

CEAG Annual Plan 2025: Advancing Community Life Engagement (CLE) Across Virginia

The Community Engagement Advisory Group (CEAG) is committed to transforming how individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) experience life in their communities. This plan outlines a strategic roadmap through 2026 to build understanding, remove barriers, and expand access to meaningful Community Life Engagement (CLE) by September 2026.

Long Term Outcome I. Empower Stakeholders to Champion CLE

We aim to create a shared vision of CLE where individuals with DD are not just present in their communities, but actively engaged in ways that reflect their interests, strengths, and goals.

Strategy 1: Build a shared understanding of CLE through in-person training.

Goal 1:

Train at least 150 community partners (support coordinators, providers, individuals, families, and state agency staff) by September 2026.

Outcome:

- 86% of participants demonstrate increased CLE understanding through pre and post-test surveys.

#	Lead(s)	Activities	Tasks	Deliverable(s)	Outcome(s)	Due Date
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEAG Education and Training Committee • DBHDS Staff 	Incorporate community partner input into standardized CLE training slides based on national CLE standards for community and state partners.	<p>CEAG Training and Education Committee and DBHDS staff will prepare slide content based on national CLE standards, which will be shared with select CSB, provider, and individual/family representatives for input.</p> <p>CEAG Training and Education Committee and DBHDS staff will</p>	<p>Training slides, Training schedule, Pre-test survey in MS Forms, Post-test survey in MS Forms</p>	<p>Statewide standardized CLE training developed incorporating community feedback.</p> <p>Trainings are scheduled and announced.</p> <p>Pre and post tests are prepared.</p>	February 15, 2025

			<p>finalize training slides and update notes/narrative.</p> <p>Develop pre and post test surveys to determine increases in knowledge and understanding of CLE.</p>			
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DBHDS Staff 	<p>CLE in-person training is delivered in-person in an interactive format by DBHDS.</p>	<p>Training space is located, dates are selected, and CLE Training is scheduled for 2025 and advertised through DBHDS listservs and the DS Council.</p> <p>Training is formatted and sent for posting to DBHDS LMS website following completion of in-person events.</p>	<p>At least three CLE Training events.</p>	<p>Trainings are held for support coordinators, providers, individuals and families and state agency staff.</p> <p>CLE trainings are completed.</p> <p>Tests are completed and analyzed to determine success.</p>	<p>March 31, 2026</p>

Strategy 1: Q1 Status

Step 1 Narrated re-recording of the training was reviewed and discussed by CEAG members. Recommendations were incorporated into the training with the provider video edited into the survey and one family member story. An additional story reflecting lived experience has been directly solicited. When received, it will be added, and the recording will be edited by our Communications Department for posting.

Step 2

Strategy 2: Increase awareness and understanding of CLE through personal stories

Goal 2:

By February 15th, 2025, post an on-demand video training for CLE for providers that includes stories from people with lived experience.

Outcome:

- CLE video developed, recorded, posted online, and announced by June 30, 2026.

#	Lead(s)	Activities	Tasks	Deliverable(s)	Outcome(s)	Due Date
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEAG Education and Training Committee • DBHDS Staff 	DBHDS and CEAG Education and Training Committee will develop a CLE video that incorporates the four pillars of CLE and includes perspectives of people with lived experience that can be provided to a diverse representation of DD community partners.	<p>DBHDS staff and community partners will record narration for slides.</p> <p>CEAG Training and Education Committee and DBHDS staff will identify resources to record video from individuals with lived experience and then edit the narrated PowerPoint with video content.</p>	Draft video	Community partners contribute stories, which are incorporated into a draft video for final editing.	April 30, 2026
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEAG Education and Training Committee • DBHDS Staff 	DBHDS and CEAG Education and Training Committee will finalize CLE video	<p>CEAG Training and Education Committee and DBHDS staff will finalize video by June 2026.</p> <p>Final video is edited and posted to DBHDS website.</p>	Final video	<p>Final video is announced and available of the DBHDS DS website and LMS system.</p> <p>Support Coordinators and Providers/DSPs are aware of CLE video and resources.</p>	June 30, 2026

Strategy 2: Q1 Status

Step 1: In progress. Initial requests for video stories via advocacy groups were not successful. Stories have been solicited directly from among known self-advocates.

Step 2:

DBHDS met with advocacy stakeholders to determine review of existing recorded content and solicitation of volunteers to record their lived CLE experiences.

~~As of 8/14/2025 a solicitation has been distributed via the Arc of VA for individuals interested in recording stories about Community Life Engagement along with review of existing recorded content.~~

~~A DBHDS CRC trainer/presenter has been identified. Voice overs will be scheduled within the next month.~~

~~As of 8/14/2025, the CLE provider training has been recorded and is currently undergoing leadership review. Once the recorded content is approved, individual and family and provider stories will be edited into the video.~~

~~As of 8/14/2025 TBD after recorded video content is finalized with input incorporated.~~

Strategy 3: Include meaningful community life engagement conversations in provider policies and practices

Goal 3:

By March 31st, 2026, support at least five provider organizations and two state agencies to incorporate CLE standards into their organizational policies and practices, as well as establish a method to confirm provider implementation within their programs.

Outcome:

- At least 86% (6/7) of participating agencies incorporate policies and practices that align with CLE standards as assessed through Quality Service Reviews (QSR).

#	Lead(s)	Activities	Tasks	Deliverable(s)	Outcome(s)	Due Date
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEAG Policy Committee • DBHDS staff 	Prepare and send evaluation criteria to DBHDS for inclusion in QSR reviews.	<p>Review current community elements in QSR Round 7 to determine question enhancements.</p> <p>Organize and share suggestions to DBHDS for consideration in Round 8.</p>	Draft QSR language.	Suggestions are incorporated into QSR Round 8.	November 2025
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEAG Policy Committee • DBHDS staff 	Develop and pilot CLE conversation tools and other helpful resources as determined by committee members	Determine needed tools and develop in plain language versions to be accessible all DD community and state partners in Virginia.	CLE conversation guides and resources.	Tools are identified and developed.	March 31, 2026

		in collaboration with community partners.				
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEAG Policy Committee • CEAG Education and Training Committee • DBHDS staff 	Recruit and train participating agencies.	<p>Send interest surveys to providers and state agencies to communicate expectations and secure participation.</p> <p>Schedule training session to share CLE standards, provide examples, and discuss methods of incorporating standards into policies and practices.</p> <p>Establish procedures and provide technical assistance as needed or requested to support agency development and implementation.</p>	<p>Participation survey. Presentation materials. Example policies and practices.</p> <p>Additional materials as needed following pilot.</p>	<p>Providers are identified, trained, and supported to incorporate CLE.</p> <p>Learning from the pilot is used to refine and develop additional materials for systemwide use.</p>	July 31, 2026

Strategy 2: Status

Step 1: CLE expectations will be built into the new ISP. Staff will review and discuss with the CEAG, monitoring of CLE provider training and technical assistance and oversight of CLE via ISP implementation.

Step 2:

Step 3:

Strategy 3: Include meaningful community life engagement conversations in planning

Goal 4: By November 30, 2025, update Virginia’s ISP specifications related to the integrated community involvement (ICI) conversation to redefine ICI as a component of CLE.

Outcome:

- Specification language is drafted with community partners input by November 2025.

#	Lead(s)	Activities	Tasks	Deliverable(s)	Outcome(s)	Due Date
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEAG Policy Committee DBHDS staff 	Prepare and send specification language updates to DBHDS.	Review current ISP elements, determine needed revisions, draft language and submit to DBHDS.	Draft specification language.	Draft complete and submitted.	November 2025
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DBHDS staff EHR vendors CSB staff 	Finalize specifications, test, and release ISP.	<p>Incorporate suggestions into draft specifications.</p> <p>Refine with EHR vendor group.</p> <p>Proceed with testing and release of updated ISP.</p>	Specifications finalized; ISP released.	ISP released for use that incorporates CLE.	May 1, 2026

Strategy 3: Status

Step 1: In progress. The CLE definitions and ICI expectations will be reviewed and discussed at the upcoming CEAG meeting.

Step 2:

Long Term Outcome II: Identify and document the root causes of Community Life Engagement (CLE) service barriers as reported by providers, to inform and develop targeted, quality-driven initiatives that address systemic challenges and improve service delivery.

We believe that understanding provider-reported barriers is essential to fostering inclusive, person-centered community engagement. By listening to those delivering services, we can co-create solutions that elevate quality, equity, and access for all individuals supported.

Strategy 4: Identify and address the root causes of barriers to the delivery of Community Engagement (CE), Community Coaching (CC), and Community Guide services under the DD Waiver (DDW), using data-driven approaches.

Goal 4:

By September 30, 2026, using data collected through the DBHDS Community Engagement and Community Coaching Quality Improvement Initiatives (QII), identify the top five provider-reported barriers to delivering CE, CC, and Community Guide services. Share findings and mitigation strategies with providers

Outcome:

- At least 75% of participating providers reporting an improved understanding of the barriers and actionable strategies to address them, as measured by post-engagement surveys.

#	Lead(s)	Activities	Tasks	Deliverable(s)	Outcome(s)	Due Date
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEAG Policy Committee • DBHDS staff 	Analyze provider-reported data and prepare findings.	<p>Analyze provider-reported data from CE and CC QII initiatives.</p> <p>Identify and categorize the top five recurring barriers.</p> <p>Create a summary report and visual aids (e.g., infographics, slide decks) outlining key barriers and mitigation strategies.</p> <p>Tailor report for different provider types (e.g., rural vs. urban, small vs. large agencies).</p>	Data summary report	Report completed for distribution.	October 31, 2025
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEAG Policy Committee • DBHDS staff 	Distribute findings, offer technical assistance, track participation.	<p>Design and distribute a pre- and post-session survey to measure provider understanding and confidence.</p> <p>Offer optional technical assistance or office hours for providers seeking help implementing strategies.</p> <p>Track participation and feedback for continuous improvement.</p> <p>Feedback from CLE survey used to develop a statewide QII targeted to those areas identified</p>	Survey, Tracking method for participation, QII draft	QII drafted based on findings from provider report review and related technical assistance.	January 31, 2026

			by providers in the survey to remediate barriers.			
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Strategy 4: Q1 Status

Step 1:
 Additional SME added to help address technical issues with the survey.
 Survey draft #4 completed and sent to CEAG for a second test. 12 members completed the survey.
 As of 8/14 Survey completed, tested and approved for distribution.
 Reconciling provider contact information to be able to distribute the survey.

Step 2:

Survey responses have been received, compiled and organized according to high level themes. CEAG members will rank the themes and solicit assistance with developing the infographic.

Long-term Outcome III: A sufficient and geographically diverse network of providers is consistently and successfully implementing Community Engagement services across all regions of the state, ensuring equitable access and quality for individuals receiving DD Waiver supports.

We believe that every individual receiving DD Waiver services deserves equitable access to meaningful community engagement, regardless of where they live. By cultivating a geographically diverse and capable network of providers across all regions, we affirm our commitment to inclusion, person-centered practices, and the right to full participation in community life.

Goal 5:
 By September 30, 2026, increase the number of DD Waiver providers delivering Community Engagement services in underserved regions.

Outcome:

- There is a 20% increase in CE providers in underserved areas as determined by the DBHDS Provider Data Summary, and at least 85% of those providers demonstrate compliance with person-centered, community-based service delivery standards, as measured through QSR reviews.

Strategy 5: Strengthen provider capacity and regional equity by identifying underserved areas, offering targeted technical assistance, and promoting best practices in Community Engagement service delivery to expand access and ensure consistent, person-centered implementation statewide.

#	Lead(s)	Activities	Tasks	Deliverable(s)	Outcome(s)	Due Date
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEAG Policy Committee DBHDS staff 	Complete data analysis	Use Provider Data Summary and service utilization data/geographic mapping to	Data report.	Data is aggregated and summarized to communicate gaps in CE	January 31, 2026

			<p>identify underserved regions with limited or no Community Engagement (CE) service providers.</p> <p>Prioritize regions based on population need, provider availability, and historical service gaps.</p>		<p>services in underserved areas.</p> <p>A written report is completed to summarize the findings for sharing with current and potential CE providers.</p>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEAG Education and Training Committee DBHDS staff 	Engage the community.	<p>Host targeted outreach sessions to engage existing providers in underserved areas.</p> <p>Offer incentives (Jump-Start Funding) and/or technical assistance to encourage new provider enrollment or expansion in CE services.</p>	<p>Session schedule.</p> <p>Communication re: invite.</p>	<p>Outreach sessions are scheduled and held to communicate data report finding and encourage provider growth.</p> <p>A method of technical assistance is determined and implemented.</p>	June 30, 2026

Strategy 5: Q1 Status

Step 1: CLE team will review data as part of the data summary report to determine baseline number of providers and individuals served. The infographic will be posted and distributed to providers. Training video will be targeted to geographic areas with low service utilization.

Step 2:

Strategy 6: Increase service use.

Goal 6:
Increase the percentage of individuals receiving DD Waiver services who are actively participating in meaningful Community Engagement (CE) services.

Outcome:

- Individuals actively participating in meaningful Community Life Engagement (CLE) activities increases by 10% by September 30, 2026, as measured against a 2024 baseline to be established through provider reporting and individual service data.

#	Lead(s)	Activities	Tasks	Deliverable(s)	Outcome(s)	Due Date
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1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEAG Policy Committee DBHDS staff 	Determine service authorization statewide and refine “meaningful participation” to include the perspectives of individuals using these services.	<p>Define “meaningful participation” from the individual’s perspective, using person-centered planning principles.</p> <p>Develop accessible materials (e.g., videos, brochures, peer-led sessions) to help individuals understand what CE is and how it can benefit them.</p>	<p>Meaningful participation, individual perspective definition.</p> <p>Accessible, plain language resources</p>	<p>Summary of individual CE service access statewide.</p> <p>Data monitoring process established and implemented to determine progress.</p> <p>Meaningful participation, individual perspective defined.</p> <p>Accessible, plain language resources are developed.</p>	July 31, 2026
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEAG Education and Training Committee DBHDS staff 	Collect and share successes.	In newsletters and/or listserv announcements, highlight stories of individuals who have achieved meaningful outcomes through CE to inspire others and promote what’s possible.	Stories collected and shared.	Success stories are routinely communicated at a frequency determined by the CEAG to the broader DD community.	August 31, 2026
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEAG Policy Committee DBHDS staff 	Establish and implement data method and monitoring process.	<p>Collect data on the number and percentage of individuals currently engaged in meaningful Community Engagement (CE) activities to establish a baseline.</p> <p>Collect quarterly data on individual authorization rates.</p> <p>Analyze trends and adjust outreach or supports to ensure equitable progress across regions and populations.</p>	<p>Baseline data and method to track progress.</p> <p>Quarterly analysis of progress.</p>	A baseline is determined, and progress is tracked quarterly with adjustments made at regional and local levels as needed.	September 30, 2026

Strategy 6: Q1 Status

Step 1: Following posting of CLE video, we will solicit feedback on video (insert a poll feature) and utilizing that feedback, we will develop targeted in-person and other trainings on CLE and it's relationship to ICI.

Step 2:

Step 3: