

ODDS guiding principles for 2027–29 budget requests

July 22, 2026

The Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) held 18 community meetings in April and May 2026. We met Oregonians from across the state in person and on Zoom. We also shared a survey online.

We asked people about their intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) services and what should be most important when we make budget decisions. With the community's feedback, we drafted 12 guiding principles for our budget requests.

In June 2026, we asked for feedback on the drafted principles. Using this feedback we revised the principles. The final version is below: These 13 principles will guide our 2027–29 budget requests. The Oregon Legislature makes final budget decisions.

Thank you to all who shared throughout this process.

Guiding principles for ODDS budget planning

Decisions about services start with the person.

- **Start with the person** — Support should begin with the person, not with paperwork or rules.

- **Each person leads their own life** — Each person chooses their goals, how they communicate, and what matters to them. People can make their own choices, even hard ones.
- **Make plans that fit each person** — Decisions and processes must match each person's needs, likes, communication style, and history. Support plans should grow and change with the person.
- **Protect dignity and choice** — Services must help people stay in charge of their lives and make their own choices.

Support people's independence.

- **Design services to promote independence** — Help people be as independent as they want to be. Case managers and families use supported decision making to help people make their own choices.
- **Provide each person clear information** — Ensure they have a real voice in decisions. They choose who helps them understand changes.
- **Support the workforce to better support the person** — A strong, supported, trained, and reliable workforce helps people be more independent. Those who coordinate services and provide support have a direct impact on people's health, safety, growth, and happiness.

Uphold the I/DD community's civil rights and core values.

- **Support the right to live in the community** — People have the right to live in the least restrictive and most integrated place. Oregon will not go back to institutions.
- **Honor core values** — Inclusion, equity, dignity, and belonging must guide all services.

Fair and equal access for people of all abilities and cultures.

- **Meet people where they are** — Services must fit people’s culture, language, identity, location, and financial needs.
- **Provide language support and respect different cultures** — This includes having interpreters, translated materials, and staff who understand the person’s culture, and taking the time to build trust.

Clear, open, and honest communication to build trust.

- **Include people in decisions** — “Nothing about us without us” must guide all choices.
- **Share information early** — Give people clear updates and a real voice in decisions, especially when related to budget cuts.
- **Make information accessible** — Simplifying communications and processes helps everyone.
- **Be open about limits and timelines** — Explain why decisions are made and how they affect people. Let people know what to expect and when.

Strengthen support from family, friends, and community.

- **Support friendships and connection** — Relationships and community activities help people feel happy and included.
- **Make community life possible** — All systems must support people to join activities, work, play, and belong.
- **Strengthen natural supports** — Make family, friends, and community support stronger.

Keep people safe at home and in their communities.

- **Home- and community-based services first** — They improve quality of life and are the safest and most cost effective.

- **Help people live where they choose** — Policies should support people to live in the place that is right for them.
- **Support community life** — Services that help people live, work, and join in their community are essential. They are not optional.
- **Being part of a community helps keep people safe and healthy** — When more people know a person, they are more likely to notice if something seems wrong. Having more friends and connections also gives the person more people to talk to outside of the I/DD service system.
- **Jobs increase independence** — Earning money and being included give people more choices and control in their lives.

Safety, well-being, and stability come first.

- **Protect health and safety** — People must have services that keep them safe from abuse while promoting dignity of risk and emotional wellbeing.
- **Prevent crises** — Services should be stable and protected.

Support people early to prevent crises later.

- **Help people early to avoid bigger problems** — Early support prevents trauma and saves money later.
- **Support people to be as independent as possible** — Assume ability. Take the opportunity to teach rather than do. Create a culture where we ensure services develop people's independence.
- **Avoid cuts to early services** — Cutting children's services, behavior supports, and in-home hours leads to higher long-term costs and instability.

Use money responsibly and fairly.

- **Watch how money is used** — Prevent fraud and waste with strong checks on how contracted partners and providers spend public funds.
- **Cut administrative waste first** — Start with inefficiencies, not direct supports.
- **Use money fairly** — Focus decisions on quality and equity, not just cost or convenience.

Work together across systems.

- **Stop working in silos** — People struggle when the I/DD, medical, school, and mental health systems don't work together.
- **Work together** — Teamwork across these systems reduces stress, workload, costs, and harmful gaps in services.
- **Share responsibility** — People's needs often cross many systems. I/DD services cannot meet every need.

Less paperwork, more time for people.

- **Cut down on paperwork** — Long forms, repeated assessments and confusing steps take time away from real support.
- **Fix confusing rules** — Too many rules, confusing processes and mixed messages make it hard for people to trust the system.
- **Make things simpler** — Use technology and clear communication. Find ways to make processes easier.

Find creative solutions that give people flexibility and choice.

- **Give people more choice** — Increase flexibility for people to use their service hours and resources to meet their goals.

- **Allow different options** — One model doesn't work for all. Rules must fit real life.
 - **Support new ideas** — Creative solutions are welcome when they're based on what a person wants and needs.
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