



Commission on People with Disabilities

January 14, 2026 - 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Tonya Gilchrist, Chair

Jamila Michael-Sobratti, Vice-Chair

Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

[Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Virtual Meeting Via Zoom: *If you want to call into the meeting, call 301-715-8592, use Meeting ID 739 001 7153 followed by #. Those calling into the meeting can press *6 to mute and unmute their phone. If an attendee would like to speak during the meeting, they must use the “hand raise” function. If connecting via a smart phone, tablet or computer, please click on the Zoom link to be able to access all functions, including raising your hand. If you are calling by phone, press *9 to raise your hand.*

Agenda

- 6:05 Call to Order & Approval of December 2025 Meeting Minutes – Tonya Gilchrist, Chair
- 6:10 Inclusive Housing for People with Disabilities – Tim Wiens, Executive Director at Maryland Inclusive Housing Corporation (MIH), Silver Spring, Maryland
- 6:55 Updates – Updates on FY27 Priorities for the Year – Commission and Ex-Officio Members
 - Promote Greater Community Engagement and Inclusion of All People who Have a Disability
 - Greater Enforcement of Disability Laws: Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance, Fair Housing Act
- 7:20 Community Speaks – Public invited to make comments, 2-minute limit, time permitting. For profit companies who want to speak should contact the Commission in advance. The Open Meetings Act does not afford the public any right to participate in the meeting, it does assure the public right to observe the meeting and the making of decisions by the public body at open meetings. Public participants generally are not invited to speak during presentations and time is set aside at the end of the meeting to allow the public to speak. This policy will be strictly enforced moving forward.
- 7:30 Adjourn

ADA Reasonable Accommodations: Sign language interpreter services and other auxiliary aids or services will be provided upon request with as much advance notice as possible, preferably at least five (5) full business days before the meeting. To request any reasonable accommodation to participate in the meeting, please contact Carly Clem in advance at carly.clem@montgomerycountymd.gov or call 202-853-1109. In all situations, a good faith effort will be made to provide accommodations. For any additional questions or concerns, please contact Betsy Luecking, Staff Liaison at betsy.luecking@montgomerycountymd.gov or please call 240-418-4865, MD Relay 711.

See Next Page for Top FY 27 Priorities



Commission on People with Disabilities

Meeting with Montgomery County Council HHS Committee

Top Policy Issues October 22, 2025

Tony Gilchrist, Chair

Promote Greater Community Engagement and Inclusion of All People who have a Disability

- Promote Greater Employment Opportunities for people with disabilities who want to work of all ages and who have all types of disabilities. OHR should continue to promote the Hiring preference for Veterans, Disabled Veterans and People with Disabilities and the County's non-competitive hiring initiative. At the same time, work with DORS and Worksource Montgomery to promote hiring in the private and public sectors.
- Encourage MCPS to implement more one on one family/student assessments of students who are marginalized or of immigrant populations in special education to access needed programs and resources. Promote avenues for greater parent advocacy.
- Continue to support the annual Development Disability supplement as it remains a cornerstone for providers who receive funding for services from the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) enabling them to sustain quality services and support for people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). This funding ensures the provider community can navigate cost disparities and workforce challenges of recruiting and retaining Direct Support Professionals while meeting the evolving needs of the people they serve. The DDA FY 26 COLA rate adjustment for this year did not fully cover the extra cost of inflation. The DD supplement increases do not fully cover the cost of annual expansion of hundreds of new people who are newly admitted into services DD providers in the County, including Transitioning Youth who graduate from MCPS. DDA funding reductions have impacted providers, and it is not known how Medicaid will play out. Depending on what happens with Medicaid, DDA could have a major challenge supporting individuals with IDD.
- Increase funding of Respite and Caregiver Supports. Respite care is occasional, short-term temporary physical and emotional relief for families with adults with functional disabilities, children or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, children with challenging behaviors, and frail seniors ages 60+. Caregiver supports promotes community engagement.

Greater Enforcement of Disability Laws: Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance, Fair Housing Act

- Transportation – Designated bike lanes and floating bus stops can present specific barriers, confusion, and danger to people who have low vision, blindness, hearing loss, mobility limitations or intellectual disabilities. Because there is not one standard design for floating bus stops, the issue should be studied for changes leading to consistency. Minimize or eliminate designated bike lanes and better monitoring of those installed by the state as they are confusing to the public such as Old Georgetown Road and Rock Spring Drive. Provide incentives to taxi drivers to drive accessible vehicles on a regular full-time basis. Greater police enforcement of accessible parking spaces/placards.
- Funding for new and innovative assistive listening devices such as Auracast broadcast audio which is a new Bluetooth capability to enhance hearing accessibility.
- Promote programs that increase the amount of accessible and affordable housing – Such as: Design for Life Montgomery, encourage the building and renovation of accessible homes. Seek legislation for the County to adopt the Prince Georges Universal design Bill CB-085-2024 AN ACT CONCERNING UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR HOUSING - REVISIONS generally regarding Universal Design elements for certain newly constructed residential homes.

- Implementation of property tax credit for people with a disability that is in Montgomery County Code, **ARTICLE X. PROPERTY TAX CREDIT** ARTICLE X. PROPERTY TAX CREDITS **Sec. 52-84. Real property tax credits for permanently and totally disabled homeowners.**

Lastly, it is critical for Boards, Committees and Commissions (BCC) have commissioners appointed in a timely manner so that they can be most effective and also respecting the volunteer service of community members who serve. We ask that the County ensure proper staffing for the County Executive's Office for timely recruitment and appointments of BCC members.