



Partners in Policymaking Frequently Asked Questions

What is the goal for participation in the Partners in Policymaking program?

The goal of Partners in Policymaking is to educate class members so that they can be a part of disability advocacy on all levels. This means anything from being on a school board to participating in a State or National legislative process.

Is there a specific philosophical point of view that speakers and presentations will share?

The basic philosophy is self-determination. Best practices, current philosophy and policy will depend on the speaker's perspective and the movement or policy being presented.

Who is eligible to apply for the program?

Eligible applicants include Self-Advocates with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) and family members of persons with I/DD, including siblings of persons with I/DD. To be considered for the program, you must be a resident of the state of Maryland.

How important is it to be able to attend every session of the Partners program?

Attending every session of the program is incredibly important. We are looking for class members with this dedication to take full advantage of the investment in them.

How much does it cost to be a part of the Partners in Policymaking program?

The Partners program is free for participants. The Arc Maryland and the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council have, however, estimated that each spot in the program is valued at \$5,000. Being a part of the Partners in Policymaking program is like a scholarship opportunity. Class members are chosen because of the potential seen in them to be lifelong advocates for change and the rights of people with disabilities.

Are overnight accommodations for 2-Day Sessions free?

The overnight accommodation for each of the 2-Day Sessions are covered in full by The Arc Maryland and the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council.

Will there be provisions in place for weather related issues that may arise, specifically in the winter months?

Yes, there will be provisions in place for weather related issues, especially for those coming from further distances who may run into the issue.



How can I stand out from other applicants to be selected?

The more information you share about yourself, the better. Be thorough and complete in answering questions on the application. Tell us more about yourself, your interests, and what you plan on doing with what you learn from the class.

Is this program the first of its kind?

Partners in Policymaking was originally developed in Minnesota in 1987. The program has since been implemented across over 30 states and internationally. While Partners was originally introduced in Maryland in the 90's, our 2019 Class was the first class in the state in the past 12 years. We are so pleased to be able to extend this opportunity for two more years, to two more classes of advocates in Maryland!

Is there any subsidy for travel?

The Arc Maryland has some funding reserved for travel stipends to be provided on a case by case basis for participants who require additional support to successfully attend the class.

Are meals included in the program during class sessions? What if I have dietary restrictions?

Lunch and snacks during each class session will be included. Additionally, a continental breakfast is included during morning sessions. During 2-day sessions, dinner is also available on the Sunday evening portion of the session. Please make note of any special diets or dietary restrictions you have on the application. We will do our very best to meet your needs.

Upon completion of the Partners in Policymaking program, how do I utilize my newfound skills?

What you do with your Partners experience is completely up to you! Partners is about creating long-term agents of change. This can be accomplished through many channels of advocacy on local, state, and national levels. This can mean taking on leadership roles in volunteer organizations, participation in public policy and legislative sessions, and much more. Opportunities will present themselves during and after the class. It is up to you to seize them!

If I do not get accepted, or cannot be a part of the program this year, will there be another opportunity for me in the future?

Yes. The Arc Maryland will again coordinate Partners in Policymaking for the 2020-21 class, thanks to funding from the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council. We strongly encourage those who are not accepted or unable to participate this year to apply next year for the 2020-21 class.



Who can I contact for more information about Partners in Policymaking?

For additional questions about Partners in Policymaking, you can reach out to Kathy Swanson at The Arc Maryland by phone at 410-571-9320, or by email at kswanson@thearcmd.org.

What is the application deadline for the 2019-20 Partners in Policymaking program? When will I be notified if I was accepted?

Applications for the 2019-20 program will be accepted until August 16. Following the application deadline, a review panel consisting of members of partnering organizations will review applications and select members for the class. Applicants will be notified whether they were accepted to the 2019-20 class well in advance of the first class, but not before September 3rd.