

**Mandate Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS) follow the
Developmental Disability (DD) Shared Vision Act and Implement
Participant-Directed Services in FY 25**



WHAT:

Sections of AS 47.80, Section 47.80.095 known as the Developmental Disability (DD) Shared Vision Act has not been implemented. <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Text/30?hsid=SB0174A>

In 2018, Senate bill 174 was passed by the House and the Senate and signed into law:

- 6 years later we have yet to see major changes in the state system to support **Self-Direction and Autonomy** which means that the DD Shared Vision is not being upheld by the State.
- 40 other states have proven that participant directed services is budget neutral, or a cost savings to the State.
- Alaska does not have Participant Directed Services that includes budgetary and employer authority as an option that is available under Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services.
- The Alaska Veterans Administration, working with three ADRC/CILS, have implemented this type of program since November of 2015 with great success. In 2023, Veterans hired over 260 employees who were directing their own care in their own homes. SDS could do the same.

The next step to enable the DD Shared Vision is to follow these requirements for individuals who experience developmental disabilities:

AS 47.80.095 (a) (1-3) Self-Direction and autonomy – initiate Participant Directed Services where a person is allowed to direct their own supports and services in an independent and flexible way.

Sec. 47.80.095. Legislative findings related to persons with disabilities, policy.

The legislature finds that:

- self-direction and autonomy enhance quality of life, support independence, build self-confidence, and generate skills that help people protect themselves from abuse; persons with physical and mental disabilities to participate actively, with assistance based on each person's strengths and abilities, in managing their own support services so that all persons with physical and mental disabilities can achieve a meaningful life in their homes, jobs, and communities;
- professional staff and support services made available to families of persons with physical and mental disabilities throughout the state now and into the future.
- It is the policy of the state that the department and the legislature consider the vision of support services described in (a) of this section when determining the need for new and existing services for persons with physical and mental disabilities and establishing priorities among those needs.
- It is also the policy of the state to encourage and enable persons with physical and mental disabilities to participate fully in the social and economic life of the state.

* **Sec. 2. AS 47.80.130(a)**—The department shall:

- take a flexible approach to administering programs for persons with disabilities that allows each person to participate actively, with assistance based on the person's strengths and abilities, in managing the person's support services so that the person can achieve a meaningful life in the person's home, job, and community.

Implementing the Vision is not optional—it is the law.

Such services are not for everybody but those who are able to direct their services have either seen no increase in the costs of services or in some cases, saved their states money. In addition, participant directed services increases personal choice and autonomy.

Ask:

We ask the Legislature to mandate SDS fulfill the vision by implementing Participant Directed Services as allowed in 40 other states. We cannot continue to wait to implement person directed services, especially when they are already enshrined within the DD Shared Vision statute.

The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education and the Statewide Independent Living Council stands ready to assist SDS/DOH in this next step toward realizing the shared vision—Now!