



What is the Purpose of DD Council Grants?

The purpose of a DD Council grant is to support the Council's mission. It is one tool to change service systems and alter the way supports are provided. Grants may build coalitions, influence public attitudes, cut across cultural barriers, and encourage people with disabilities to plan their own lives.

Since the early 1980s, the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council has awarded more than \$40 million in grants. Many projects that used this money have changed systems to improve the lives of thousands of Michigan citizens with developmental disabilities; projects for which funding ended years ago still continue to support change and independence for people with developmental disabilities in many Michigan communities.

Congress provides grant and operating funds to councils in each state. It also sets requirements for how they can be used. Michigan DD Council members, with information and advice from work groups, committees, and the public, develop a five-year plan for using the grant money. Grants are offered only to carry out the plan. They are awarded on a competitive basis.

The Council's grants, like all of its activities, are based on core values. These are self-determination, choice, community inclusion, consumer participation, collaboration, and cultural competence. Grants from the Michigan DD Council target changes in:

- **The “system.”** This means changing the way services and supports are provided, including ordinary everyday services anyone in the community might receive;
- **The community.** This includes its attitudes, awareness, acceptance and willingness to include persons with developmental disabilities; and
- **The lives of people with developmental disabilities.** Successes is based on people taking charge of their own lives – self-determination – and by supporting people with developmental disabilities to live, work, contribute and participate in inclusive communities.

Lives change when systems and communities change. Among the systems targeted for change by the Council through its grants are:

- **Education** (all children, all together, all the time, with the supports they need);
- **Employment** (real work for real wages, with needed supports);
- **Transportation** (public and private ways to ride, walk or roll where and when people choose);
- **Housing** (safe, affordable, accessible home of choice with needed supports); and
- **Healthcare** (quality, availability and range of services, including long term care).

These systems need to assure:

- **Choice** (services and supports provided by the people and in the location that the individual chooses).
- **Cultural competence and outreach** for diversity (many cultural groups are ignored when it comes to help for people with disabilities).
- **Council grant projects** encourage and support people with developmental disabilities to get control of their own lives, determine their own goals and lifestyles, and contribute to their communities.

Making systems responsive to the needs of people with developmental disabilities benefits every Michigan community.

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