

## **Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council** **Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Policy**

### PURPOSE

The mission and philosophy of the Colorado Developmental Disabilities Planning Council and all of its committees, standing and ad-hoc, are to work toward fostering the independence, productivity, and integration of persons with developmental disabilities. We recognize that persons with disabilities are “individuals” and not a homogenous group. This policy guides all Council work to consider all aspects of ethnic and cultural diversity on all areas of advocacy.

### PHILOSOPHY

- Persons with disabilities are as ethnically and culturally diverse as persons without disabilities
- Ethnic and cultural diversity is equally viewed with cognitive, physical, and emotional diversity within the best practices of the Council
- Ethnic and cultural diversity will be considered in every aspect of Council work to ensure equal access, choice, and participation
- The Council must ensure that ethnic and cultural diversity does not create additional obstacles to receiving services and supports within the Colorado community.

### POLICY

The Colorado Developmental Disabilities Planning Council affirms, promotes and supports ethnic and cultural diversity within its work. Information, opportunities, support, and assistance shall be provided to assure that ethnic and cultural diversity is respected and defended in a progressive and sensitive manner.

### GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are designed as recommendations for the Colorado Developmental Disabilities Planning Council when developing and implementing any policies, practices, projects, organizations, or collaboration with respect to issues for persons with developmental disabilities.

- Encourage, support and increase the number and involvement of populations which are ethnically and culturally diverse on all levels of advisory and policy making committees in their capacities as consumer, parent, agency representatives or other professionals.
- Promote recruitment, training, and retention of ethnic and culturally diverse populations in professional and paraprofessional careers in the developmental disabilities service system.

- Establish collaborative efforts with ethnic and culturally diverse communities to provide services.
- Ask ethnic and culturally diverse groups within communities what their service needs are and support them in planning and implementing those services.
- Promote and foster sensitivity and understanding of ethnic and cultural differences throughout the developmental disabilities service system and community to encourage ethnically and culturally sensitive screening and assessment processes and services that are child and family focused and friendly.
- Increase the availability and accessibility to information, services, and resources that are available to Colorado's ethnic and culturally diverse communities by translating public awareness materials into appropriate languages and dialects.
- Raise public awareness about ethnic and cultural issues for people with developmental disabilities.

## REQUIREMENTS

- Include language about ethnic and cultural diversity in the state plan and in all Requests for Proposals; i.e., "Applications must demonstrate the involvement of groups and individuals who will provide input regarding specific issues affecting ethnic and culturally diverse people with developmental disabilities and their families.
- Any proposal or response to a published Request for Proposals presented to the Council must specifically address, as a section in the proposal or response the extent to which they have considered involvement or impact on ethnic and culturally diverse populations.

## POLICY ON ETHNIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Adopted November 18, 2003

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Jean Snoddy, Chairperson

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Marcia Tewell, Executive Director

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