In Minnesota, people with disabilities are more and more living, learning, working and enjoying life in the community. This means people with disabilities can build and maintain relationships with their family and friends, live more independently, work at regular jobs and participate in community life. In other words, people with disabilities lead lives that are meaningful to them.

The Olmstead plan is our state’s roadmap to help make that happen for more people. The plan is built on three connected ideas:

**Individual choice.** The Olmstead Plan will pave the way for Minnesotans with disabilities to express their preferences for how they choose to live, learn, work and engage in community life, while receiving the supports they need.

**The right services.** For people with disabilities, services must be appropriate to their needs, reflect their life choices and enable their participation with nondisabled persons to the fullest extent possible. The goal of Olmstead is not to close programs. However, like any competitive marketplace, people with disabilities will ultimately make the call as to what programs and services are successful.

**Person-centered practices.** Professionals involved in a person's life must share power with the individual and recognize everyone as whole people with unique strengths, assets, interests, expectations, cultures and goals.

The vision: People with disabilities are living, learning, working, and enjoying life in the most integrated setting.
Minnesota’s Olmstead plan sets goals for 11 topic areas:

**Person-Centered Planning**
People with disabilities decide for themselves where they will live, learn, work and live their lives. They choose the services that support their decisions through a planning process that determines what is important to them and will improve their quality of life. People with disabilities receive information about the benefits of integrated settings, which are settings where people with disabilities live and work with those who do not have disabilities. They will receive this information by visiting the locations and meeting others who are living, working, learning and receiving services.

**Waiting List**
People with disabilities who qualify for home and community based waiver services are approved for services at a reasonable pace as determined by the individual’s need.

**Transition Services**
People with disabilities receive services that help them achieve their life’s goals. Services match an individual’s needs, reflect their life choices and allow them to live and work with nondisabled persons as much as possible.

**Housing and Services**
People with disabilities have choices about where they live, with whom and in what type of housing. They can choose to have a lease or own their own home and live in integrated settings appropriate for their needs. Supports and services will allow flexibility to support individuals’ choices on where they live and how they live in their communities.

**Lifelong Learning and Education**
People with disabilities will access a comprehensive educational system at all levels, and have lifelong learning opportunities that support all development of an individual’s talents, interests, creativity, and mental and physical abilities.
Healthcare and Healthy Living
People with disabilities, regardless of their age, type of disability or place of residence, can access coordinated health services. These health services meet individual needs, support good health, prevent secondary conditions and provide the opportunity for a satisfying and meaningful life.

Employment
People with disabilities have choices for competitive, meaningful and continuous employment in the most integrated settings.

Crisis Services
People with disabilities live, work, attend school and conduct their daily lives in community settings even when experiencing a crisis. If this is not possible, disruption to daily life will be brief, minimal, and targeted to meet the individual’s choices and needs.

Community Engagement
People with disabilities have the opportunity to fully engage in their community and connect with others in ways that are meaningful and aligned with their personal choices and desires.

Positive Supports
People with disabilities are treated with respect and dignity. They receive services that provide positive therapeutic supports and practices, trauma-informed care and person-centered thinking and planning. Physical intervention only occurs when an individual’s conduct creates imminent risk of physical harm to themselves or another and less restrictive strategies will not work.

Transportation
People with disabilities have access to reliable, affordable and accessible transportation choices that support their work, housing, education and social connections.
History

Minnesota’s Olmstead Plan
The State of Minnesota believes all people have the right to make choices: to find a place to live where they want, to land a job that is satisfying, to attend classes like everyone else and in general be part of the community. The services people are eligible for must support those choices.

However, like much civil rights progress in our time, the Olmstead Plan began with a push. In the settlement of Jensen v. DHS, a class action lawsuit in U.S. District Court, the settlement agreement stated: “The State and the Department shall develop and implement a comprehensive Olmstead Plan that uses measurable goals to increase the number of people with disabilities receiving services that best meet their individual needs in the most Integrated Setting.”

Olmstead plans across the country are the result of a US Supreme Court decision in 1999, finding that unjustified segregation of persons with disabilities constitutes discrimination in violation of title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Court held that public entities must provide community-based services to persons with disabilities when (1) such services are appropriate; (2) the affected persons do not oppose community-based treatment; and (3) community-based services can be reasonably accommodated, taking into account the resources available to the public entity and the needs of others who are receiving disability services from the entity.

Developing the Plan
Minnesota began working on its Olmstead Plan in 2012. That year, the state formed the Olmstead Planning Committee, which included people with disabilities and their family members, providers, advocates and decision-makers from the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

In January 2013, Governor Mark Dayton issued an executive order establishing a subcabinet to develop and implement a broad plan supporting freedom of choice and opportunity for people with disabilities. The Olmstead Subcabinet includes the commissioner or commissioner’s designee from the following state agencies:

- Department of Corrections
- Department of Education
- Department of Employment and Economic Development
- Department of Health
- Department of Human Rights
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Transportation
- Minnesota Housing Finance Agency

Representatives from the Office of the Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities and the Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities are ex officio members of the subcabinet.

In August of 2015, a third draft of the plan was submitted to the court. On Sept 29, 2015, the court approved the plan.

For more information and the complete Olmstead Plan, visit www.dhs.state.mn.us/olmstead

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