

Services for Individuals Living with a Disability



Photo provided by Eastside Legal Assistance Program.

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Themes

An estimated 7.3% of Bellevue residents are living with a disability (American Community Survey, 2022). Of the survey respondents who reported accessing services for an individual living with a disability, only 38% were able to find this resource in their community and only 32% were able to receive the services in a reasonable amount of time. Providers noted difficulties for individuals with a disability who do not speak English as a first language and highlighted the need for additional capacity for community-specific outreach and engagement. The need for additional day programs for adults living with disabilities was also noted. Another community member described the trauma that lingers for this community following the pandemic:

“There is a lot of trauma that still exists for individuals with disabilities coming out of the pandemic. Connection is something that people are struggling to find.”

The need to consider intersections between disability and other marginalized identities when designing and evaluating programs was also emphasized. Providers and community members highlighted service needs for children and youth with disabilities. Providers noted the difficulty families can face in navigating access to both Early Supports for Infants and Toddlers and school district services, particularly when facing language and cultural barriers.



Service Trends

Below are examples of service trends in the area of services for individuals living with disabilities. These examples are intended to provide a snapshot of this service area and are not a comprehensive reflection of available services in Bellevue.

- **Highland Community Center** launched *The Highland Times* during the COVID-19 pandemic and has continued this publication. Adults with intellectual disabilities are responsible for all content and work with a staff member to publish. *The Highland Times* builds connection and community amongst adults living with a disability in Bellevue.
- **Community Homes** has developed a new housing model over the last several years, where two or three families of an individual with a disability join in renting homes and hiring a live-in caregiver. The families use Section 8 housing vouchers making the rent affordable, and Medicaid personal care hours through First Choice In-Home Care are used to compensate the caregiver. Persons with disabilities can add a caregiver to their Section 8 housing vouchers, and they are also entitled to food benefits.
- **Open Doors for Multi-cultural Families: Family Support Program** provides individualized, culturally competent case management for individuals with developmental/intellectual disabilities and their families from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Through their Leveraging Our Community Knowledge (BLOCK) program, Open Doors for Multicultural Families provides Family Wellness and Youth Ambassador cohorts to bridge multicultural communities within Bellevue. Family Wellness events focus on sharing culture, food and ethnic diversity designed with the needs of the intellectual and developmental disability (I/DD) community in mind.

