

The Olmstead Commission's goal is to move North Dakota towards greater integration and inclusion for individuals with disabilities.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING

2026 Virtual Fair Housing Month Conference

April 9th at 9am

Early Identification, Intervention, and Access to Children's Mental Health Services

April 9th at 12pm

Understanding Men's Mental Health

April 21st at 12pm

Secondary Transition Fair

April 28th at 9am

NEXT

OLMSTEAD MEETING:

Wednesday, May 13th
1-3pm in the Fort Totten
Room at the Capitol

Discussion Topics:
Rural Health Transformation
Program and Goal #4- Housing

Join meeting [here](#).

ANNIVERSARY OF THE 504 SIT-INS

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was a groundbreaking civil rights law intended to ban discrimination against people with disabilities in federally funded programs. But for several years, it remained largely unenforced, as the Nixon and Ford administrations failed to implement the regulations needed to make it effective. By the time Jimmy Carter took office in 1977, frustration had reached a breaking point. When his administration delayed action and launched a review process that excluded meaningful disability representation, advocates grew concerned the rules would be weakened. In response, the American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities (ACCD) demanded that the original regulations be signed without changes and set an April 5th deadline for action.



When that deadline passed without a response, activists escalated their efforts by organizing sit-ins at federal offices nationwide. While most protests lasted only a few days, the San Francisco sit-in continued for nearly a month and became a defining moment in the disability rights movement. Drawing inspiration from earlier civil rights protests, demonstrators challenged stereotypes about people with disabilities, showing strength, leadership, and determination. Participants from across the disability community came together, building solidarity and a shared sense of purpose.

The occupation was physically and emotionally demanding, with protestors facing limited access to food, medication, and essential equipment. Support from allies like the Black Panther Party helped sustain them, but many still endured significant hardship. Their persistence ultimately led to success. On April 28, 1977, the regulations were signed unchanged. This victory marked a turning point, helping establish disability rights as a civil rights issue and laying the groundwork for future legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Source: National Museum of American History

"Through the sit-in, we turned ourselves from being oppressed individuals into being empowered people. We demonstrated to the entire nation that disabled people could take control over our own lives and take leadership in the struggle for equality."

- Judy Heumann



OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Olmstead Commission Advisory Council Meeting

April 8th at 2pm

ND Interagency Coordinating Council

April 9th at 9am

Bismarck Legislative Working Group

April 18th at 10am

Rehabilitation Council

April 14th at 12pm

Behavioral Health Planning Council Meeting

April 15th at 10am

Cross Disability Advisory Council Meeting

April 16th at 9am

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