



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability



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[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

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ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

by Claudia Browner

The Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) now offers a new publication, the [Accessibility Guide—A toolkit for accessible communications in the workplace](#), on its website. This guide provides instructions on how to plan and facilitate accessible meetings and events, and create accessible communications. The guide also features links to online trainings to learn about making events, documents and emails, multimedia, websites, and social media content accessible to all users. In addition, it provides tips on establishing inclusive policies and practices.

Originally created for state team members, in collaboration with the Office of Administration's Diversity & Inclusion Council, the GCD modified the guide for public use.

The Accessibility Guide can be printed out as a desk reference, or used online with links to the training components.

You can view and download the guide on the Disability Portal at <https://disability.mo.gov/files/accessibility-guide-public.pdf>



DISABILITY RIGHTS LEGISLATIVE DAY 2023

by Laura Mueth

Disability Rights Legislative Day (DRLD) 2023 is next month on Wednesday, March 1.

A planning committee comprised of self-advocates and representatives from various disability organizations including the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council and GCD has been working hard to plan a day focused on issues that individuals and groups told us were important to them.



This year's event will focus on transportation, employment, and the caregiver crisis. Attendees will have the opportunity to hear from legislators and dynamic self-advocates during the rally portion. Following the rally, in-person attendees can take advantage of being at the Capitol in Jefferson City to meet with legislators about issues discussed during the rally or any issue meaningful to them.

Virtual participants will have the option to attend afternoon breakouts, or independently schedule virtual legislator visits. You can stay updated on DRLD happenings at the [event website](#) at <https://DRLD.org>. Individuals who want to be part of this great day and share in the **We the People** atmosphere can register at [DRLD Registration](#).

LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION PROJECT WEBINARS

by Claudia Browner

It's not too late to join the Governor's Council on for a free Legislative Education Project (LEP) webinar to learn about the legislative process in Missouri and find out about opportunities to become more active in creating positive public policies for people with disabilities. The GCD has already held three webinars, and two more are available in March.

The LEP webinars are open to individuals or organizations that are new to the legislative process, or those who need additional information about disability policies or proposed legislation that impact people with disabilities.

Each webinar will include information on the legislative process, communicating with legislators, and current state bills related to disability.



The final two webinars will be offered on Thursday, March 16, 2023, at 10:00 AM and at 7:00 PM.

WebEx software will be used to conduct each webinar. Registration is required to attend. Please complete the LEP Registration Form. If accommodations are needed, please register at least two weeks prior to the webinar date so accommodations can be arranged in a timely matter. For more information about the LEP, please visit the LEP web page at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/LEP.htm>

APPLY NOW FOR 2023 MISSOURI YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

by Rachel Rackers

Applications for the 2023 [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/yf.htm) (MO-YLF) are now being accepted and available on our website at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/yf.htm>. The deadline for delegate applications is April 15, 2023. As a reminder, the dates are July 18-22nd and the event is held at the University of Missouri in Columbia, MO. While at MO-YLF, the delegates will gain leadership skills, knowledge, self-confidence, and much more.



During the week, delegates will learn a lot of valuable information. Some activities the delegates participate in include a community service project, a mentor event, a visit and mock legislative session at the State Capitol, an employment event focusing on career exploration, mock interview exercises, networking, and tips on when and how to disclose disability status, information on volunteer opportunities, and a resource fair. Throughout the week participants will also engage in fun social events including adaptive sports night, a talent show, and a dance. At the end of the week, the teams have a chance to present their experiences and what they learned to family members, staff and sponsors at the closing banquet. Also on the last day, parents have the opportunity to participate in the resource fair and parent information session.

If you know of a student with disabilities who has leadership potential, please share the information about this exciting program with them. GCD is looking for applicants from all areas of the state. MO-YLF is free to the students who are selected. This is all made possible because of donations and sponsorships.

If you are interested in volunteering as a staff member, please apply by May 1 at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/yf.htm>. For questions, please contact the Governor's Council on Disability at (800) 877-8249 or (573) 751-2600.

THIRD ANNUAL VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT COMING IN MARCH

The GCD team along with our partnering organizations is getting geared up for the 3rd Annual [Virtual Leadership Summit](#) (VLS) for high school students with disabilities, to be held virtually on March 4, 2023. Participants will meet virtually with leaders in the disability community and hear from mentors, alumni, and keynote speakers about the importance of goal setting, self-advocacy, and leadership.

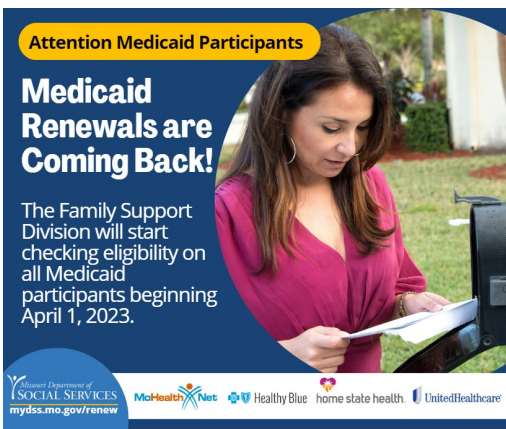


Our team is looking forward to connecting with youth throughout the different parts of the state. During the Virtual Leadership Summit, the youth will get a small glimpse into what the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum is and build connections with other youth and alumni.

The application deadline for this year's Virtual Leadership Summit has already passed. Be sure to watch for announcements and the application this fall for the 2024 event. For more information on the Virtual Leadership Summit please visit our website at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/vls.htm>

For updates information on both the MO-YLF and VLS, you can also follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MOLeadershipForum>

MEDICAID ANNUAL RENEWALS COMING BACK



The Department of Social Services (DSS) recently announced that beginning April 1, the Family Support Division will be re-starting its annual eligibility reviews and renewals for everyone who is currently participating in MO HealthNet. According to DSS, more than 1.4 million Missourians have healthcare coverage through MO HealthNet and will be impacted by the return of these annual renewals.

MO HealthNet participants are asked to get ready for renewals by keeping their contact information up to date so they can get important updates in the mail. If their address has changed in the last 3 years, they will need to notify the Family Support Division by reporting a change [online](#), visiting their [local resource center](#), or calling 855-373-4636.

DSS is asking partners, advocates, and providers to help spread the word so Missourians can stay informed. Visit the website at mydss.mo.gov/renew for more information.

Source: Department of Social Services website

CAPITOL ACCESS GUIDE

by Claudia Browner



Are you planning a visit to the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City? Do you want to learn about accessibility at the capitol, where to find hearing rooms, parking, and how to participate in a tour? Then the Capitol Access Guide will be a great resource for you.

Created by the Governor's Council on Disability in collaboration with Missouri Assistive Technology, this guide is designed to provide information about accessibility in the state capitol so that Missourians with disabilities can fully participate in state government activities. Direction is provided for requesting access accommodations, such as interpreters or electronic materials, for legislative activities, capitol tours and for rotunda activities. Locations are noted for accessible parking, entrances, restrooms, and elevators to the House and Senate gallery areas.

The guide is available online at <https://at.mo.gov/information-resources-publications/cap-access-booklet.html>

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability— Council Members

- Ronald Hack, Council Chair, St. Louis
- Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D., Lee's Summit
- Charles Comstock, Kirksville
- Wayne Crawford, Marshall
- Betty Davidson, Ph.D., St. Louis
- Chip Hailey, Joplin
- Rosemary Hendon, West Plains
- Katie Jones, St. Charles
- Kim Lackey, St. Louis
- Elijah Mayfield, Jefferson City
- Susan Orton, Creve Coeur
- Traci Ritter, Cape Girardeau
- Andrew Sartorius, Jefferson City
- Lesia Shelton, Buffalo
- James Trout, St. Louis
- Robert Wallace, St. Louis

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability— Staff Members

- Claudia Browner, Executive Director
- Laura Mueth, Senior Program Specialist
- Rachel Rackers, Senior Program Specialist
- Jennifer Pettit, Lead Administrative Support Assistant

SIGN UP NOW FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING

by Claudia Browner



Niagara University Disability Awareness Training has received funding from the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council to educate anyone involved in emergency planning, preparedness, response, and recovery as it pertains to individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs.

Members of the disability community, including disability advocates and organizations, along with emergency management and public health agencies are invited and encouraged to attend one of the upcoming trainings in their regions of the state.

Training sessions will be held in nine different regions of the state, and are currently open for registration in Springfield, Independence, Columbia, and St. Louis. If you have questions or are not sure which training you should attend, contact the Missouri DD Council at moddc@moddcouncil.org

To register for the training in your area, or to find out when a training will be held in your region, visit <https://frdat.niagara.edu/training/trainings/>

FILING YOUR TAXES

by Claudia Browner

Tax season is here and for many people filing taxes can be confusing and stressful. The National Disability Institute has put together some great information and resources to help you prepare and find out where to file our taxes for free, tax credits you might be eligible for, and how you can make the most of your tax refund money.

Check out the information at

<https://www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/financial-resilience-center/taxes-and-tax-prep/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **March 1, 2023**
[Disability Rights Legislative Day, State Capitol, Jefferson City/Virtual](#)
- **March 4, 2023**
[Virtual Leadership Summit](#)
- **April 3-4, 2023**
[Power Up Assistive Technology Conference & Expo, Columbia](#)
- **May 2-4, 2023**
[Annual Charting the LifeCourse Showcase, Kansas City](#)
- **May 21-24, 2023**
[National ADA Symposium, Kansas City](#)
- **July 18-22, 2023**
[Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#)

If you know of other events you would like us to share with the disability community, please contact our office.