

Ohio's Plan to Increase Independent Living Options for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

October 20, 2021



Office of Housing and Capital Projects

Independent Living Options

- Covered by a lease
- Settings that are chosen
- Clear separation of services and housing
- Where individuals maintain control of the housing

The Gap:

DODD Housing Resources are insufficient to address the need



The Plan



The Primary Focus

- Individuals who are extremely low income – at or below 30% of AMGI
 - SSI
 - SSDI
 - Combination of SSI/SSDI
 - Combination of SSI and wage income

Ohio's Plan to Increase Independent Living Options for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities



Goal 1

Expand the Inventory of Affordable and Accessible Rental Units

- Strategy 1.1: Pursue and leverage local, state, and federal rental subsidy opportunities.
- Strategy 1.2: Provide incentives for developers to build affordable units for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Strategy 1.3: Provide incentives to developers to increase accessibility levels and/or universally designed rental units.

Strategy 1.1: Pursue and leverage local, state and federal rental subsidy opportunities.

- 1.1.1. Build upon the state's Ohio 811 Program.
- 1.1.2. Incentivize county boards to coordinate with local public housing authorities by placing individuals on Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) waitlists and by encouraging their non-profit housing organizations to accept HCVs or apply for project-based assistance.
- 1.1.3. Incentivize county boards to coordinate with their public housing authority to pursue federal subsidy opportunities targeted to disability populations.
- 1.1.4. Increase the capacity of county board-established non-profit housing corporations related to leveraging state Community Capital Assistance.
- 1.1.5. Identify sources to provide secondary financing (operations grant) to enable further write down of rents on affordable housing units that serve individuals with disabilities.

Strategy 1.2: Provide incentives for developers to build affordable units for individuals with disabilities.

- 1.2.1. Develop a comprehensive plan with OHFA to serve extremely low-income individuals with developmental disabilities.
- 1.2.2 Incentivize Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) developers to include more 30 percent units in their projects.

Strategy 1.3: Provide incentives to developers to increase accessibility levels and/or universally designed rental units.

- 1.3.1 Incentivize LIHTC developers to increase accessibility and/or universally designed rental units by offering grants to offset costs associated with incorporating new design elements.
- 1.3.2 Incorporate the most useful design elements from 1.3.1 into OHFA's policies.

Goal 2

Increase Access to Rental Subsidies

- Strategy 2.1: Partner with state and local agencies to prioritize rental subsidy needs of individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Strategy 2.2: Pursue and/or develop funding sources to expand the availability of rental assistance.

Strategy 2.1: Partner with state and local agencies to prioritize rental subsidy needs of individuals with developmental disabilities.

2.1.1. Encourage local Public Housing Authorities (PHA) to adopt preferences for individuals with disabilities, if not already in place.

2.1.2. Encourage county boards to partner with PHAs and other local or state agencies in their annual planning processes.

2.1.3. Encourage county board-established non-profit housing corporations to coordinate with PHAs to prioritize Housing Choice Vouchers for their projects.

Strategy 2.2: Pursue and/or develop funding sources to expand the availability of rental assistance.

2.2.1. Continued partnership around the Ohio 811 Program, a HUD funded project-based rental subsidy program for persons with disabilities to maximize the number of individuals served.

2.2.2. Continue to partner with the Ohio Housing Authorities Conference and their membership to leverage existing resources.

2.2.3. Continue to partner with the Ohio Housing Authorities Conference and their membership to leverage new resources, especially resources directly targeted to individuals with disabilities (Mainstream Vouchers, NED Category 1 and NED Category 2 Vouchers).

2.2.4. Encourage the creation of a state-subsidy for extremely low-income individuals with disabilities.

Goal 3

Build Understanding and Increase Awareness of Informed Choices

- Strategy 3.1: Develop and implement a communications, advocacy, outreach, and education plan.
- Strategy 3.2: Build the capacity of public and private agencies to assist individuals with disabilities and their families in making informed choices related to housing.

Strategy 3.1: Develop and implement a communications, advocacy, outreach, and education plan.

- 3.1.1. Create a communication plan that addresses key audiences to independent living, including, but not limited to, individuals with developmental disabilities, families, county boards, Councils of Government, advocacy groups, providers, housing developers, property managers, landlords, PHAs, other state agencies, and stakeholders.
- 3.1.2. Develop and message out the key components of the independent housing options that are being supported in this plan using social and other media, including the fundamental principles, opportunities, challenges and barriers associated with each option.
- 3.1.3 Convene a group of public and private stakeholders to maximize outreach efforts.
- 3.1.4 Communicate and outreach to housing stakeholders, including developers, public housing authorities and landlords related to the statewide Housing Locator-Social Serve, accessibility standards, principles of Universal Design, reasonable accommodations and reasonable modifications, HUD guidance as it relates to individuals with disabilities.
- 3.1.5. Develop an outreach, education and training plan for individuals and their families that explores various independent living options, and topics that support independent living, such as affordability, service provision, employment, transportation, accessibility modifications.
- 3.1.6. Develop an outreach, education and training plan for county boards and other stakeholders who assist in the identification and procurement of independent living arrangements. Topics would include but not be limited to landlord tenant law, fair market rent, Fair Housing, funding opportunities.

Strategy 3.2: Build the capacity of public and private agencies to assist individuals with disabilities and their families in making informed choices related to housing.

- 3.2.1. Raise the profile of independent living in the Individual Service Plan (ISP).
- 3.2.2. Develop and implement independent living training for county board staff.
- 3.2.3. Develop and implement independent living training for state Developmental Center staff.
- 3.2.4. Develop and implement independent living training for Intermediate Care Facility staff.
- 3.2.5. Develop and implement independent living training for Direct Support Professionals.

Goal 4

Review Potential Policy or Practice Changes Related to Services

- Strategy 4.1: Explore cost-savings measures that support independent living in the setting of one's choice.
- Strategy 4.2: Survey boards and service providers around unique approaches to providing services.

Strategy 4.1: Explore cost-savings measures that support independent living in the setting of one's choice.

4.1.1. Encourage county boards to collaborate with contiguous counties, or regionally.

4.1.2. Increase coordination between providers.

4.1.3. Expand use of technology, including remote monitoring and supports, and other innovative services or practices.

4.1.4. Explore additional services that support independent living in the setting of one's choice (e.g., services and activities to expand home and community-based living opportunities and to promote community integration, per the June 26, 2015 CMS Bulletin

Strategy 4.2: Survey boards and services providers around unique approaches to providing services.

4.2.1. Promote peer to peer learning regarding unique approaches.

Goal 5

Remove Challenges to Independent Living

- Strategy 5.1: Identify tools that support independent living.
- Strategy 5.2: Identify and remove barriers to independent living.

Strategy 5.1: Identify tools that support independent living.

5.1.1. Increase use of Fair housing requests - reasonable accommodation and reasonable modification - to accommodate people with disabilities.

5.1.2. Increase the use of STABLE accounts to support housing goals.

5.1.3. Promote best practices to accessing benefits such as SSI, SSDI, Access, Outreach and Recovery (SOAR methodology).

5.1.4. Encourage the inclusion of county boards in the local continuum of care planning process.

5.1.5. Explore establishing a landlord risk mitigation fund for individuals with pre-existing evictions or damaging behaviors.

Strategy 5.2: Remove barriers to independent living.

5.2.1. Incentivize developers to adopt inclusive or low barrier Tenant Selection Plans.

5.2.2. Examine unfair and discriminatory zoning policies.

Goal 6

Assess and Implement Housing Plan

- Strategy 6.1: Improve data collection so that it presents an accurate picture of individuals' current living situation.
- Strategy 6.2: Convene an advisory committee to continuously assess and oversee implementation of the Plan.
- Strategy 6.3: Track, evaluate, and continuously improve upon Plan progress.

Strategy 6.1: Improve data collection so that it presents an accurate picture of the population's current living situation.

6.1.1. Evaluate current data and make recommendations for improvements.

6.1.2. Create data sharing agreements with other departments to advance the goals within this Plan.

Strategy 6.2: Convene an advisory committee to continuously assess and oversee implementation of the Plan.

6.2.1. Select advisory team members.

6.2.2. Establish roles, meeting schedule, timeline for implementation.

Strategy 6.3: Track, evaluate, and continuously improve upon Plan progress.

6.3.1. Establish process for tracking and evaluating Plan.

6.3.2. Establish process for updating document.

Capital Housing Contact Information

John Charles, DODD, Capital Housing Administrator

john.charles@dodd.ohio.gov

(614) 940-7964

Jeannette Welsh, DODD, Capital Housing Manager

jeannette.welsh@dodd.ohio.gov

(614) 466-4179

Aaron Lichtenauer, DODD, Capital Projects Administrator

aaron.lichtenauer@dodd.ohio.gov

(614) 230-5462

Felicia Bond, DODD, Administrative Professional

felicia.bond@dodd.ohio.gov

(614) 387-0920