

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council's mission is "To advocate and promote meaningful participation in all aspects of life for Floridians with developmental disabilities."

The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council's Purpose:

We are committed to advocating and promoting programs, practices, and innovative initiatives that enhance the independence, productivity, inclusion, and self-determination of individuals with developmental disabilities in all aspects of life.



INTRODUCTION

In 2020, The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council's work resulted in more than \$633 million in funding that will help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) live meaningful lives in their communities.



\$633

Million



The areas the Council worked on in 2020 were:

- **Transportation**
- **Employment**
- **Elementary through Postsecondary Transition**
- **Self-Advocacy Leadership**
- **Self-Advocacy Systems Change**
- **Housing**
- **Workforce (Direct Support Providers)**
- **Broad Systems Change**

TRANSPORTATION

The Council started three new Transportation Voucher Expansion projects that should begin providing on-demand, door-to-door transportation in 2021 in St. Lucie, Okeechobee, Indian River, Martin, Pinellas, and Collier counties.

In 2020, \$10 million became ongoing funding to the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund.

\$4.5 million from this Fund was given to 21 Innovation and Service Development Grant projects for new transportation options in 2020.



**\$10
Million**

**became ongoing
funding**

EMPLOYMENT

Employment First continues to be a priority for the Council, with a number of efforts to help people with I/DD get good jobs that pay well.

Florida's Employment First Interagency Cooperative Agreement was renewed for another 5 years.

The Council's Employment First partners continued to educate the legislature and advocate for employment. This contributed to the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) continuing to receive \$900,000 for their Employment Enhancement Program. As a result, 126 people on the waiting list got jobs, 11 got internships, and 342 kept their jobs.

The Council helped Florida keep its position as the top state in the nation for Project SEARCH. Project SEARCH helps people with I/DD in their last year of school get ready for jobs.

Florida now has 41 Project SEARCH sites, more than any other state in the country. Around 70% of the people who complete Project SEARCH get good jobs.



ELEMENTARY THROUGH POSTSECONDARY TRANSITION

In 2020, the Council continued to support Project TOPS, an inclusive career and technical education approach in the state technical college system.

Even though Project TOPS had to move to online instruction because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many important outcomes were still achieved:

- *25 students enrolled*
- *6 students finished the full career and technical education (CTE) program*
- *15 students earned an occupational completion point by mastering all job skills*
- *5 students passed industry certification exams*



2 Council partnerships are helping more people understand how to get funding and build postsecondary programs for students with I/DD.

- *Think College, the National Coordinating Center for Transition Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability*
- *The Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities at the University of Central Florida, which manages the Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program (FPCTP)*



**In 2020,
Florida Postsecondary
Comprehensive Transition
Programs had grown from**

8 in
2017
to
19

SELF-ADVOCACY LEADERSHIP

In 2020, Florida Self-Advocates Network'D (Florida SAND), the statewide self-advocacy organization, worked with Partners in Policymaking to protect the benefits people with I/DD receive from the iBudget waiver.

Florida SAND also led a response to the COVID-19 pandemic to help people with I/DD. Staff from Florida SAND met weekly to plan for online and remote ways to help people with I/DD who were affected by the crisis.

15

local grassroots groups received the “**Making Waves**” regional training, delivered by other self-advocate trainers.

Florida SAND leaders provided training to 80 self-advocates in 2020.

Florida’s DD Leadership Network Cadre, a group of self-advocates, participated in training, technical assistance, and mentoring throughout 2020. They also successfully provided a half-day virtual conference on employment.

43

individuals

were participating on boards or councils.

27

family members and 2 self-advocates graduated from Partners in Policymaking

SELF-ADVOCACY SYSTEMS CHANGE

In 2020, the Working People with Disabilities Program was approved in Florida!

It helps people with developmental disabilities under Florida’s Medicaid Waiver programs increase their monthly income limit up to 550 percent of the Federal Benefit Rate if they have earned income through paid employment.

Cash assets up to
\$13,000
per person and

\$24,000
for a couple.

- **Allows a retirement account**



HOUSING

In 2020, the Council helped secure

\$250
Million

through the CARES Act. This protects access to affordable housing.

The Council supported the delivery of trainings for 65 individuals with I/DD, their family members, and other stakeholders. This resulted in a plan for influencing local and state housing funding.

WORKFORCE (DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS)

The Council's Pay Fair for Care campaign raised awareness of the importance of a fair wage for direct care. This resulted in a rate increase for Residential Habilitation providers totaling over \$40.6 million.

\$30.2 million was kept in the state budget to increase funds for those served on the iBudget Waiver. \$58 million was kept to serve individuals whose needs had changed.

The Council's "Save and Preserve the iBudget" efforts, Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day, and support from Florida legislators resulted in a great deal of funding for the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD).

Click the link below to learn more:

iBudget Waiver - Protecting Floridian's Rights

<https://ibudgetwaiver.com>

BROAD SYSTEMS CHANGE

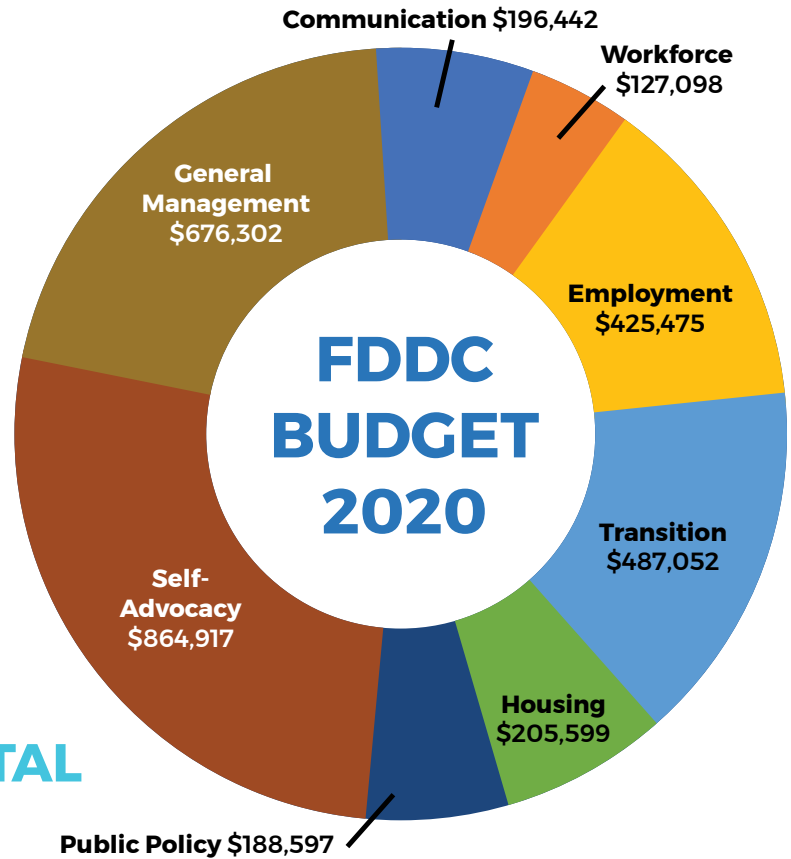


- APD received \$241 million to help people on the waiver. This money helped catch up for the 3 years that had no funding in this area.
- APD received more than \$30 million to bring people off the iBudget waitlist.
- \$58 million was saved for people whose needs would change throughout the year.



FLORIDA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL BUDGET

FLORIDA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL



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124 Marriott Drive, Suite 203 • Tallahassee, Florida 32301-2981
(850) 488-4180 or (800) 580-7801 • Fax: (850) 922-6702
admin@FDDC.org • www.FDDC.org