PLAIN LANGUAGE GLOSSARY

Below are plain language definitions for some of the words and phrases used in this platform.

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act): A federal law passed in 1990 that makes it illegal to discriminate against people with disabilities in jobs, public places, transportation, and government services.

Assistive Technology: Tools and devices that help people with disabilities do things more easily. Examples include hearing aids, wheelchairs, screen readers, and communication apps.

Communication Access: Making sure people can understand and be understood. This can include interpreters, sign language, translated materials, captioning, and assistive communication devices. Communication access helps people who are deaf or hard of hearing, people whose first language is not English, and people with other communication support needs.

Community-Based Services: Supports that help people with disabilities live in their own homes and communities instead of in institutions or nursing homes.

Coordinator of Community Services (CCS): A person who helps someone with a disability plan and organize the supports they need.

DDA (Developmental Disabilities Administration): The Maryland state agency that helps fund and manage services for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. DDA supports more than 18,000 Marylanders.

Direct Support Professional (DSP): A person who is paid to help someone with a disability with daily tasks such as cooking, getting dressed, going to work, and taking part in the community.

Dual Diagnosis: When a person has both an intellectual or developmental disability and a mental health support need at the same time.

Fading Plan: A plan that says a support, like a job coach, will slowly be reduced or removed over time. People On the Go believes fading plans should not be required unless they are written into the state's official waiver.

General Welfare Clause: A phrase from the Preamble to the United States Constitution. The Preamble says that one purpose of the federal government is to "promote the general Welfare." This means the federal government has a responsibility to act in ways that benefit all of its people. People On the Go believes this responsibility includes protecting the right of people with disabilities to live in their communities.

Humane Treatment: Being treated with kindness, dignity, and respect. Humane treatment means a person's basic needs are met. They are not harmed, ignored, or mistreated. People On the Go believes everyone deserves humane treatment, including people held in ICE detention facilities.

ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement): A federal agency that enforces immigration laws in the United States. ICE can arrest, hold, and remove people who are not in the country legally. People held by ICE are sometimes kept in detention facilities, which are a kind of jail, while their immigration cases are reviewed.

Informed Consent: When a person is fully told about a medical treatment or procedure, understands it, and agrees to it freely. To give informed consent, a person must understand what will happen, what the risks are, and what other choices they have. They must make their decision without being pressured or forced. No one should agree to a medical procedure without truly understanding it and choosing it on their own.

Infringe: To take away or limit a right that belongs to someone. For example, if a person has the right to speak freely and someone tries to stop them from speaking, that is an infringement. People On the Go will not infringe on the right of its members to express their personal views, as long as those members make clear they are not speaking for the organization.

Institution: A large facility where people with disabilities are housed together, often with little choice or independence. Examples in Maryland include Potomac Center and Holly Center.

John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act: A federal law that Congress has worked to pass to restore and strengthen the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It is named after John Lewis, a civil rights leader and longtime member of Congress. The original Voting Rights Act made it illegal to use practices that stopped people from voting. Court decisions over the years weakened those protections. The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act is meant to restore them. People On the Go supports this act because strong voting rights protections help all people, including people with disabilities.

Marriage Penalty: Rules in the Social Security system that reduce or cut benefits for people with disabilities when they get married.

Medicaid Waiver: A special agreement between a state and the federal government that allows a state to use Medicaid funds to pay for community-based supports and services for people with disabilities, instead of only paying for institutional care. In Maryland, the DDA waiver uses Medicaid money to fund services like job coaching, residential support, day programs, and other supports that help people live in their own communities. A Medicaid waiver is called a "waiver" because it waives — or sets aside — the usual rule that Medicaid can only pay for care in hospitals or nursing homes, creating an approved exception so people can receive supports in their homes and communities.

Medical Aid in Dying: When a person who is very ill asks a doctor for medicine that will end their life. This is sometimes also called death with dignity or physician-assisted death. It is legal in some states but not in all states. People On the Go takes a neutral position on this issue.

Middle East Conflict: The Middle East is a large region of the world. It includes countries such as Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Iraq, and others. For many decades, there has been serious conflict in this region. A conflict is a serious disagreement that involves violence, war, or military action between groups or countries. The conflict in the Middle East is very complicated. It involves disagreements about land, government, history, and the rights of different groups of people. Many countries, groups, and individuals have very strong and different views about it. People On the Go does not take a side in this conflict. We mention it because events in the Middle East affect the cost of oil and gas, which then affects the cost of

food, transportation, and many other things in the United States. When prices go up, it can make it harder for people with disabilities and the people who support them to afford the things they need every day.

Members' Rights to Express Personal Views on Conflicts: People On the Go does not take a political position on any conflict in the Middle East or any other conflict around the world. However, People On the Go will not infringe on the rights of its members to speak their personal views in public.

To infringe means to take away or limit a right that belongs to someone. People On the Go will not do that. Our members have the right to speak for themselves. That is a fundamental right.

If a member of People On the Go speaks publicly about a conflict in the Middle East or any other world conflict, they must make it clear that they are speaking only for themselves. If anyone asks whether they are speaking for People On the Go, they must say clearly: the organization has no political position on this conflict.

What People On the Go can say — and does say — is this: we hope that all conflicts of this kind will come to an end. We say this because wars and conflicts cost people their lives. Every life lost is someone's family member, friend, or neighbor. The loss of life in any conflict is a tragedy. People On the Go hopes for peace.

Natural Supports: Help that a person gets from family or friends without pay, such as a ride to the doctor. People On the Go believes the state should not expect families to provide these supports for free in order to cut costs.
Non-Neurotypical: A person whose brain works differently from what is considered typical. This can include people with autism, ADHD, and other support needs. Non-neurotypical people may need specific supports to succeed at work and in life.

Nonpartisan: Not connected to or supporting any political party. People On the Go works with leaders from all parties to fight for the rights of people with disabilities.

Olmstead Decision: A 1999 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that said keeping people with disabilities in institutions when they do not need to be there is

a form of discrimination. It supports the right to live in the community. It is important to know that the Olmstead decision is not a law. Laws are passed by Congress. The Olmstead decision is a court ruling that explains what an existing law, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), already means. This is sometimes called an interpretation. In Olmstead, the Supreme Court said the ADA means that disability supports should be provided in the community, where a person lives, when possible. The Court did not create a new law.

Person-Centered Plan: A written plan that describes the supports, services, and goals a person has. People On the Go believes these plans should be shorter and written in plain language, so the person and their supporters can understand them.

Plain Language: A clear and simple way of writing and speaking, so that people can understand important information without needing help. People On the Go supports the use of plain language in documents like plans, ballots, and privacy policies.

Provider-Supported Model: A way of getting disability services where a person works with an agency that hires and manages their support staff.

Psychosis: A serious mental health condition in which a person loses touch with what is real. A person experiencing psychosis may hear or see things that are not there. They may feel very afraid or confused, or have trouble thinking clearly. Psychosis can be caused or made much worse by extreme isolation, such as solitary confinement.

Rehabilitation Act, Section 504: A federal law passed in 1973. It says that any program or organization that receives money from the federal government cannot discriminate against people with disabilities. Section 504 was one of the first federal laws to protect the civil rights of people with disabilities. It applies to schools, hospitals, state agencies, and other programs that use federal funding.

Religiously Neutral: Not connected to or supporting any religion. A religiously neutral organization does not have an official position on faith, religion, or spiritual belief. People On the Go welcomes people of all faiths and people who have no religious faith. We believe each person has the right to believe or not believe however they choose.

Self-Directed Services: A way of getting disability services where the person with a disability is in charge. They choose who works for them, how much that person is paid, and what training they receive.

Solitary Confinement: Keeping a person in a prison or jail alone in a very small space, with little or no contact with other people. This can last for hours, days, weeks, or even longer. Research shows that solitary confinement causes serious harm to a person's mental health, including anxiety, depression, and psychosis. People On the Go opposes the use of solitary confinement, especially for people with disabilities.

SSI (Supplemental Security Income): A federal benefit program that provides monthly payments to people with disabilities who have limited income and resources.

Subminimum Wage: Paying a worker with a disability less than the minimum wage. Maryland ended this practice in 2020 thanks to the Ken Capone Equal Employment Act.

Supports Intensity Scale (SIS): An assessment tool used to measure how much support a person needs. Many people with disabilities consider this tool offensive and inappropriate. People On the Go supports the right to object to this assessment.

Texas v. Kennedy: A legal case in which the Department of Justice, on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services, along with several states, asked a court to erase the community integration rules from the federal regulations that carry out Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. These rules have been in place since 1977 and protect the right of people with disabilities to live in their own communities, not in institutions. National disability organizations strongly opposed this action. People On the Go agrees with the perspective of those organizations. We believe the federal government has a constitutional duty to uphold the rights of people with disabilities to live in the community.

Transitioning Youth: Young people with disabilities who are finishing school and moving into adult services and supports. Also called "aging out" of school services.

Waiver: A waiver, in the context of disability services, is a special agreement between a state and the federal government. It allows the state to use Medicaid funds to pay for community-based supports and services for people with disabilities, instead of only paying for care in hospitals or nursing homes. The word “waiver” means that the usual Medicaid rules are being set aside — or “waived” — so that a person can get the supports they need to live in their own home and community. In Maryland, the DDA waiver is one example. It covers services like job coaching, residential support, and day programs. Without a waiver, Medicaid would typically only pay for care in an institution. *See also: Medicaid Waiver*.