



State of Iowa Olmstead Plan Summary 2026-2031

“Delivering on the promise. Iowans with disabilities are living, learning, working, and enjoying life in the most integrated setting of their choice.”

Scan the QR code
to view the full plan.



The Progress Made

The Olmstead Progress Areas show that Iowa cares about helping people with disabilities live well in their communities. Even though these steps are not directly listed in the Olmstead plan, they are very important. They help meet different needs, bring people together, and make life better for everyone in Iowa.

Shaping the Future

The Olmstead Plan provides guidance to help improve health outcomes for people with disabilities in Iowa. It outlines how agencies and community groups can join forces to create positive change.



Olmstead Plan Overview

Iowa's Olmstead Plan demonstrates the state's dedication to ensuring people with disabilities can live and work in inclusive environments. It is a flexible plan that is reviewed and updated regularly to address evolving needs and priorities.

Moving Integration Forward

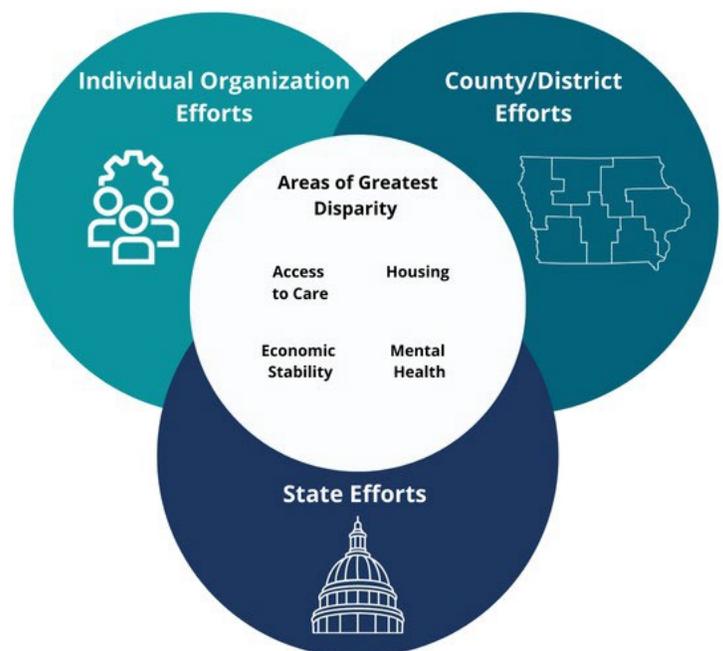
Over the next six years, the Olmstead Plan will guide efforts to better include Iowans with disabilities in their communities.

The plan will:

- **Guide Action:** Set priorities and define new initiatives to support Olmstead priorities.
- **Encourage Collaboration:** Bring together state and local agencies, partners and the disability community to work toward shared goals and create a positive culture.
- **Shape the Future:** Help shape future planning efforts within the disability service system, staying focused on our mission while adapting to community needs.

Closing Gaps, Building Inclusion

The 2026 Olmstead Plan identifies the most important needs for Iowans with disabilities using existing data. It includes all disability types, age groups, and health conditions, with a focus on the state's main health challenges. People with disabilities experience major differences in every major health issue in Iowa compared to those without disability. The plan prioritizes areas with the **largest gaps: access to care, economic stability, housing, and mental health.** It offers a six-year roadmap to reduce these gaps through collaboration between state agencies, disability access points, and local providers.



Connection to Iowa's State Health Assessment (SHA)



Access to Care

SHA Top Priority Area

Olmstead Primary Impact Areas:

- Access to Services
- Person-Centeredness 



Housing

SHA Top Priority Area

Olmstead Primary Impact Areas:

- Life in the Community
- Person-Centeredness 



Economic Stability

SHA Top Priority Area

Olmstead Primary Impact Areas:

- Quality of Life and Safety
- Life in the Community
- Person-Centeredness 



Mental Health

SHA Top Priority Area

Olmstead Primary Impact Areas:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Family and Natural Supports
- Person-Centeredness 

Progress Through HHS Programs and Services

Iowa has made big changes to its programs and services so people can have more independence and be part of their communities. These changes show Iowa's strong commitment to the Olmstead principles and to making sure people with disabilities get the support and resources they need to live and thrive in their communities.

Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)



- Assessment of home and community-based services settings.
- Implementation of the Hope and Opportunity in Many Environments (HOME) initiative focused on streamlining Iowa's HCBS services to better support individuals in achieving successful community living.

Responsive and Excellent Care for Healthy Youth (REACH)



- Implementation of REACH initiative to further improve home and community based behavioral health services for children and adolescents.

Glenwood Resource Post Move Monitoring



- Allocated \$51 million to fund Money follow the Person Transition Specialist to support successful community integration.
- Expanded the Community Integration Manager's role to ensure ongoing support post-transition into the community.
- Established the Center of Excellence Outreach Team in 2024 and continued in 2025 resulting in successful integration of individuals into the community.

Progress Through HHS Programs and Services

Office of State Long Term Care Ombudsman

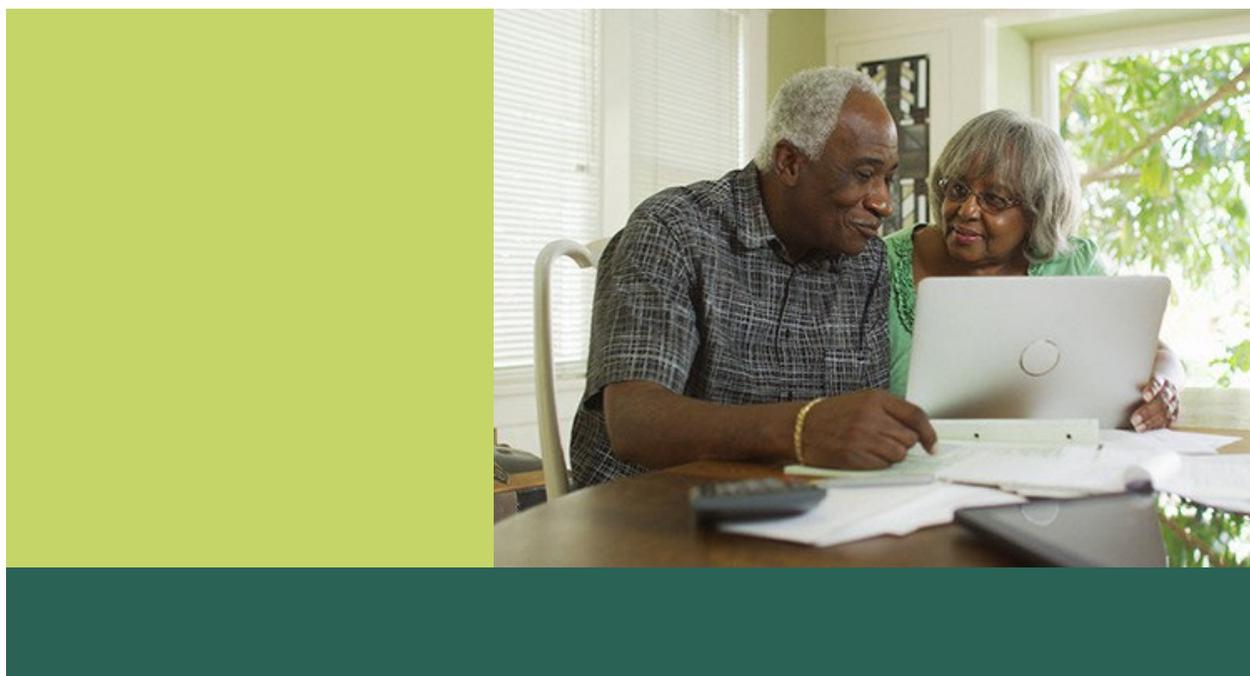


- The Office of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman works independently within Iowa HHS. It speaks up for individuals and the system to improve quality of life and care, and to protect the rights of facility residents and individuals.

Dependent Adult Protective Services



- Established specialized workforce, separate from child protective services.
- Established Adult Protective Services bureau in 2023 to protect dependent adults' well-being, promote independence, and support quality of life.



Progress Through HHS Service Systems

Iowa Disability Service System



- Formed Disability Access Points (DAPs) in July of 2025 to help people with disabilities, their families, and their caregivers find the short and long-term services and support. DAPs also connect Iowans with other systems like Behavioral Health, Medicaid and Public Health.
- Expanded the Aging and Disability Resource Network through the DAPs making it easier for people with disabilities to access services and understand all the options available.
- Completed a district assessment in each DAP to identify each district's strengths, gaps, and resources. These assessments will guide plans tailored to meet the specific needs of the communities they serve.

Aging Service System



- Expanded the Aging and Disability Resource Network (ADRC) through the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) to help older adults find short- and long-term supports and services for disabilities.
- Development of Area Plans on Aging show how each AAA will serve older adults in greatest need.
- Development of the Multisector Plan for Aging (MPA) to improve service coordination and service infrastructure for Iowa's aging population, including people aging with disabilities.
- Launched MPA workgroups in May of 2025, working with the State Health Improvement Plan, to create strategies that:
 - Improve access to person-centered and supportive services.
 - Support economic stability.
 - Increase accessible and affordable housing and transportation.
 - Boost social and emotional connectiveness.

Behavioral Health Service System



- Development of the Behavioral Health System Statewide Plan also improves access to care throughout the state by offering a continuum of behavioral health services for individuals with disabilities with behavioral health needs.

State of Iowa Olmstead Plan: Recommendations for Access to Care



What We Hope to Achieve

Individuals with disabilities have timely and convenient access to services and supports that are responsive to their needs and preferences, delivered by a qualified, well-trained, and supported workforce.

What We Will Do

Ensure children are connected to prevention and early intervention services and resources to help them thrive.



How We Will Do It

At a State Level:

- Establish a standard statewide developmental screening tool for developmental milestones with standardized recommendations.
- Conduct a state gap analysis of existing behavioral health, dental, medical providers, and those who can serve those with disabilities.

At a County/District Level:

- Explore other potential sources of 1st Five referrals outside of the medical sector, for example: childcare, WIC program.
- Standardize implementation of developmental screening and tracking within an integrated system.
- Conduct a district gap analysis of existing behavioral health dental medical providers and those who can service those with disabilities.
- Ensure system navigation is a collaborative effort between districts and local providers.

At an Organization Level:

- Increase provider participation in 1st Five.
- Standardize implementation of developmental screening and tracking within an integrated system.
- Ensure system navigation is a collaborative effort between districts and local providers.

State of Iowa Olmstead Plan: Recommendations for Mental Health



What We Hope to Achieve

Individuals with disabilities and mental illnesses are supported by family members and friends of their choice and have social connections within their communities.

What We Will Do

Create and use a data informed, statewide communication plan that helps connect those at risk for isolation with social and emotional support.



How We Will Do It

At a State Level:

- Develop best practices for service plans that addresses all life domains: community living activities, employment, recreation, healthcare and relationships.
- Develop social isolation training for ADRC navigators, including the effect of strategies to combat social isolation in the training.
- Conduct a state analysis of services people are experiencing access barriers.
- Develop cohesive awareness messaging of social and emotional support services that can be used statewide.

At a County/District Level:

- Incorporate best practices for service plans to address all life domains.
- Conduct a gap analysis of social and vocational programs for adults with disabilities aged 22 to 59 years of age.
- Train ADRC navigators and local providers on the effects of social isolation and ways to combat social isolation.
- Conduct a district analysis of services people are experiencing access barriers.
- Develop cohesive awareness messaging of social and emotional support services that can be used across a district.

At an Organization Level:

- Promote personal growth through education and the adoption of positive behaviors that contribute to a meaningful society.
- Work with providers to increase knowledge of social and emotional supports available and how to access them.

State of Iowa Olmstead Plan: Recommendations for Economic Stability



What We Hope to Achieve

Adults with disabilities and mental illnesses are employed in integrated settings of their choice, earning competitive wages and benefits.

What We will Do

Identify and address system gaps in recruitment and training for adults with disabilities.



How We Will Do It

At a State Level:

- Assess the gaps for recruiting and training for people with disabilities, in partnership with Iowa Vocational Rehab services, for areas like direct care workforce apprenticeships and trades.

At a County/District Level:

- Assess the gaps for recruiting and training for people with disabilities for areas like direct care workforce apprenticeships and trades.
- Engage community partners in education on the work incentives and benefits of employing people with disabilities.

At an Organization Level:

- Increase participation in Iowa vocational rehab services by including work transition planning in Individualized Education Program (IEP) for students.
- Participate and enroll in state and county training on employing people with disabilities.

State of Iowa Olmstead Plan: Recommendations for Housing



What We Hope to Achieve

Individuals with disabilities experience life in the community demonstrated through integration, employment, housing and transportation.

What We will Do

Build knowledge and skills for financial planning and resources available to support stable housing.

How We Will Do It



At a State Level:

- Create and education campaign on financial coaching and budgeting programs using Iowa's ABLE (IAble) Savings Account and planning to assist with the campaign.
- Provide education on statewide centralized housing assistance, the application process and the existing database.
- Partner with Iowa Financial Authority and Housing & Urban Development (HUD) for a centralized and universal application and collaborate for resource development.

At a County/District Level:

- Increase the number of eligible older adults and people with disabilities who are enrolled in local state and federal housing assistance programs.
- Explore funding options like Housing Trust Funds and builder incentives to rehab and preserve existing housing stock especially in rural areas.

At an Organization Level:

- Share and promote education on financial coaching and budgeting and connect individuals to financial planning programs.
- Increase the number of eligible older adults and people with disabilities who are enrolled in local state and federal housing assistance programs.
- Partner with schools to increase awareness of housing resources like financial literacy and home modification, disability access points short term support services service navigation, and ADRC's at Individual Education Program (IEP) meetings.
- Explore funding options like Housing Trust Funds and builder incentives to rehab and preserve existing housing stock especially in rural areas.

State of Iowa Olmstead Plan: Recommendations for Transportation



What We Hope to Achieve

Individuals with disabilities experience life in the community demonstrated through integration, employment, housing and transportation.

What We will Do

Expand the reach and capacity of transportation options by enhancing connections to existing transportation resources.



How We Will Do It

At a State Level:

- Partner with the Iowa Transportation Council to coordinate accessible transportation programs in Iowa.
- Conduct an environmental scan and analysis of the current state of services and funding to identify gaps and true understanding of transportation needs.

At a County/District Level:

- Partner with local organizations like schools, churches, retired and senior volunteer programs, etc. to explore collaboration opportunities to increase the capacity and reach of existing transportation.
- Provide education on transport on transportation options through disability access points.

At an Organization Level:

- Promote the use of retired and seniors volunteer programs and other volunteer transportation programs to increase local transportation options in the community.
- Include transportation planning in case plans and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) planning to educate on transportation options for those with disabilities.



State of Iowa Olmstead Plan

2026-2031

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How to Use the Olmstead Plan

The Olmstead Plan is Iowa's guide for reducing health gaps for people with disabilities and helping them be part of their communities. It sets a plan to make sure people can live, work, and get services in the most inclusive settings by working together with state and local agencies, organizations, and the disability community.

Join Us in Shaping Community Integration For Organizations and Partners

- Share the Olmstead Plan with your partners and networks.
- Use the Olmstead Plan recommendations to guide your planning efforts.
- Share the data on the top health issues for those with disabilities.
- Identify ways you can support or contribute to the Olmstead Plan recommendations.
- Encourage leaders to invest in initiatives that help to address the top health issues for Iowans with disabilities.

For Individual Community Members

- Share the Olmstead Plan with other community members.
- Volunteer in your community around Olmstead initiatives that are important to you.
- Share lived experiences with community leaders and advocacy groups.
- Get involved with the [Olmstead Consumer Taskforce](#).



Scan the QR code to view the full plan.