



## **The Arc Minnesota's Public Policy Principles**

Through nonpartisan legislative advocacy, we support public policies founded in the principles of **human and civil rights, autonomy and self-determination, inclusion and individualization**, to advance systems change that promotes equity for Minnesotans with disabilities.

These principles act as a framework for our legislative advocacy efforts, informing our stakeholders, policymakers, elected officials, and the public at large of our fundamental view on key issues - acting as a guidepost in our decision-making.

By upholding these principles and positions in our public policy advocacy, The Arc Minnesota aims to address critical problems affecting people with I/DD and their family members, while identifying solutions that promote choice, advance equity and inclusion, and increase access to opportunity.

### **Human & Civil Rights**

All people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are entitled to human and civil rights. These rights include the rights to autonomy, dignity, family, justice, life, liberty, equality, self-determination, community participation, property, health, well-being, access to voting, and equality of opportunity.

We believe that all people with I/DD are entitled to human and civil rights regardless of:

- age, gender, race/ethnicity,
- sexual orientation,
- cultural, linguistic, geographic, and spiritual diversity, economic status,
- severity of disability/intensity of needed supports, or
- other factors that expose them to increased risk of rights violations.

The human and civil rights of all people with I/DD must be honored, protected, communicated, and enforced - and thus be central to all advocacy efforts.

### **Autonomy & Self-Determination**

Many individuals with I/DD have not had the opportunity or the support to make choices and decisions about important aspects of their lives. Instead, they are often overprotected and involuntarily segregated, with others making decisions about key elements of their lives.



People with I/DD have the same right to, and responsibilities that accompany, self-determination as everyone else. They must have opportunities, respectful support, and the authority to exert control in their lives, to self-direct their services to the extent they choose, and to advocate on their own behalf.

### **Inclusion & Individualization**

Individuals with I/DD often are not treated equally. They have been labeled by their disability and separated from the community. For many years they were relegated to sterile, dehumanizing institutions and even now, the services they receive frequently segregate, isolate, and focus on an individual's deficits rather than their strengths and lifestyle choices. They continue experiencing exclusion in schools, jobs, and in their social lives.

The Arc Minnesota supports public policies that maximize inclusion and individualization for people with I/DD of all ages, in all areas of life.

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