



# 2025 Legislative Priorities Poll

The Governor's Council on Disability recently conducted its annual poll to determine the level of importance disability related issues have to Missourians impacted by disability through their personal and/or professional lives. The results will be shared with council members, the Governor, state legislators, and other interested groups. The poll was available to individuals via the Governor's Council on Disability listservs, Twitter, Facebook, website, personal contacts, and other organization contacts. It was provided in Microsoft Word, PDF and Qualtrics formats.

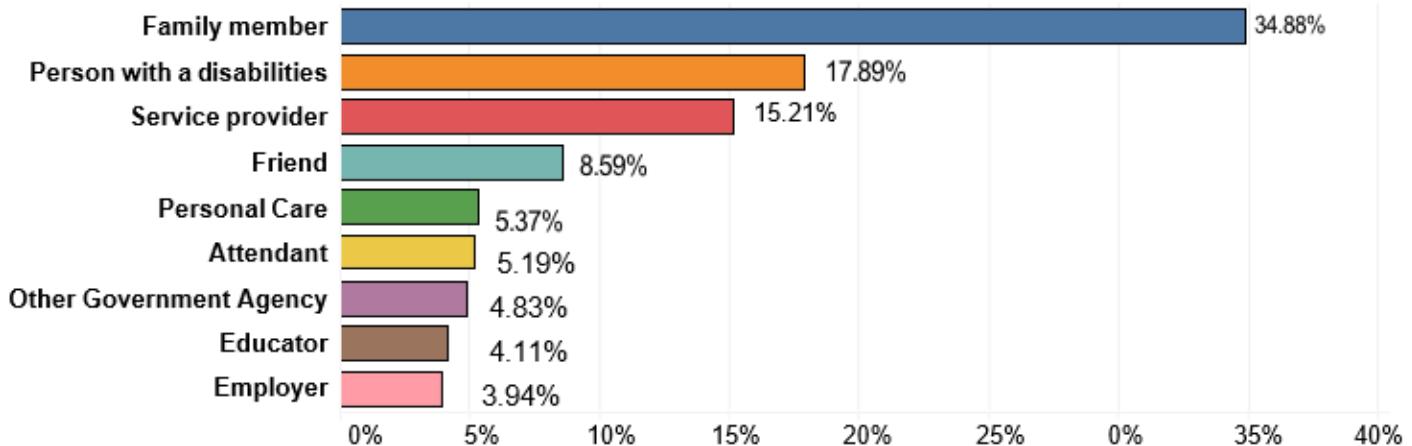
**Three hundred forty-six (346) polls were returned.**

The top four priorities for the Governor's Council on Disability for the coming year are determined by the questions which receive the highest combined percentage of strongly agree and agree responses and overall responses. The 2026 priorities will be:

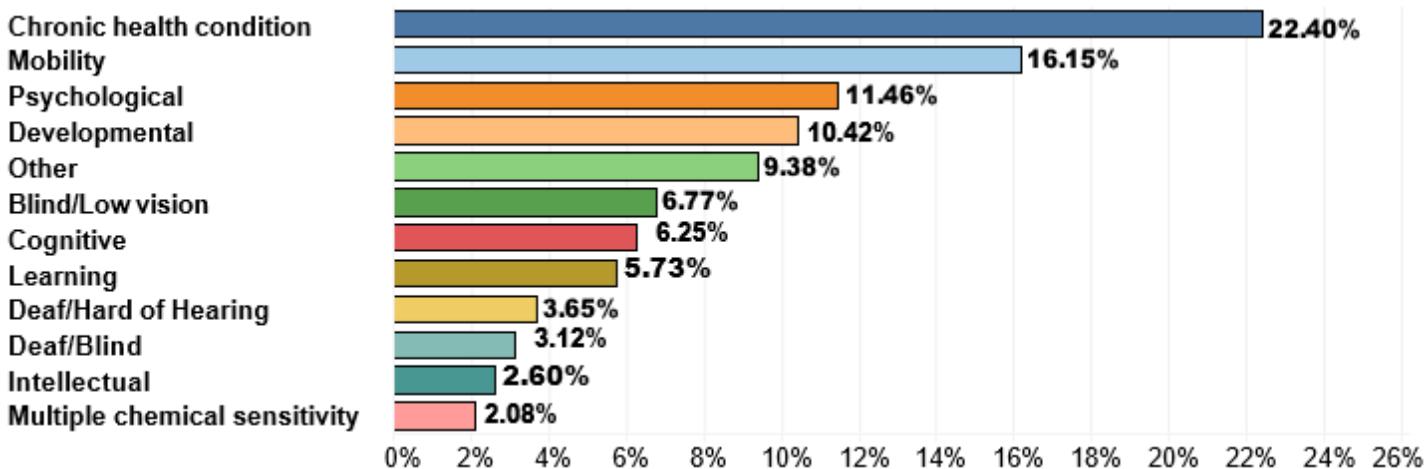
1. **The State of Missouri updating websites to include more language that is direct and easy to understand for those with reading or writing difficulties.**
2. **The Personal Care Attendant/Aide/Direct Support Professional workforce providing critical services.**
3. **Funding needs.**
4. **Transportation needs.**

# 2025 Legislative Priorities Poll Demographics Section

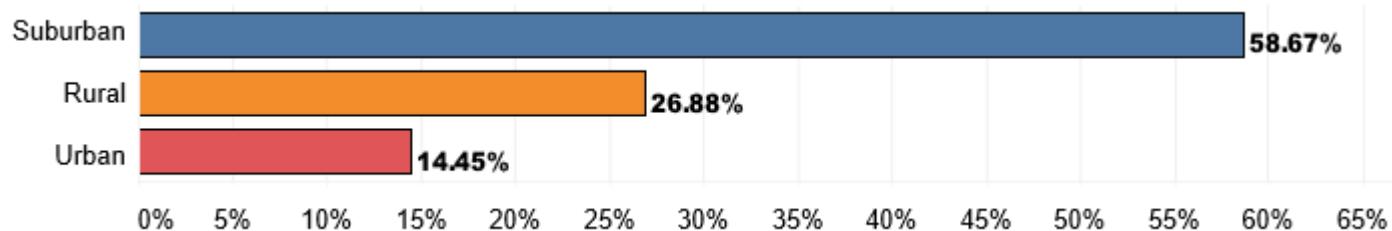
**Respondents were given the opportunity to indicate the group or groups to which they belonged:** person with a disability, family member, friend, government agency employee, service provider, educator, employer, personal care attendant/aide/direct support professional, other. 100 (17.89%) were a person with a disability, 195 (34.88%) were a family member, 48 (8.59%) were a friend, 27 (4.83%) represented a government agency, 85 (15.21%) were service providers, 23 (4.11%) were educators, 22 (3.94%) were employers, 31 (5.37%) were personal care attendant/aide/direct support professional, and 30 (5.19%) marked other.



**Individuals with disabilities were given the option to indicate what type or types of disability they have:** blind/low vision, chronic health condition, multiple chemical sensitivity, cognitive, deafblind, deaf/hard of hearing, developmental, learning, mobility, psychological, intellectual, other 13 (6.77%) blind/low vision, 43 (22.40%) chronic health condition, 5 (2.08%) multiple chemical sensitivity, 12 (6.25%) cognitive, 6 (3.12%) deafblind, 7 (3.65%) deaf/hard of hearing, 20 (10.42%) developmental, 12 (5.73%) learning, 32 (16.15%) mobility, 23 (11.46%) psychological, 5 (2.60%) intellectual, and 18 (9.38%) other.

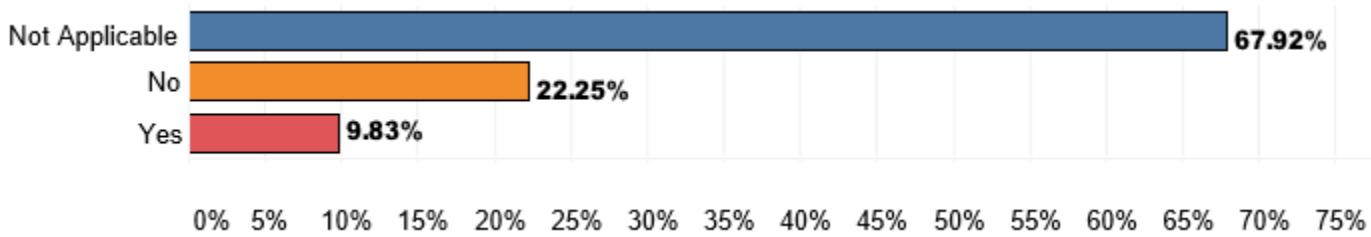


**Individuals were asked to indicate what county they reside in and whether they live in an urban, suburban, or rural area.** For the purposes of this report, the City of St. Louis is considered a county. Of the one hundred fifteen counties, fifty-nine are represented. For the number of respondents per county see Appendix. As indicated by self-report, 50 (14.45%) live in urban areas, 203 (58.67%) live in suburban areas, and 93 (26.88%) live in rural areas.

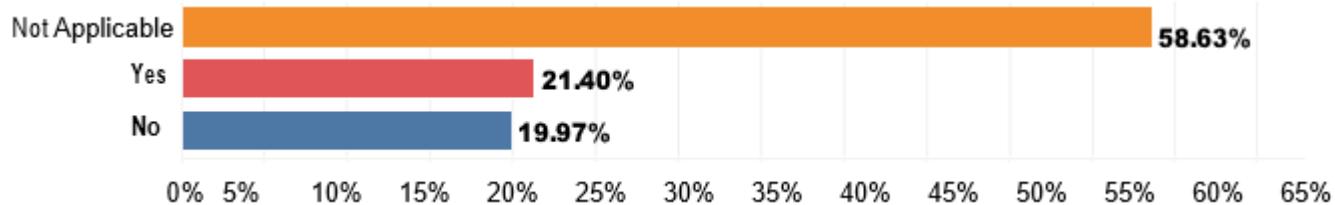


## 2025 Legislative Priorities Poll Accessibility Section

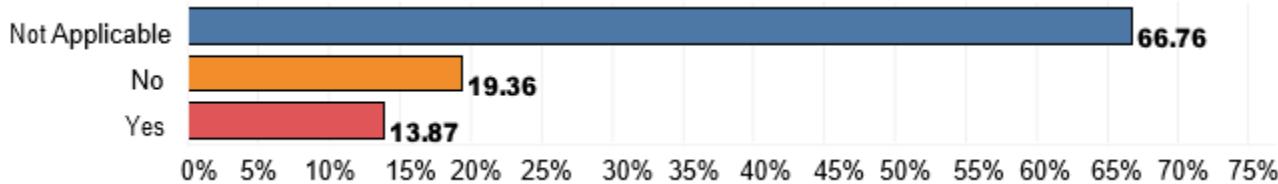
**Do you, or someone in your care, have access to a certified sign language interpreter in school, juvenile services meetings, or medical appointments?** 9.83% Yes, 22.25% No, 67.92% Not Applicable



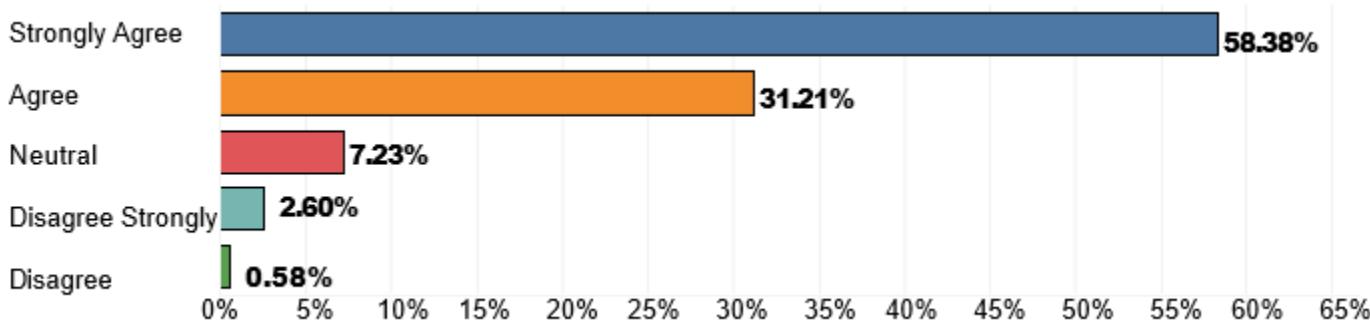
**Have you, or someone in your care, requested accommodations for hearing/communication in school, juvenile services, or medical appointments that are not provided?** 21.40% Yes, 19.97% No, 58.63% Not Applicable



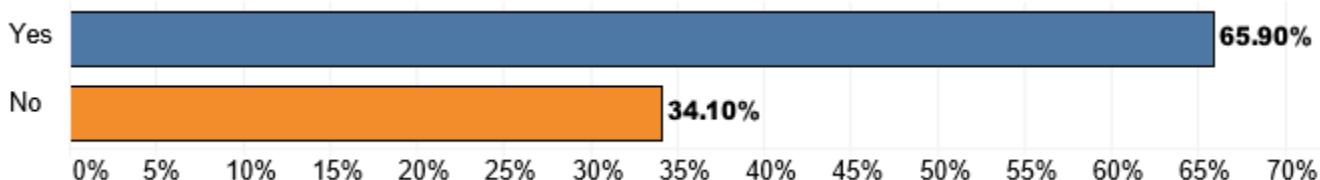
**Do you, or someone in your care, have access to a support service professional to assist individuals who are Deaf Blind in accessing the community?** 13.87% Yes, 19.36% No, 66.76% Not Applicable



**The State of Missouri should update websites to include more language that is direct and easy to understand for those with reading or writing difficulties.** 58.38% strongly agree, 31.21% agree, 7.23% are neutral, 2.60% disagree, and 0.58% strongly disagree.



**Have you or others had difficulty accessing services from a state department.** 65.90% Yes, 34.10% No.



14.35% Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 22.78% Department of Health and Senior Services, 28.25% Department of Mental Health, 5.01% Department of Revenue, 27.11% Department of Social Services and 2.51 Other along with indicating which department.

#### **Which department(s) have you had difficulty accessing services from?**

<b>Department of Mental Health</b>	28.25%
<b>Department of Social Services</b>	27.11%
<b>Department of Health and Senior Services</b>	22.78%
<b>Department of Elementary and Secondary Education</b>	14.35%
<b>Department of Revenue</b>	5.01%
<b>Other</b>	2.51%

**What is the most important issue with accessibility in Missouri for people with disabilities and what changes could state legislators make to improve it?**

#### **Issues**

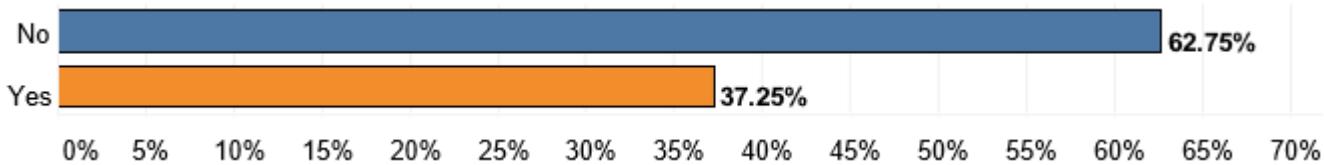
- Application processes/renewal of services
- Funding of services for people with disabilities
- Long waiting periods for services
- Inadequate customer service from certain state departments
- Physical and communication accessibility
- Transportation

#### **Changes**

- Increase information sharing between agencies/streamline application processes
- Have enough staff to answer questions
- Increase funding
- No funding cuts
- Allow parents to be paid to care for children with disabilities
- Require interpreters and captioning for public events and government meetings

# 2025 Legislative Priorities Poll Education Section

**If you are a parent of a school-age child with a disability, have you experienced any difficulties in making sure your child has an appropriate education? 37.25% Yes, 62.75% No**



**What challenges do you experience making sure your child receives an appropriate education? Only answered by those who marked Yes to the previous question.**

- Schools not providing needed services
- Schools not challenging students with disabilities or challenging them too much with worksheets
- Lack of supports and staff
- Forcing students out of school before age twenty-one

**What is the most important issue with education in Missouri for people with disabilities and what changes could state legislators make to improve it?**

## Issues

- Not enough paraprofessionals and teachers
- Lack of transition services in high school
- Lack of resources and funding of public schools
- Not enough training for all school staff on disabilities and how to work with students with disabilities

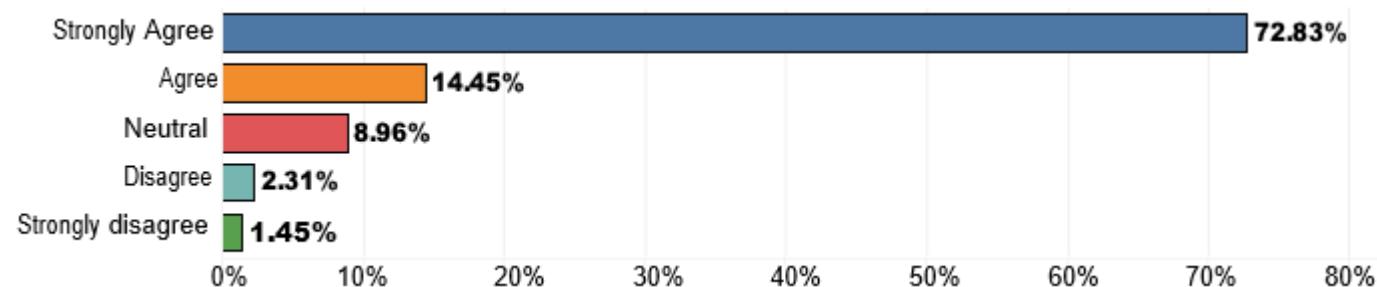
## Changes

- Increase teacher/staff pay and funding for public schools
- Hold schools accountable for providing services and following agreed to plans
- Promote inclusion of students in schools

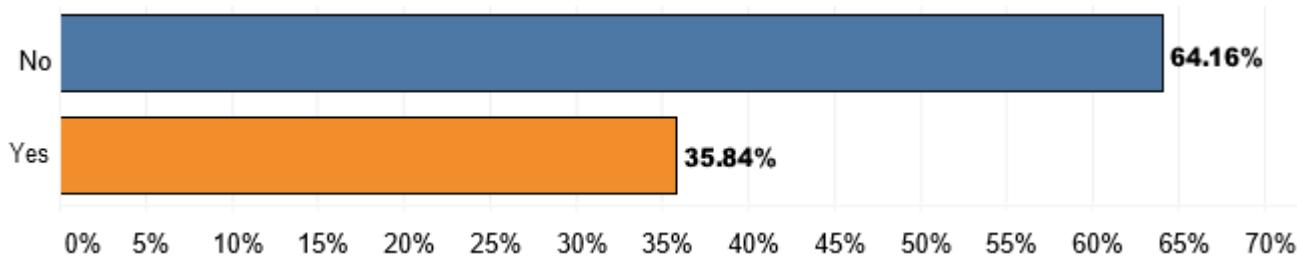
# 2025 Legislative Priorities Poll Assistance Services/Health Care Section

**The care attendant/aide workforce provides critical services to people with disabilities.**

72.83% strongly agree, 14.45% agree, 8.96% are neutral, 2.31% disagree, and 1.45% strongly disagree.

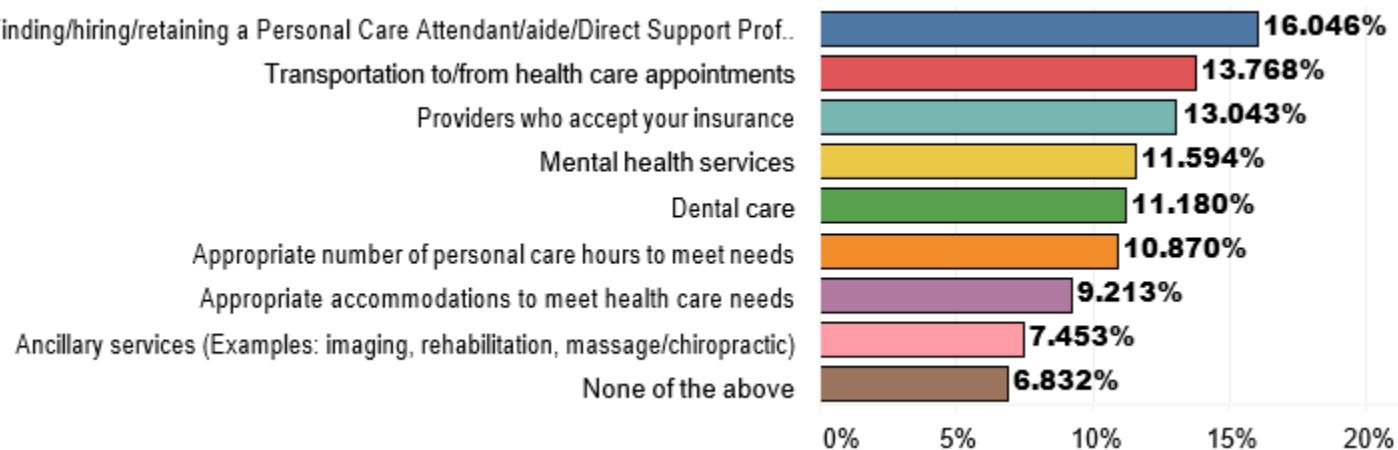


**Do you use Personal Care Attendant/Aide/ Direct Support Professional services?** 35.84% Yes, 64.16% No.



**Indicate which, if any health care services they have difficulty with.**

16.046% Finding/hiring/retaining Personal Care Attendant/aide/Direct Support Professional, 10.87% appropriate number of personal care hours to meet needs, 11.18% dental care, 11.594% mental health services, 9.213% appropriate accommodations to meet health care needs, 13.768% transportation to/from health care appointments, 13.043% providers who accept individual's insurance, 7.453% ancillary services, 6.832% none of the above



**What is the most important issue with personal assistance services or health care in Missouri for people with disabilities and what changes could state legislators make to improve it?**

Issues

- Lack of providers who accept MO HealthNet
- Low pay and lack of direct support professionals and personal care attendants
- Transportation to appointments

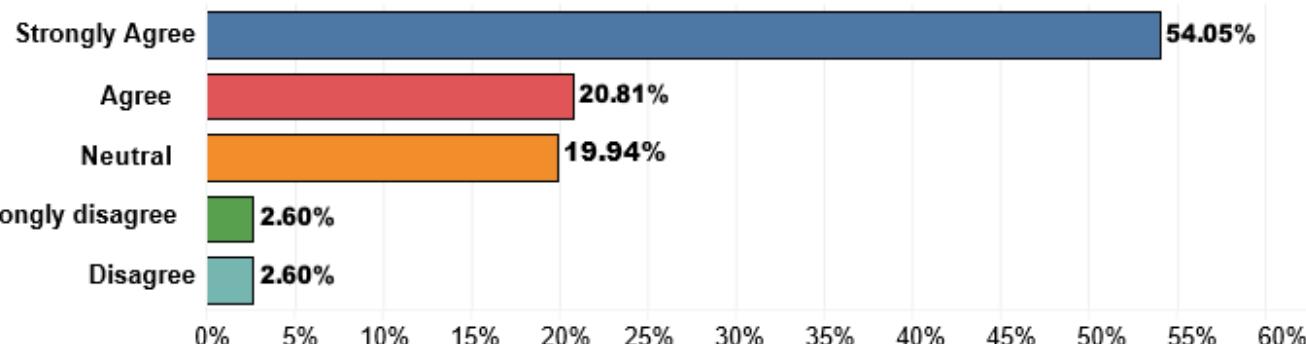
Changes

- Increase pay for personal care attendants and direct support professionals
- Create a standard occupational classification for personal care attendants and direct support professionals
- Remove cost caps
- Improve the health care and mental health care systems
- Make it easier to obtain Department of Mental Health contracts for day habilitation services, restructure the consumer directed services program

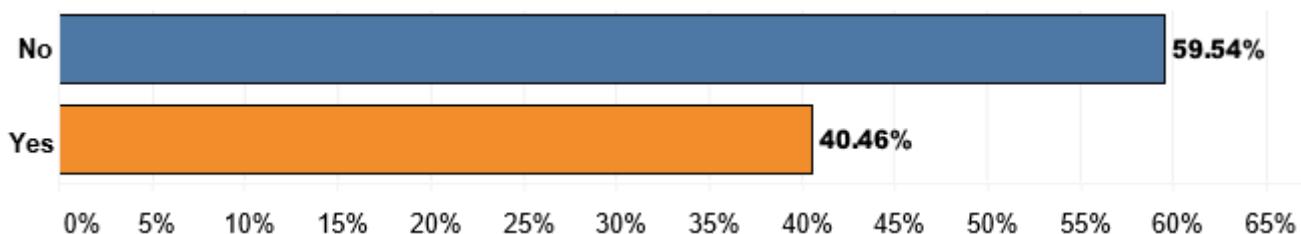
# 2025 Legislative Priorities Poll Housing Section

**There should be a freeze (stay the same) on property taxes for people with disabilities.**

54.05% strongly agree, 20.81% agree, 19.94% are neutral, 2.60% disagree, and 2.60% strongly disagree.

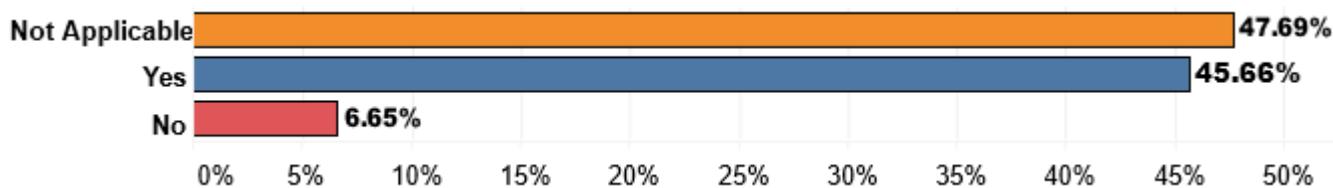


**Is accessible housing available in your community?** 40.46% Yes, 59.54% No



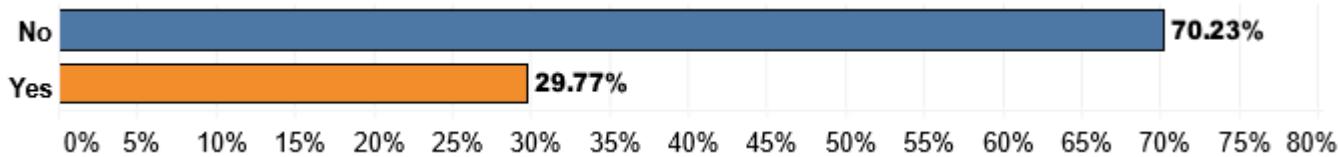
**Do you have difficulty finding available rental properties that are affordable and meet your needs?**

45.66% Yes, 6.65% No, 47.69% Not applicable



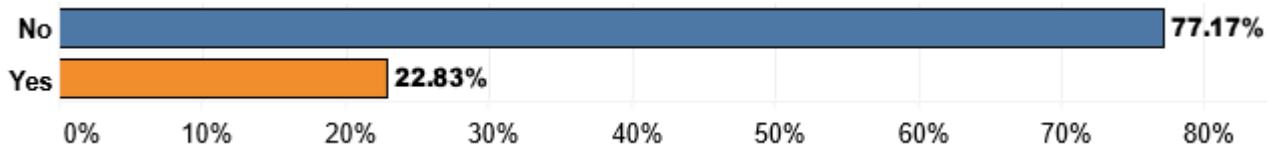
**Have you or someone you know experienced discrimination in renting because of a disability?**

29.77% Yes, 70.23% No



**Have you or someone you know experienced rental application rejections because of a disability?**

22.83% Yes, 77.17% No



**What is the most important issue with housing in Missouri for people with disabilities and what changes could state legislators make to improve it?**

**Issues**

- Cost-high rent, amount needed to make accessibility renovations
- Availability in all areas of the state
- Lack of all types of housing-group, independent supported living, accessible
- Housing locations-not in safe areas or near services
- Conversion of low-income housing to market rate housing
- Laws favoring landlords over tenants

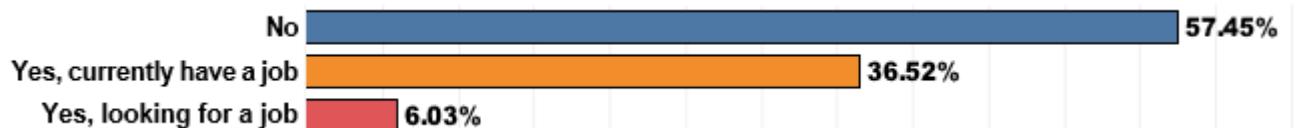
**Changes**

- Assistance with housing costs-rent, building, renovations
- Encourage building of affordable housing
- Encourage all types of housing-multi-unit, group homes, tiny homes, single family
- Increase universal design and accessible options through requirements on new construction and code changes

# 2025 Legislative Priorities Poll Employment Section

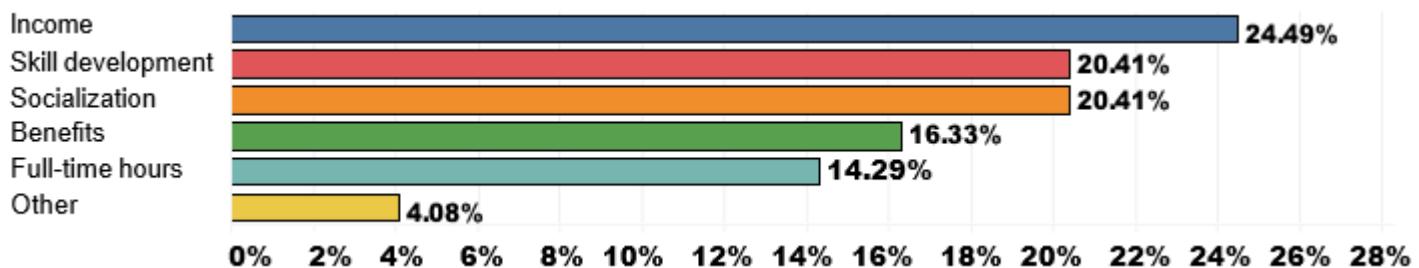
If you have a disability, do you currently have a job or are looking for a job?

36.52% Yes, currently have a job, 6.03% Yes, looking for a job, 57.45% No



What motivates you to get a job? Only answered if yes, looking for a job was marked in the previous question

24.49% income, 20.41% skill development, 14.29% full-time hours, 20.41% socialization, 16.33% benefits, 4.08% other



Describe any barriers people with disabilities may experience when attempting to obtain employment. This was an open answer response. Responses included:

- Attitudes and beliefs of employers
- Lack of knowledge/understanding by employers
- Employers not being willing to hire people with disabilities
- Processes not working for some types of disabilities
- Transportation access
- Gaps in employment history
- Lack of accessibility
- Not providing accommodations during interviews or employment
- Fear of losing benefits/not being able to keep much money due to rules of benefit programs
- Finding options that work for the individual-sheltered workshop, inclusive, remote, flexible schedule

What is the most important issue with employment in Missouri for people with disabilities and what changes could state legislators make to improve it?

## Issues

- Employers not being willing to hire people with disabilities
- Employers not being willing/able to provide accommodations
- Workplace discrimination and stigma
- Lack of transportation
- Not enough employment supports

## Changes

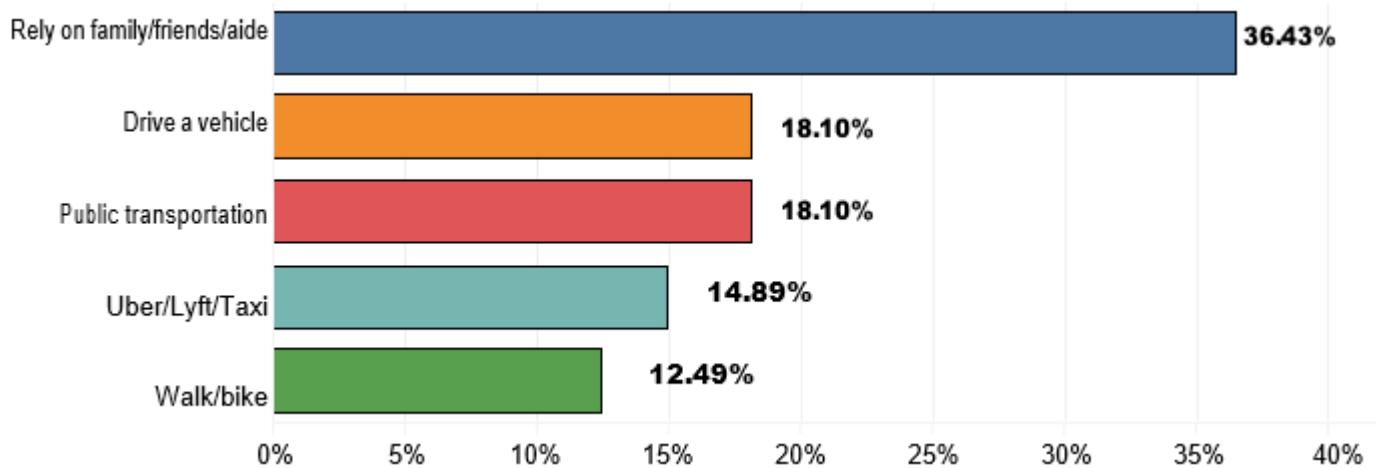
- Create employer incentives for hiring people with disabilities
- Create more options for caregivers of people with disabilities and those who cannot work in traditional office settings
- Fund employment supports including long-term supports and agencies providing the services
- Increase transportation funding and availability

- Keep sheltered workshops open for those who cannot work in competitive employment/transition from sheltered workshops
- Increase workplace protections for employees with disabilities-Strong enforcement of the Missouri Human Rights Act

# 2025 Legislative Priorities Poll Transportation Section

## What types of transportation do people with disabilities use in your community?

18.10% Drive a vehicle, 14.89% Uber/Lyft, taxi, 36.43% Rely on family/friends/aide, 12.49% Walk/bike, 18.10% Public transportation



## What barriers does a lack of transportation provide for people with disabilities?

This was an open answer response. Responses included:

- Ability to be employed
- Ability to obtain medical care
- Ability to obtain groceries
- Ability to engage in community activities
- Ability to attend religious services
- Ability to obtain post-secondary education or training

## What is the most important issue with transportation in Missouri for people with disabilities and what changes could state legislators make to improve it?

### Issues

- Lack of access to transportation across the state
- Lack of accessible/alternate options
- Transportation vehicle costs
- Lack of walkable communities

### Changes

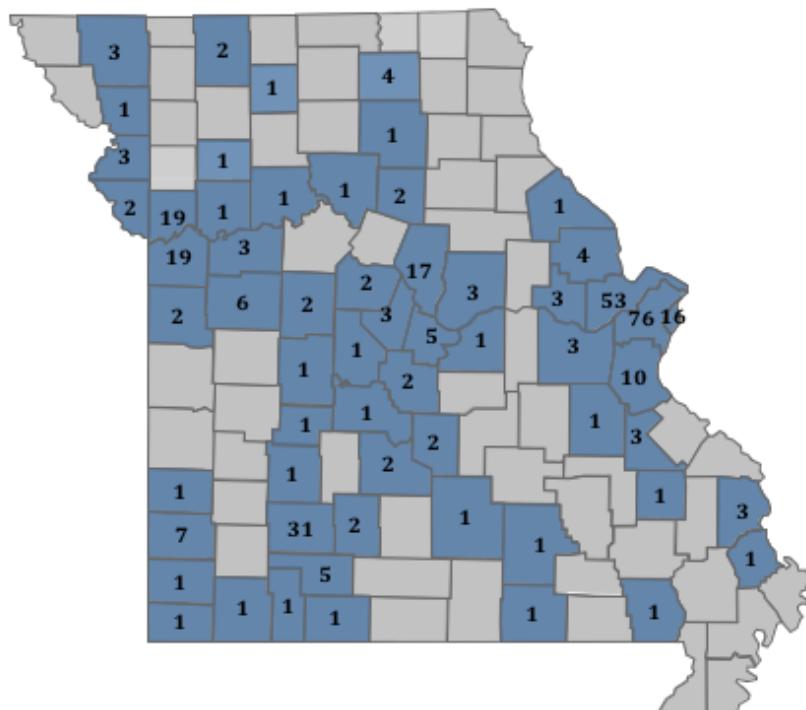
- Expand transportation options in all counties-build community transportation infrastructure
- Fund public transportation-including accessible options
- Increase reimbursement rates for providers/reimburse family members for transportation costs
- Reduce transportation costs for people with disabilities
- Create a ride-share program
- Improve technology for MO HealthNet transportation reimbursement
- Explore autonomous vehicles as a transportation option

All graphs and citizen responses to the open response questions are available on the online dashboard. The dashboard can be accessed on the [Annual Legislative Priorities Poll web page](#).

# Appendix

Please indicate what county you live in

Adair	4	Greene	31	Osage	1
Andrew	1	Grundy	1	Pettis	2
Barry	1	Harrison	2	Pike	1
Barton	1	Hickory	1	Platte	2
Benton	1	Jackson	19	Polk	1
Boone	17	Jasper	7	Pulaski	2
Buchanan	3	Jefferson	10	Randolph	2
Butler	1	Johnson	6	Ray	1
Caldwell	1	Laclede	2	Scott	1
Callaway	3	Lafayette	3	Shannon	1
Camden	1	Lincoln	4	St Charles	53
Cape Girardeau	3	Macon	1	St Francois	3
Carroll	1	Madison	1	St Louis	76
Cass	2	McDonald	1	St Louis City	16
Chariton	1	Miller	2	Stone	1
Christian	5	Moniteau	3	Taney	1
Clay	19	Morgan	1	Texas	1
Cole	5	Newton	1	Warren	3
Cooper	2	Nodaway	3	Washington	1
Franklin	3	Oregon	1	Webster	2



\*No responses from grayed out counties