.





Advocating & Reaching Out

The Board periodically helps plan and/or sponsors statewide conferences in order to expand educational outreach and assist its advocacy partners to spread their message on systems issues of mutual concern. During FFY 2012, the Board was involved in these conferences:

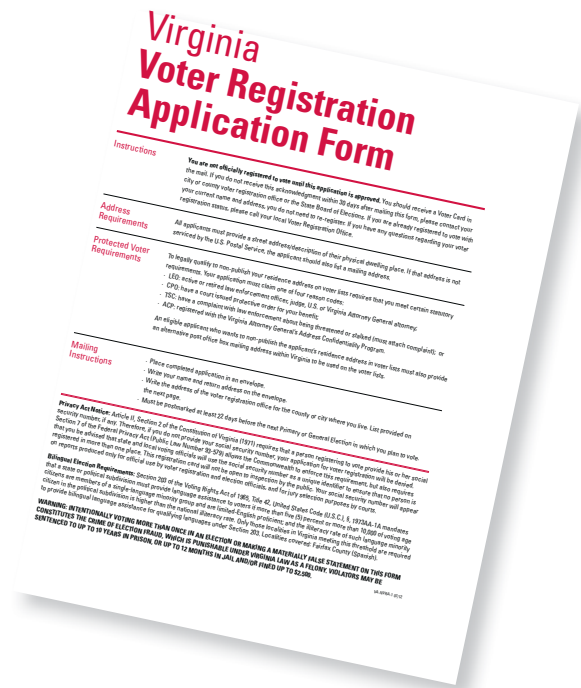
- ▶ Helped plan and sponsor the annual Aging and Disability Conference, an annual conference held by the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitation Services, entitled “Later Aging for Individuals with Lifelong Disabilities”. Skill building sessions were provided to 175 attendees (in-home support providers, family members, and professionals serving individuals with disabilities). Topics focused on community integration supports, health management, accessible housing and universal design features that are convenient for all individuals and allow elderly persons to “age in place”.
- ▶ Helped develop the Youth and Family sessions track of the annual Transition Forum sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education and the Department for Aging and Rehabilitation Services. Annually, over 800 individuals attend the Forum and for the last two years, Youth Leadership Forum alumni have presented at this event.
- ▶ Sponsored the Arc of Virginia annual statewide convention, with more than 400 attendees, and conducted outreach to build and strengthen relationships with individuals with disabilities and other advocates across the Commonwealth.

Improving Voter Participation

To meet its State Plan goal of "...promotion of full inclusion in education, employment, health and civic and community activities as a civil right..." the Board this year provided grant funds to the State Board of Elections to improve voter access/participation for citizens with disabilities in the November 2012 elections. Four two-minute videos were developed, which were promoted via social media (Facebook and YouTube), on both agency websites, and through brochures and e-communication with an extensive network of Community Service Boards, Disability Service Boards, Special Education Advisory Councils, individual support providers, Area Agencies on Aging, and other stakeholders. These materials educated voters of all abilities about curbside voting, absentee voting, registering to vote, and use of the annual absentee application.

By using both the State Board of Elections and the Board's (VBPD) social media avenues, the videos received more than 500 hits in

FFY12. Although the final results occurred in FFY13, in the 2012 Presidential race, use of the annual absentee ballot application rose to 1,701 from 1,500 in the 2008 election.



The Board's advocacy work is intertwined with its systems change and capacity building initiatives, all of which actively support policies and practices that promote self-determination and inclusion in the community and workforce for individuals with DD. A distinct role is the Board's support of individuals with DD speaking for themselves. The Board funded establishment of a statewide cross-disability, non-profit self advocacy organization majority led by and for individuals with DD, a first in the Commonwealth. Virginia Advocates United Leading Together (VAULT)'s goals are to develop public policy priorities and build coalitions/membership to influence public policies that improve community life for individuals with developmental and other disabilities.





Coordinating Housing & Transportation

Training in use of the Transportation and Housing Alliance (THA) Toolkit—a multi-year grant project involving GIS mapping to better coordinate transportation, housing, services and employment for individuals with disabilities—continued statewide. Use of the toolkit statewide continues to grow; last year, 161 individuals (including planning commissioners, planners/planning staff, and local government staff) were trained at regional conferences.

Localities that adopt the Toolkit are able to affect local and statewide policies on land use, service planning, and community development. The users of the THA Toolkit are leading the way in model language for local and state ordinances. As government planners are educated, processes are changing, and the needs of people with disabilities are being considered to a greater extent during the initial phases of community development.



Expanding Information Networks

Work continued in FFY12 on projects funded by earlier Board grants. Expanding an existing service program for aging Virginians known as Senior Navigator (online and in physical locations) involved expanding staff knowledge and locations. Renamed Virginia Navigator, the newly transitioned centers are now found in libraries, rehabilitation/medical centers, faith-based organizations, and even a retail pharmacy. Statewide, the growth of locations for Virginia Navigator/Senior Navigator has exceeded 700.



Increasing Access to Direct Support Professionals

Having an adequate workforce of individuals to provide personal assistance and other direct care services to individuals with significant disabilities is a vital need. To address that workforce issue, the Board supported a grant project, Improvement & Expansion of Consumer-Directed (C-D) Services, conducted by the Va. Association of Centers for Independent Living (VACIL) which ended in FFY 2012. The project goal was to recruit individuals, especially those with disabilities, to seek and obtain jobs as direct care/personal assistants. Extensive outreach and workshops were conducted statewide at community colleges, universities, and job fairs (high school and college level). VACIL recruited and trained a cadre of 20 individuals to serve as workshop leaders, whose

recruitment roles continued post-grant. Those efforts resulted in a total of 734 individuals trained in the responsibilities and rewards of such jobs; of those 700+, at least 42 were persons with a disability and 60 were family members.

For the first time an online Direct Care C-D Support Staff Directory was created. Individuals seeking employment as personal care attendants or other direct support professionals can post their skills, locations, and availability. People with disabilities or their families can more readily find available workers. This accessible resource, online at www.CDsupport.info will be maintained by Public Partnerships Limited (PPL), Inc. (a DMAS fiscal contractor).

Training Programs

Graduates of Board training programs are active advocates for people with disabilities. Many serve on local or state boards and commissions.



Partners in Policymaking (PIP)

PIP is an 8-month advocacy and leadership training program conducted by the Board. In FFY12 PIP graduated 22: six adult self-advocates and sixteen parents of children with disabilities. Over 400 individuals have graduated from PIP in the past thirteen years.

Youth Leadership Forum (YLF)

Held in July 2012, YLF graduated 21 student delegates who spent a week at Virginia Commonwealth University enhancing their self-advocacy, leadership skills and career planning. Over 240 individuals have graduated from YLF in the past twelve years.



**Virginia Board for
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