

**VOLUME II: HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES**

**GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON
DISABILITIES**

Agency Summary

Governor's Commission on Disabilities

Agency Mission

The Commission's mission is to ensure "that people with disabilities are afforded the opportunities to exercise all the rights and responsibilities accorded to citizens of this state". {RIGL 42-51-6(1)} The Commission's goals are: 1) The adoption of state government policies that will ensure every person with a disability: a) Is able to work; b) Is able to live on her / his own; with the right services, at the right time, and in the right place; and c) Is involved in her / his neighborhood and community. 2) That every person with a disability is able to exercise all the rights and responsibilities accorded to citizens of this state. 3) That every working age person with disability has the opportunity to work with supports and / or accommodations if needed. 4) That entrepreneurship opportunities and supports are available for working age persons with disabilities. The Commission's vision for Rhode Island is that every Rhode Islander with a disability is able to accomplish their maximum potential in independence, human development, productivity and economic self-sufficiency.

Agency Description

The Commission has 18 volunteer Commissioners, appointed by the Governor; numerous volunteers who: serve on several committees; mediate disability discrimination complaints; monitor polling place accessibility on Election Day; and mentor young adults in the Mary Brennan Fellowships. Much of the Commission's work is conducted by volunteers serving on: the Accessibility Committee, developing state's 504/ADA Transition Plan, for removing access barriers in state owned buildings, schools, colleges, beaches, and parks; the Disability Business Enterprise Committee certifying small businesses owned by person(s) with a disability to receive preferential points when bidding on state contracts for goods and services; the Employment Committee overseeing the ADA employment outreach and training and promoting work and work incentives; the Legislation Committee, conducting forums to understand the concerns of people with disabilities and their families, drafting bills that will improve the lives of people with disabilities; and issuing legislative impact statements on pending legislation to General Assembly and the Governor; the Public Awareness Committee developing and implementing a broad public awareness campaign. The Commission's five (5) staff are responsible for (1) Promoting on behalf of the people with disabilities and assuring, on behalf of the state, that people with disabilities are afforded the opportunities to exercise all of the rights and responsibilities accorded to citizens of this state; (2) Arousing community interest in the concerns of people with disabilities through the utilization of whatever community and state resources the commission may deem necessary to accomplish the maximum in independent living and human development; (3) Coordinating compliance with federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities by state agencies; (4) Providing technical assistance to public and private agencies, businesses, and citizens in complying with federal and state laws protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities; (5) Survey all polling places prior to and on every election day; (6) Administering the Mary Brennan fellowship program for students and young adults with disabilities; (7) Managing the Livable Home Modification grant program for home modification and accessibility enhancements to construct, retrofit, and/or renovate residences to allow individuals with significant disabilities to remain in community settings; and (8) Administer the federal Independent Living Services State Grant.

Statutory History

The Commission's responsibilities are defined in RI General Laws: 42-51; 42-87; 37-8-15 & 15.1; 42-46-5(b); 42-46-13(f); 37-2.2; 30-15-6; 28-5.1-9; and 17-9.1-31, Article I § 2, RI Constitution and federal laws: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability (29 USC 794); Section 705(e) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. § 796c); the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 USC 12101 et. seq.); and Section 261 of the Help America Vote Act, Election Assistance to Individuals with Disabilities (42 USC 15461).

Budget

Governor's Commission on Disabilities

	2022 Actuals	2023 Actuals	2024 Enacted Budget	2024 Revised Budget	2025 Recommended
Expenditures by Program					
Central Management	1,358,383	1,514,288	1,983,720	2,571,463	1,680,507
Total Expenditures	1,358,383	1,514,288	1,983,720	2,571,463	1,680,507
Expenditures by Object					
Salary and Benefits	410,303	468,750	564,470	537,450	554,123
Contract Professional Services	113,395	123,089	129,792	135,997	148,662
Operating Supplies and Expenses	45,773	80,304	116,543	97,314	93,376
Assistance and Grants	787,107	835,829	1,172,915	1,793,838	881,831
Subtotal: Operating	1,356,579	1,507,971	1,983,720	2,564,599	1,677,992
Capital Purchases and Equipment	1,805	6,317	0	6,864	2,515
Subtotal: Other	1,805	6,317	0	6,864	2,515
Total Expenditures	1,358,383	1,514,288	1,983,720	2,571,463	1,680,507
Expenditures by Source of Funds					
General Revenue	1,014,840	1,153,698	1,542,951	2,148,870	1,528,968
Federal Funds	305,139	320,336	378,638	377,937	85,000
Restricted Receipts	38,404	40,254	62,131	44,656	66,539
Total Expenditures	1,358,383	1,514,288	1,983,720	2,571,463	1,680,507
FTE Authorization	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0

Personnel Agency Summary

Governor's Commission on Disabilities

	FY 2024		FY 2025	
	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
Classified	1.0	89,304	1.0	79,708
Unclassified	4.0	241,797	4.0	258,099
Subtotal	5.0	331,101	5.0	337,807
Total Salaries		331,101		337,807
Benefits				
FICA		25,330		25,843
Health Benefits		52,495		62,682
Payroll Accrual		1,933		1,959
Retiree Health		14,965		13,310
Retirement		98,548		99,179
Subtotal		193,271		202,973
Total Salaries and Benefits	5.0	524,372	5.0	540,780
Cost Per FTE Position		104,874		108,156
Statewide Benefit Assessment		13,078		13,343
Payroll Costs	5.0	537,450	5.0	554,123
Purchased Services				
Clerical and Temporary Services		43,642		45,418
Design and Engineering Services		30,000		52,915
Management & Consultant Services		43,437		31,812
Other Contracts		18,918		18,517
Subtotal		135,997		148,662
Total Personnel	5.0	673,447	5.0	702,785
Distribution by Source of Funds				
General Revenue	5.0	658,092	5.0	671,965
Restricted Receipts	0.0	15,355	0.0	30,820
Total All Funds	5.0	673,447	5.0	702,785

Personnel

Governor's Commission on Disabilities

Central Management

		FY 2024		FY 2025	
		FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
Classified					
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES	0132 A	1.0	58,272	1.0	79,708
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES	0134 A	0.0	31,032	0.0	0
Subtotal Classified		1.0	89,304	1.0	79,708
Unclassified					
ASSISTANT ADA COORDINATOR	0824 A	2.0	111,050	2.0	122,676
PROGRAM MANAGER	0828 A	1.0	71,445	1.0	74,057
SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE	0821 A	1.0	59,302	1.0	61,366
Subtotal Unclassified		4.0	241,797	4.0	258,099
Subtotal		5.0	331,101	5.0	337,807
Total Salaries			331,101		337,807
Benefits					
FICA			25,330		25,843
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Performance Measures

Governor's Commission on Disabilities

Central Management

Advocating on Behalf of People with Disabilities

The Commission's goal is to ensure that people with disabilities have the opportunity to exercise all rights and responsibilities accorded to Rhode Island citizens and are able to reach their maximum potential. The figures below represent the percent of successful outcomes for GCD's advocacy for disability-friendly policy adopted by the General Assembly (laws and budget articles), Executive Branch and General Officers (regulations), and Judiciary and quasi-judicial entities (decisions). [Note: Legislation that was recommended as beneficial if amended, that were neither amended nor enacted, has been re-categorized as not a successful outcome.]

	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Frequency: Annual					
Target	75%	75%	75%	40%	45%
Actual	52%	43%	36%	--	--

Promoting Safe and Livable Homes

The Commission seeks to divert people with significant disabilities from nursing homes, by modifying their homes and apartments. The figures below represent the number of beneficiaries whose healthcare provider determined would have moved to long term residential care, but for their home modifications. [Note: This performance measure was established in FY 2023 and historical targets are not available.]

	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Frequency: Annual					
Target	--	--	--	200	200
Actual	109	207	210	--	--

Promoting Barrier Free Elections

The Commission seeks to ensure voters with disabilities are able to cast votes independently, by secret ballot, and at the same polling location as their neighbors. The figures below represent the percent of polling places barrier-free on Election Day. Measure includes data from special elections that take place in Rhode Island. [Note: No target or actuals available for State Fiscal Year 2022 because no elections were held.]

	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Frequency: Annual					
Target	100%	--	100%	90%	95%
Actual	21%	--	89%	--	--

Promoting the Rights of People with Disabilities

The Commission works to foster voluntary compliance with federal and state disability rights laws and regulations. The figures below represent the percent of accessibility inquiries informally resolved prior to hearing. [Note: Values greater than 100% represent complaints filed in one fiscal year resolved in the next fiscal year.]

	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Frequency: Annual					
Target	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
Actual	45%	100%	47%	--	--
