



## HOUSING POSITION PAPER

For over twenty years housing for people with disabilities in Connecticut has been moving away from segregated housing toward housing in the community, in order to more fully integrate persons with disabilities in community life. However, if this transition happens without a focus on basic standards and principles, then the move is purely geographic, and will not lead to a better life for the person with a disability. This process of accessing housing must be person centered, allowing the person with a disability and responsible family members to identify what needs to be in place for their life to be better. At this time, Connecticut is failing at developing an array of housing options. The CT Council on Developmental Disabilities believes that access to housing for people with disabilities must address the following:

- 1. Respect for the choices that each person makes.** The process of finding housing should be person centered. People with disabilities should be informed of the housing choices that are available to them, and have the right to choose where they live, and who lives with them. There should be respect for personal preferences, such as the type of neighborhood or being able to decide if they want to live in a place that allows animals. Housing should be located in culturally diverse communities that include people with and without disabilities. If the services needed to best support the person do not exist, then they should be developed before the person moves.
- 2. Respect for the rights and responsibilities of both the tenant and the landlord.** This includes the right to live in housing that is in good condition, where things work properly and where repairs are made as needed so that everything is in good condition and safe. Having a place to live means making friends and participating in community activities as they choose. Tenants with disabilities may have a greater need for long term stability in their housing than other members of the community and options should be available that enable them to live where they choose for a long time, in order to maintain their friends and relationships in the community. They should not have to be concerned about discrimination because of their disability, or be forced to leave for unlawful reasons.

- 3. Location in the community of choice.** All people should be able to live in safe communities of their choice. People with disabilities should be able to live in housing that is convenient to parking, transportation, amenities, and schools. They should be able to live in culturally diverse communities that include people with and without disabilities. Additionally, these communities should be adequately prepared for emergencies, recognizing the particular needs of people with disabilities.
- 4. Accessibility.** Housing should be affordable to all people, including people with disabilities. Existing financial barriers that impair housing choice should be removed, including allowing people with disabilities to own their own home, creating incentives for people with disabilities or their families to finance their own homes, and dedicating additional public finance dollars to expand available housing for persons with disabilities. People with disabilities should have housing available to them which allows physical access through doorways, sufficient room to turn around in hallways and fully accessible bathrooms. They should also be able to visit friends and relatives barrier-free in other houses and apartments. In order to maximize housing options, people with disabilities should have access to accessible transportation, informal and formal supports that are available and assistive technology needed to live inclusively in their community.
- 5. Availability.** The supply of housing for people with disabilities is insufficient. Governmental programs should require resources adequate to serve a greater number of people with disabilities who are eligible for and seeking housing assistance, and not solely for emergency placements. There should be no wrong door to access housing, so that the system is easy to use, adequately funded and coordinated to ensure that all people have a stable housing plan.

[For more information, contact:](#)

CT Council on Developmental Disabilities

460 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

[Molly.cole@ct.gov](mailto:Molly.cole@ct.gov)

860-418-6160

**800-653-1134**