

Utah Developmental Disabilities Council Framework for Public Policy Decision Making

All public policy actions – whether to support a specific piece of legislation, to join a coalition, or to sponsor a specific activity - need to be reviewed based on the potential impact on the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families, how it aligns with the mission, values, and goals of the Utah Developmental Disabilities Council, and the impact upon the Council in joining with another individual / entity in policy issues. All decisions to join coalitions or release public policy documents should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and (when feasible) receive Council approval. In those situations when the Council is identified as supporting a public policy position, it should be a well thought out, documented position.

If the social and institutional obstacles for people with developmental disabilities are to be overcome, disability must be reframed with a civil rights focus, as the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Civil Rights Act of 2000 creates the powers of the Council and its two sister agencies, the Disability Law Center and Utah State's Center for Persons with Disabilities for this purpose. Reframing disability as a civil rights issue makes it possible to conceive long-term, systemic solutions to the fundamental problem of access to social and economic opportunities, resources, and support systems for people with disabilities.

The overarching goal of any public policy proposed or supported by the Council should be to improve the full inclusion and self-determination of people with disabilities.

The Council's public policy positions must be in support of the Council's Mission, Guiding Principles, and Values.