



Positive Action for a Better Tomorrow

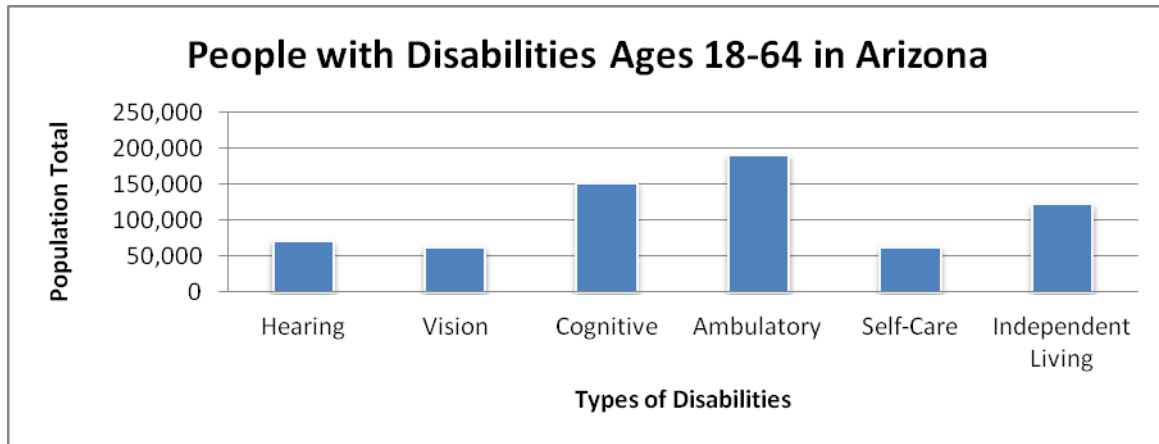
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Arizonans with disabilities seek to live as independently as possible, work and contribute to their community to their fullest capacity

361,900 working age Arizonans reported a disability in 2011 (10% AZ population)



Community Barriers Facing Arizonans with Disabilities:

Demeaning Attitudes and Stereotypes
Poverty resulting in lack of affordable, accessible...
Housing
Public Transportation
Health Care
Mental Health Services
Assistive Technology

One common solution to these barriers is Employment!

ACTION ⇒ More Employment Supports Needed

Employment Rate:

Arizonans with disabilities (32%) are **half** as likely to be employed as non-disabled Arizonans (72%).

Less working Full-Time/Full-Year:

Arizonans with disabilities are working full-time/full-year at **less than half** (20%) the rate of their non-disabled peers (53%).

Looking for Work Less – Unaware of Work Incentives

Only 12.9% Arizonans who are not working and actively looking for work is less than half the percentage of non-disabled peers (26.5%.) Although some Arizonans with disabilities are too ill or disabled to work, many more are simply unaware of the work incentives that can help them transition



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back to employment without losing needed health care or are too afraid to risk losing cash benefits if their disability gets worse or they are not successful at work.

Recipe for Disaster for Arizonans with Disabilities Brewing in Arizona FY2014

Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration/Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services is charged with helping Arizonans with disabilities get the education, job training and development, assistive technology and support services they need to achieve successful employment.

Over 3,000 Arizonans with disabilities linger on the VR waiting list.

Due to funding shortages caused by the lack of state match for federal funding, VR has been on an "Order of Selection" for the past four years. The result in that only the most severely disabled can access services today.

Even worse in 2014, DES estimates that without additional Arizona funding to draw down the \$4 to \$1 federal match July 1, 2013, VR will likely be unable to serve any new clients, leaving thousands of Arizonans with disabilities wanting to work lingering on waiting lists. Stop sending Arizona VR federal dollars to other states! Help Arizona's economy. Create more AZ tax payers!

⇒ We urge you to find Arizona matching funding for Vocational Rehabilitation Services ASAP!

For every \$1 M to AZ VR, another 646 people can get VR services

Loss of SSA Work Incentive Expertise

This past year, as a result of Congressional Reauthorization inaction, Arizona lost a \$300,000, twelve-year, statewide SSA Work Incentives Planning and Assistance grant that helped Social Security beneficiaries understand how employment affects benefits and to help them use work incentives to transition to employment while disabled. Most SSA employees do not understand these complicated rules. Trained/certified work incentives consultants have this knowledge. Although state agencies and employment providers agree work incentives consulting is a first step to help beneficiaries leave a life of poverty and work their way back to self sufficiency, only a few VR clients will have access to this much needed expertise, due to lack of funding.

AzDAC fully supports the Medicaid Expansion

AzDAC supports the Governor's proposal for Medicaid expansion as a key foundation to enable people with disabilities to obtain necessary health care coverage as a foundation for empowerment, employment, independence and community participation. Over the last two years over 140,000 single, adult Arizonans have lost health care coverage under AHCCCS because of a legislative freeze on eligibility as a way to deal with budget shortfalls. The lack of regular access to health care has led to increased severity of chronic illness without regular treatment, lack of restorative rehabilitation after a health crisis to maximize functioning, increased instability for people needing case management services, and in some cases premature death. Full AHCCCS expansion will reduce uncompensated care, provide the supports many people with serious mental illness need to stabilize and succeed in life, bring millions of federal dollars into Arizona's recovering economy and eliminate health care as a barrier to employment.



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Poverty among Arizonans with Disabilities – 2011 for Working Age Adults

99,200 Arizonans with disabilities live in poverty

1 ½ times as likely to live in poverty as an Arizonan without a disability (27.4% vs. 16.14%)

Median annual household income

Arizonans with disabilities, \$37,700, 28% less than non-disabled households, \$52,200

Government Subsidies aren't the solution

55,700 adult Arizonans with a disability receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

- More people than the capacity of the Diamondback's Chase Field Stadium
- \$740 month/ \$8,520 per year - The highest income possible from **any** source other than employment for a person on SSI.
- **Almost \$3,000 less than the Federal Poverty Level - \$958 month/ \$11,490!**

150,778 Arizona workers with disabilities are on SSDI payment status, which is equal to the population of Tempe, Arizona

- Average SSDI cash benefit is \$1,100 per month/ \$13,200 per year.
- Only 853 beneficiaries terminated SSDI cash benefits because of successful work – .05%
- Only 657 SSDI beneficiaries working at a substantial rate using work incentives.

Workers with disabilities earn less

Median annual earnings for a single adult Arizonan with disabilities working full-time/full-year was \$35,600 vs. non-disabled workers, \$40,700.

Less with college degrees

Half as many Arizonans with a disability (13.7%) received a BA degree or higher than their non-disabled peers (26.8%).

The Arizona Disability Advocacy Coalition is an alliance joined together to advocate and promote public policy that enhances the choice, dignity, rights and responsibilities of individuals with disabilities and their families. AzDAC Members: Arizona Bridge to Independent Living (ABIL) * Arizona Center for Disability Law * Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing * Arizona Council of the Blind, Inc. * DIRECT Center for Independence * National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Arizona Chapter * New Horizons Independent Living Center * People First of Arizona * Self Advocacy Coalition of Arizona * SMILE – Independent Living Center * Statewide Independent Living Council

Resources:

Annual Disability Statistics Compendium funded by National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) (2001). Retrieved from: <http://www.aapd.com/resources/publications/disability-compendium-2011.pdf>

Arizona Area on Aging. (2012) *Respite Services*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.aaaphx.org/RESPITE+SERVICES>

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https://www.azdes.gov/InternetFiles/Reports/pdf/rehabilitation_council_2011_annual_report.pdf

Cornell University. (2011). *2011 Disability Status Report United States*. Retrieved from:

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National Council on Disability. (2012). Retrieved from: (<http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/021413>)