

## PURPOSE

The Consumer Involvement Fund (CIF) is a reimbursement program that provides partial funding for individuals with developmental disabilities, their family members, or guardians to attend professional and informational conferences, legislative advocacy skills training events, public forums, hearings, and other similar activities. The Council is committed to investing financial resources in people with disabilities and family members to further the agenda of creating inclusive communities throughout Alabama.

Many policy, procedure, and program decisions affecting the lives of people with developmental disabilities are made without the meaningful involvement of the people who are most affected by those decisions. Often, they lack either the opportunity to participate or the experience which would enable their meaningful participation in such events as Board meetings of service agencies, state and national conferences which policy recommendations are developed, city council meetings, consumer advocacy meetings and training events, tax, abatement hearings, zoning hearings, etc.

The Consumer Involvement Fund (CIF) is designed to empower people with developmental disabilities and family members with the opportunities, experiences, resources and information they need to participate meaningfully in decisions that are being made which affect their lives. Through the Consumer Involvement Fund, people with disabilities and their families can access the information and educational events which will enable them to participate effectively in the decision making process by being involved with agencies, services providers and consumer advocacy group.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Applicant must be a person with a developmental disability or family member/guardian of a person with a developmental disability.

## WHAT FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE?

**\$400** per year, per person for in-state events

**\$1,000** per year, per person for out-of-state events

The Council's Consumer Involvement Funds can only partially fund the cost of attending an event. The Council requires persons wishing to receive Consumer Involvement Funds to secure partial funding from other sources, such as other state agencies, private foundations, consumer or advocacy organizations, an employer, use of his/her own money, or time match. In order to receive federal funds (DD Funds) a 25% local match (your portion) is required.

To calculate the local match share for the 25% required match, divide the total amount of your federal dollars request by 3. Then to calculate the total grant amount, combine the one-third figure with the federal dollars requested.

## HOW CAN I APPLY?

Applications must be received 30 days prior to event. The Consumer Involvement Fund Committee (CIFC) will review applications for funds on a monthly basis. Funds may be provided for: registration fees, child or respite care, personal assistance, hotel/lodging, meals, transportation and other (at the discretion of the CIFC).

## WHEN CAN I BE REIMBURSED?

When you are approved for the Consumer Involvement Funds, you will be mailed an award letter instructing you to submit documentation for approved expenses. You will be reimbursed for approved expenses as indicated on your budget sheet. Receipts should accompany your expenditure report, along with additional materials provided by the Council. All documentation must be submitted to the Council in order to start the reimbursement process. All reimbursement must be claimed no later than 60 days after the event/activity. Claims submitted after 60 days will **NOT** be eligible for payment.

This Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities is funded through a grant from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities.

**ALTERNATE FORMATS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.**