

Act 186 Housing Alternatives and Options: Update to House Human Services Committee

Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living
Developmental Disabilities Services Division

Jennifer Garabedian, Director

Julie Abrahamson, Residential Housing Developer

March 23, 2023



Measures Related to Housing Included in Act 186

- Created Developmental Disabilities Services Division (DDSD) “Residential Housing Developer” position.
- Appropriated \$500,000 for pilot planning grants.
- Established [Act 186](#) Steering Committee.
- Identified partnership between Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council and Green Mountain Self-Advocates, Vermont’s statewide developmental disabilities self-advocacy organization, to commission housing study.

Developmental Disabilities Services Division (DDSD) Residential Program Developer

Incumbent

- Appropriated Global Commitment Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) funding for a limited services position within DDS.
- Julie Abrahamson
 - Began in January 2023.
 - Extensive experience supporting individuals and families through the Department for Children and Families, Family Services Division
 - Developed programs for and advocated on behalf of high-risk children and families.
 - Personal experience includes direct support for individuals receiving developmental disabilities services.

Role

Expand housing and residential services options for individuals with developmental disabilities, in accordance with federal home- and community-based services regulations.

- Investigate public and private funding opportunities for residential program development for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and assist individuals and families to access these options.
- Work with individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, and allies to identify potential models for residential services.
- Develop requests for proposals
 - Identify at least three pilot planning grants for different regions of the State.
 - Work with appropriate designated and specialized service agencies or other providers to implement selected pilots.

Key Achievements (to-date)

- Administrative support to Act 186 Steering Committee.
- Development of Pilot Planning Grant RFP drafts.
- Outreach to stakeholder groups.
- Attendance and updates at Developmental Services State Program Standing Committee and Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) Advisory Board.
- Membership on:
 - Agency of Human Services Housing Task Force.
 - State of Vermont Digital Equity Core Team.
 - Developmental Disabilities Services Workforce Workgroup.

Pilot Planning Grants

Framework

- Require a partnership with a designated or specialized service agency.
- Be in at least three (3) different regions of the State. Regions are defined by designated agency catchment areas.
- Intended to develop new housing and/or residential options.
- Reflect the varied needs of individuals with developmental disabilities— including options to support individuals with high support needs and/or alternative communication needs.
- Be consistent with state and federal home and community-based services regulations and guidelines.
- Be sustainable.

Implementation

- Use standard State of Vermont Request for Proposal (RFP) process.
- Scoring:
 - Will use de-identified submission and scoring process.
 - Will be evaluated by an Agency of Human Services team of Subject Matter Experts and Scorers.
 - Individuals who score the proposals are not the same as the Subject Matter Experts.
- Will be evaluated based on criteria included within the Act, such as:
 - Partnership with Designated Agency/Specialized Service Agency.
 - Adherence to state and federal regulations and guidelines.
 - Vision Statement.
 - Budget.

Timeline

Request for Proposal Posted	Mid-April
Bidders' Questions Due	Late-April
Department's Response to Questions Due	Mid-May
Closing Date/Proposals Due	Mid-June
Selection Notification	Late-July
Anticipated Commencement of Grants	Mid-August

Act 186 Steering Committee



Three (3) individuals with a developmental disability, appointed by the Green Mountain Self Advocates.

- ***Nicole Villemaire—Co-Chair***
- ***Chad Cleverly***
- ***Lisa Rudiakov***

Two (2) advocates who are either individuals with a developmental disability or a family member of an individual with a developmental disability, appointment by the State Program Standing Committee (established pursuant to 18 V.S.A §8733).

- ***Barbara Lee—Co-Chair***
- ***Max Barrows***

Two (2) family members of an individual with a developmental disability, appointed by Vermont Family Network.

- ***Lauren Arcuri***
- ***Elizabeth Campbell***

Two (2) representatives of the designated and specialized service agencies, appointed by Vermont Care Partners.

- ***Greg Mairs (Counseling Services of Addison County)***
- ***Julie Cunningham (Families First of Southern Vermont)***

Steering Committee: Role

- Provides advice and guidance to the Department in the development and selection of the pilot planning grants.
- Has met 6 times (October 2022 through March 2023) to provide input on the intent and content of the Request for Proposal (RFP).
- Has reviewed drafts of the RFP and provided feedback to clarify materials.
- To avoid conflict of interest, real or perceived, Steering Committee Members cannot review proposals.

Service Supported
Housing for
Vermonters with
Intellectual and
Developmental
Disabilities: 2023
Research Brief



Housing Research Brief: Objective

- Commissioned by Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council and Green Mountain Self-Advocates.
- Review strengths and need of current system through interviews and surveys of stakeholders.
- Project housing needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Vermont.
- Review services supported models around the country.

Housing Research Brief: Key Findings

Released on March 13, 2023.

- Need for increased housing options for individuals with I/DD.
- Permanent service supportive housing is the predominant model used in other states.
 - Model provides housing assistance and onsite services.
 - With proper supports, any individual can live in service supported housing.
 - Resident would continue to access Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) supports, as appropriate.
 - Estimates that over 600 units are necessary to meet current needs.