The Governor’s Committee on Disability Issues & Employment (GCDE) serves as an advocate for the disability community, advises the Governor, Legislature and other policy makers on issues related to disability, and develops policies and programs that support the empowerment of people who have disabilities.

GCDE represents the full diversity of mental, emotional, sensory and physical disabilities. Its Committee Members are recruited to reflect that diversity of experience, perspective, expertise and knowledge.
GCDE Subcommittees & Projects

**GCDE's** Members work actively to support the Committee’s goals through standing subcommittees, short term working groups, and special projects.

**Accessibility Awareness and Advocacy** addresses access issues in the building environment, transportation, communication and other information systems.

**Community Outreach** conducts outreach, information and advocacy events in communities throughout the state.

**Emergency Preparedness** works to address the needs of people with disabilities in community and household emergency planning and response.

**Governor’s Employer Awards Program** recognizes and promotes the achievements of employers and individuals who have improved employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

**Employment, Education and Training** identifies barriers and pursues solutions for improving employment for people who have disabilities.

**Legislative Core Group** develops and promotes legislation responding to the needs and aspirations of people with disabilities.

**Membership** recruits and evaluates applicants, makes appointment recommendations to the Governor, and supports the development of the potential of GCDE Members.

**Youth Leadership Forum** provides a six-day residential leadership development program for high school juniors and seniors who have disabilities.

**Disability Program Navigator Project** provides technical assistance, training and practical solutions to build the capacity of the WorkSource system to serve job seekers with disabilities.

**Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Program** helps Social Security beneficiaries understand and apply the full range of work incentives, benefits and resources to improve their lives through work.

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GCDE Recent Accomplishments

**Policy and Program Development:** GCDE is nationally recognized and sought out for its expertise in the broad spectrum of issues affecting people with disabilities. Policies and programs it has developed and implemented have been cited as best practices by such federal agencies as the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, Department of Labor, Department of Education, Department of Justice and Social Security Administration. It has helped to shape national policy in such areas as the Americans with Disabilities Act, Employment, Transportation and Barrier Free Design. It has won more than $10M in competitive federal funds to serve people with disabilities in Washington State.

**Legislation:** GCDE has developed and won passage of more than 30 state laws improving the lives of people with disabilities in civil rights, education, health care, employment, transportation, and housing.

**Port Townsend Post Office:** The Community Outreach Committee brought together federal, state and local officials and concerned citizens facilitating a breakthrough in the long standing impasse on access for people with disabilities in this historic building.

**Citizen Volunteers:** GCDE Members contribute more than 8,000 hours of their time each year to improving opportunities for people who have disabilities.