

**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

	2023 Actuals	2024 Actuals	2025 Enacted Budget	2025 Revised Budget	2026 Recommended
Expenditures by Program					
Central Management	1,514,288	1,638,906	1,936,931	2,738,921	2,056,042
Total Expenditures	1,514,288	1,638,906	1,936,931	2,738,921	2,056,042
Expenditures by Object					
Salary and Benefits	468,750	509,900	555,547	616,319	662,720
Contract Professional Services	123,089	57,974	148,662	150,823	154,275
Operating Supplies and Expenses	80,304	79,132	93,376	103,471	101,756
Assistance and Grants	835,829	990,874	1,136,831	1,867,396	1,136,379
Subtotal: Operating	1,507,971	1,637,880	1,934,416	2,738,009	2,055,130
Capital Purchases and Equipment	6,317	1,026	2,515	912	912
Subtotal: Other	6,317	1,026	2,515	912	912
Total Expenditures	1,514,288	1,638,906	1,936,931	2,738,921	2,056,042
Expenditures by Source of Funds					
General Revenue	1,153,698	1,298,969	1,530,392	2,331,664	1,610,527
Federal Funds	320,336	329,086	340,000	340,067	340,067
Restricted Receipts	40,254	10,852	66,539	67,190	105,448
Total Expenditures	1,514,288	1,638,906	1,936,931	2,738,921	2,056,042
FTE Authorization	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0

Personnel Agency Summary

Governor's Commission on Disabilities

	FY 2025		FY 2026	
	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
Classified	1.0	94,048	1.0	101,661
Unclassified	4.0	277,101	4.0	300,566
Subtotal	5.0	371,149	5.0	402,227
Total Salaries		371,149		402,227
Benefits				
FICA		28,393		30,770
Health Benefits		69,886		74,292
Holiday		1,495		0
Payroll Accrual		2,171		2,345
Retiree Health		14,622		13,072
Retirement		117,840		128,350
Subtotal		234,407		248,829
Total Salaries and Benefits	5.0	605,556	5.0	651,056
Cost Per FTE Position		121,111		130,211
Statewide Benefit Assessment		10,763		11,664
Payroll Costs	5.0	616,319	5.0	662,720
Purchased Services				
Clerical and Temporary Services		45,418		45,870
Design and Engineering Services		54,915		52,915
Management & Consultant Services		31,812		36,812
Other Contracts		18,678		18,678
Subtotal		150,823		154,275
Total Personnel	5.0	767,142	5.0	816,995
Distribution by Source of Funds				
General Revenue	5.0	736,322	5.0	786,175
Restricted Receipts	0.0	30,820	0.0	30,820
Total All Funds	5.0	767,142	5.0	816,995

Personnel

Governor's Commission on Disabilities

Central Management

		FY 2025		FY 2026	
		FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
Classified					
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES	0134 A	1.0	94,048	1.0	101,661
Subtotal Classified		1.0	94,048	1.0	101,661
Unclassified					
ASSISTANT ADA COORDINATOR	0824 A	2.0	133,000	2.0	143,713
PROGRAM MANAGER	0828 A	1.0	79,652	1.0	87,243
SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE	0821 A	1.0	64,449	1.0	69,610
Subtotal Unclassified		4.0	277,101	4.0	300,566
Subtotal		5.0	371,149	5.0	402,227
Total Salaries			371,149		402,227
Benefits					
FICA			28,393		30,770
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Performance Measures

Governor's Commission on Disabilities

Central Management

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>				
<i>Frequency: Annual</i>	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	--	--	200	200	210
Actual	207	210	260	--	--

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 targets or actuals available in years when statewide elections are not held (FY 2022 and FY 2026).]

	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
<i>Frequency: Annual</i>	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	--	100%	90%	95%	--
Actual	--	89%	89%	--	--

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 Commission's legislative committee reviews bills significant to the rights of individuals with disabilities and drafts policy statements expressing the Commission's viewpoint. The Commission also provides comments on new regulations filed. The figures below represent the number of written policy statements and comments written by the Commission on bills and regulations impacting people with disabilities. [Note: This performance measure was established in FY 2025 and historical targets and actuals are not available.]

	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
<i>Frequency: Annual</i>	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	--	--	--	40	50
Actual	--	--	24	--	--

Technical Assistance Provided on the Americans with Disabilities Act

The Commission is responsible for 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, including the Americans with Disabilities Act. This technical assistance is provided through phone calls, emails, and in-person meetings. The figures below represent the number of contacts who have received technical assistance from the Commission related to the Americans with Disabilities Act. [Note: This performance measure was established in FY 2025 and historical targets and actuals are not available.]

	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
<i>Frequency: Annual</i>	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	--	--	--	1,761	1,800
Actual	--	--	--	--	--