

2019 Legislative Agenda

Founded by parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in 1946, The Arc Minnesota promotes and protects the human rights of people with I/DD, actively supporting them and their families in a lifetime of full inclusion and participation in their communities.

Improve Access to MA-TEFRA

(S.F. 480, Relph/H.F. 748, Mann & S.F. 494, Abeler)

The Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act (TEFRA) allows parents to receive in-home supports and medical services for their children with disabilities through Medical Assistance (MA). In 1990, the state imposed a sliding scale parental fee that has dramatically increased over time, making MA-TEFRA unaffordable for many Minnesota families. Furthermore, bureaucratically complex enrollment & renewal processes create additional barriers to accessing critical services, supports, and therapies that help children thrive.

Reducing parental fees and streamlining enrollment & renewal for MA-TEFRA will help ensure that all Minnesota children with disabilities get the supports they need to build a foundation for success.

Establish the Minnesota Inclusion

Initiative (H.F. 911, Cantrell)

Through microgrants for self-advocacy groups statewide, the Minnesota Inclusion Initiative will create opportunities for individuals with I/DD to coordinate community-based projects that improve community integration, educate decision-makers and the general public about systemic barriers to inclusion, and advocate for systems change.

Establishing the Minnesota Inclusion Initiative will help promote the human rights of people with I/DD, advance equity, and expand inclusion in our communities statewide.

Prevent Sexual Violence & Abuse

(H.F. 912, Morrison)

Individuals with I/DD experience sexual violence at a rate seven times higher than others who do not have a disability. Nearly 90 percent of women and girls with I/DD will be subject to sexual violence during their lifetime, with 66% of sexual violence incidents perpetrated by someone they know – whether staff, relative, intimate partner, or other acquaintance.

Investing in evidence-based training and education will help prevent sexual violence against people with I/DD, protecting their human rights.

Reform Minnesota's PCA Program

(S.F. 968, Relph)

The workforce shortage is a cross-sector crisis affecting industries statewide, but the stakes for Minnesotans with disabilities are literally life and death. Without significant reform in the Personal Care Assistance (PCA) program, the staffing crisis will erode the independence of people with disabilities, forcing them into more restrictive, expensive institutional settings.

Reforming Minnesota's PCA program with a data-driven framework will support longterm sustainability of this cost-effective service, which helps people with disabilities live and work as independently as possible.

Improve Consumer-Directed Community Supports

Consumer Directed Community Supports (CDCS) offers people accessing Medical Assistance (MA) waivers a range of options in effectively managing their funding and staff. Expanding CDCS to allow for shared care and other flexible, non-traditional supports will help alleviate the workforce shortage while honoring self-direction, and ensure that people with disabilities and their families have access the services that are important to and for them.

Improving CDCS will help individuals with disabilities and their family members take ownership of important decisions about their supports, increasing flexibility and choice while reducing dependence on more costly, traditional services.

Stabilize Home & Community Based Services (S.F. 6, Utke; H.F. 179, Halverson)

The Best Life Alliance 2019 legislative proposal ends a destabilizing cut to community-based services rates due to federal action. The bill takes steps to address the severe workforce shortage impacting the critical supports accessed by over 30,000 Minnesotans with disabilities to live and work in their communities.

Supporting the Best Life Alliance legislation will enact much needed reforms to the rate setting system for these critical home & community based services.

Expand Affordable Housing Options

Individuals with disabilities and people in direct support professions are struggling to find accessible, affordable housing options throughout Minnesota. This limits choice, increases dependence on institutional settings, puts people at risk of homelessness, and drives up costs for the state. Investing in the Homes for All Coalition's legislative agenda will increase affordable housing options, ensuring stability in the lives of individuals with disabilities and those who support them.

Investing in affordable, supportive housing options statewide will provide more individuals with disabilities the opportunity to live as independently as possible in inclusive settings of their choice.

Invest in Special Education Services

Students with intellectual & developmental disabilities have the right to be educated in general education classrooms in their neighborhood schools with appropriate services, supplementary aids, and supports. That's why we support the Coalition for Children with Disabilities' legislative agenda, which seeks to secure adequate funding for special education services, increase mental health supports, provide professional development & training for paraprofessionals, and reduce the use of exclusionary disciplinary practices for all students.

Through investments in special education services and strategic policy change, we can ensure that students with disabilities achieve success - starting in the classroom and into adulthood.