

## **The Utah Developmental Disabilities Empowerment Fund *Updated December 2019***

The Council has created an Empowerment Fund to enable individuals with developmental disabilities and their family members to serve on policy and program planning bodies, and to gain knowledge and skills by attending disability-related conferences, trainings and meetings. The Executive Committee is responsible for determining approval or denial of applicants, in accordance with the policies governing the Empowerment Fund.

### **Policies for the Utah Developmental Disabilities Council Empowerment Fund for People with Disabilities and Families**

1. Recipients of Empowerment Fund dollars will be:
  - a. Individuals with developmental disabilities
  - b. Family members or guardians involved in the care of a person with a developmental disability.
  
2. Funds will be used to:
  - a. Support Council members who are unable to pay the money needed to participate on a local, state or national policy-making committee or board, or attend a conference/training or class.
  - b. Support individuals with developmental disabilities to participate on a local, state or national policy making committee or board.
  - c. Support individuals with developmental disabilities to attend a conference/training or class.
  - d. Support individuals with developmental disabilities to provide testimony at public policy hearings.
  - e. Support family members / guardians to participate on a state or national policy-making committee or board.
  - f. Support family members / guardians to attend a conference.
  - g. Support family members / guardians to provide testimony at public policy hearings.
  
3. Applicants must reside in Utah and be a person with a developmental disability or a family member or guardian involved in the care of a person with a developmental disability.
  
4. The Executive Committee will make all decisions related to approval or denial of requests. The Committee will vote to approve or deny each application received following the prior meeting. The meetings will be held within the context of regularly scheduled Executive Committee meetings. During those months that the Executive Committee does not meet, if there is an application submitted for urgent approval, the committee will make arrangements to meet in person, electronically or

- by telephone and vote on the applications as appropriate.
5. Those requesting support from the Fund will be asked to contribute some money to pay the costs, or obtain some money from other sources or other organizations.
  6. Upon approval, UDDC staff will make travel and registration arrangements. Advanced funding may be made available to those applicants receiving SSI, SSDI, or TANF as their only source of income and will be determined on an individual basis.
  7. Participants may be reimbursed for meals, ground travel, and hotel according to state travel policies. Guidelines will be provided upon approval.
  8. The account must be reconciled within 30 days (one month) after the trip for those seeking reimbursement or for those who received an advance. Each person who receives support from the Fund will be required to turn in appropriate receipts for the use of the money, or forfeit the funding.
  9. Each person who receives support to attend a conference/training will be required to submit a report summarizing the event (see form: Conference / Event Report to the Council). This may be done in writing or in an agreed alternative format and must be submitted to the Council office within 30 days (one month) following the event. If that person does not turn in a report or receipts, he or she will not be eligible to use the Empowerment Fund again until they do so.
  10. Reimbursements must be requested within 30 days (one month) after the end of the conference. Any individuals who have not claimed their reimbursements within the specified period will lose the ability to do so and their accounts will be closed.
  11. Individuals with disabilities who are not Council members will be eligible for funding to attend only one conference or event per calendar year. No more than \$1,500, plus the cost of personal assistance, may be provided per request.
  12. Family members/guardians who are not members of the Council may not receive funds for more than one conference per calendar year, and may not receive funds to attend the same conference in consecutive years.
  13. The Committee may approve more than 2 people to the same event.

14. Requests will be handled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Requests must be made at least 40 days prior to the event by submitting the Empowerment Fund Application. The Council reserves the right to deny any request, revise policies, or suspend funding, as it deems necessary.
15. Requests for conferences in locations outside the continental United States will not be approved.

*Funding provided by the Utah Developmental Disabilities Council is federal money. Proper use of federal funds is required of those receiving help from the Empowerment Fund and may only be funded up to 75% of total cost. Funds are limited.*