



## Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns Annual Report FY 2023

The Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns' **VISION** is that **ALL PEOPLE** with disabilities are entitled to be **EQUAL CITIZENS** and **PARTNERS** in **KANSAS SOCIETY**.

### FISCAL YEAR (FY) HIGHLIGHTS:

KCDC was instrumental in growth and partnerships in the key area of employment:

1. Local Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) committees held events in 9 counties and over 234 students and job seekers with disabilities participated across the state in FY 2023.
2. KCDC continues to support the Employment First Oversight Commission. The employment first policy is that state programs that provide employment services to people with disabilities must offer assistance with finding competitive integrated employment before offering any other employment options. KCDC is the agency that officially staffs the Employment First Oversight Commission.
3. The KCDC website was updated with new information about employment initiatives and disability history information. You can see the updated site at [www.kcdcinfo.ks.gov](http://www.kcdcinfo.ks.gov).
4. The 33 Disability Service Maps were updated for the KCDC website for use by Workforce Centers, community-based organizations and other state organizations as a resource tool to find employment-related services and other wrap-around services (<http://www.kcdcinfo.ks.gov/resources/service-maps>). The Kansas Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) for Adult Mental Health was added to the collection.
5. One hundred-twenty-one (121) people were served by the Commission during FY 2023. Of these 100 were Individuals, 11 were businesses, 5 were government representatives, 1 was from the disability community and 2 were other. The top two subjects were service dogs and employment discrimination. Service dog questions ranged from "How do I register my dog to be a service dog?" to "Do I have to let someone into my store/business/apartments who claims they have a service dog/emotional support animal?" The employment discrimination inquiries were all concerning people who felt their employer was discriminating against them because of their disabilities.
6. Staff is represented on the Governor's Commission for Emergency Planning and Response, the Assistive Technology for Kansans Project, and the Preventative Health and Health Services Block Grant Program.
7. Over 500 news-related messages were distributed during FY 2023 through list serves on [KCDCinfo.ks.gov](http://KCDCinfo.ks.gov). Information is distributed to businesses, ADA coordinators, community-based organizations, employment specialists, employers and people with disabilities.

## Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns

**Vision** (destination) – The Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns' (KCDC) vision is that all people with disabilities are entitled to be equal citizens and equal partners in Kansas society.

People with disabilities and society often do not have expectations of equal citizenship because of attitudinal barriers, institutionalization, and inadequate education. A citizen is a person born or naturalized in the U.S. of America with *all* of the rights, privileges, and responsibilities. An equal partner is one who is an active participant.

**Mission** (what we do) - KCDC is a catalyst for change in government for all people with disabilities.

A catalyst provokes or speeds a significant change or action.

**Values** (how we do it) – KCDC values partnerships, freedom of choice, advocacy, respect and to “do no harm.”

Partnerships – KCDC utilizes the strengths and connections of organizations to achieve our vision.

Freedom of Choice – KCDC recognizes that people have the right to make daily choices about their lives and lifestyles according to their functional abilities.

Advocacy – KCDC advocates for changes in government and other organizations that empower people with disabilities.

Respect – KCDC respects the rights and choices of partners and people with disabilities, and recognizes individual's capabilities, strengths and potential.

Do No Harm – In regard to government policy, KCDC does not advocate for changes that would adversely affect another person or group in the disability community.

These values serve as a compass to guide our strategies, actions and relationships with government and non-government representatives, organizations, businesses, communities, fellow employees and individuals with and without disabilities.

### Legislative Initiatives for 2023

The Commission endorsed creating the Disability Hiring Preference for state employment, Medicaid Expansion, full funding for Home and Community Based Services waivers, and supported elimination of the use of subminimum wage. The commission continues to support initiatives that improve competitive integrated employment and access to programs and services for people with disabilities.

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