



Kay Ivey  
Governor



Graham L. Sisson, Jr.  
Executive Director

# State of Alabama Governor's Office on Disability FY 2018



It's All GOOD



**The Honorable  
Kay Ivey  
Governor  
State of Alabama**



KAY IVEY, GOVERNOR  
STATE OF ALABAMA

The work contained in this annual report shows how the Governor’s Office on Disability (GOOD) is successfully helping the more than 550,000 people in Alabama living with a disability (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). I rely on GOOD to provide reliable and helpful information on disability resources and the unmet needs of affected Alabamians. My administration is committed to increasing opportunities for people with disabilities in Alabama as well as increasing employment opportunities through the Governor’s Job Fair for People with Disabilities.

GOOD is an excellent resource. If you need assistance with disability-related issues, please do not hesitate to contact the Governor’s Office on Disability.

*Kay Ivey*



## Letter from the Executive Director

I would like to thank the Governor and the Alabama Legislature for their continuing support of GOOD. Fiscal Year 2018 has been a year to celebrate the passage of two important pieces of legislation supported by GOOD.

**The Accessible Parking Act 2018-458** was sponsored in the House by former Representative Ken Johnson and in the Senate by Senator Jabo Waggoner. It was signed by Governor Kay Ivey on March 28, 2018. The following is a summary of the items covered in the Act:

- Any law enforcement officer enforcing this act may ask for verification that either the driver or a passenger of the parked vehicle is the lawful holder of a distinctive special long-term access or long-term disability access license plate or placard or temporary disability placard.
- Municipal law enforcement officers, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, and Alabama State Troopers **are authorized to have vehicles illegally parked in accessible parking spaces towed.**
- Municipal law enforcement officers, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, and Alabama State Troopers **are authorized to ticket vehicles parked on access aisles.** “Access aisles” are defined as the hash-marked or cross-striped space that is 5 feet or 8 feet wide that is directly next to the accessible parking space. “Access aisle” also has the same definition as contained within the 2010 Accessible Design Standards within the ADA.”

**The Assistive Device Warranty Act 2018-448** was sponsored in the House by former Representative Ken Johnson and in the Senate by Senator Linda Coleman-Madison. It was signed by Governor Kay Ivey on March 28, 2018. The following is a summary of topics covered in the Act:

- Definition of Assistive Device Covered by this Act
- What the manufacturer, dealer or lessor is required to do
- What the consumer is required to do
- Statute of limitations (how long consumer has to enforce this law)
- Damages

In addition to the **Accessible Parking Act** and the **Assistive Device Warranty Act**, GOOD supported HB 138 sponsored by former Representative Ken Johnson. This bill referred to as the **Volunteer Transportation Bill/GOOD Samaritan bill** moved all the way through the House and Senate and was on the Special-Order Calendar the last day of session. Unfortunately it did not come up for vote before the session ended. GOOD plans to have this bill reintroduced in the FY 19 Legislative Session.

Fiscal Year 2018 has been another year of positive growth and change for the office. GOOD continues to maintain nine local advisory committees around the state which provide grassroots input about unmet needs of Alabamians with disabilities and increases the visibility of the office. GOOD partners with these local advisory groups to facilitate the GOOD mission statement and strategic plan and obtain information at the grassroots level. The GOOD website has been revised to be even more user-friendly and includes additional resources.

GOOD is available to do training, accessibility surveying, and speaking at meetings or seminars at no cost. To schedule training, speaking engagements, or surveying, call the Alabama **ADA Hotline at 800-205-9986**. Meetings continue to be held with other state agencies to foster collaboration and maximize state resources for people with disabilities. A special thanks is again given to the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services for its close partnership with GOOD.

Information about disability issues and training continues to be disseminated throughout the state. Awareness is a powerful tool which leads to greater access for individuals with disabilities. GOOD continues its role of dispensing accurate information. Join the GOOD list by accessing the appropriate icon on GOOD’s website at [www.good.alabama.gov](http://www.good.alabama.gov). **GOOD’s Toll-Free Number is 888-879-3582** for consumers or anyone interested in information, referrals, and resources for people with disabilities in Alabama.

We look forward to the progression and inclusion of Alabamians with disabilities in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Dr. Graham L. Sisson, Jr.

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## Staff



### Dr. Graham L. Sisson, Jr., Executive Director

Graham was appointed as Executive Director of the Governor's Office on Disability in October 2007 and was reappointed in January 2011. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of North Alabama in Accounting in 1987. Graham also attended Vanderbilt University and was awarded his Juris Doctorate in 1990. He was admitted to the Alabama State Bar in 1990. He received a certificate in Rehabilitation Leadership and Management from Auburn University in May, 2009. Graham served as an adjunct law professor teaching a disability law course at the Birmingham School of Law and taught a doctoral course in disability law and history at Auburn University. Graham is a 2016 graduate of Auburn University with a PhD in Rehabilitation, Counseling, and Leadership. He has lived with a disability since 1982.

### Marlene Word, Deputy Director

Marlene was appointed as Executive Assistant of the Governor's Office on Disability in July 2013 and was appointed as Deputy Director in December 2016. Marlene attended Huntingdon College. She previously worked at Carr, Riggs and Ingram, Fire Guard Protection Systems, Legislative Reference Service, and Auburn University at Montgomery where she was an adjunct professor in the Communications Department. Marlene served as the Communications Director and Senior Manager of the third largest home health agency in the state, Central Alabama Home Health. Marlene was CEO and President of her publishing company, Dispatch Publishers, producing the weekly newspaper, *Maxwell-Gunter Dispatch* and the monthly national newspaper, *Civil Air Patrol News*. Marlene volunteered at Montgomery's American

## GOOD'S 2018 Legislative Session Bill Signings with Governor Kay Ivey



(Pictured left to right) The Honorable Governor Kay Ivey, former Representative Ken Johnson, Consumer Advocates, Kim Mensi and Karl Wade, and Deputy Director of the Governors Office on Disability, Marlene Word.

Governor Kay Ivey signs into law two bills supported by the Governor's Office on Disability (GOOD):

- Accessible Parking Act—2018-458
- Assistive Device Warranty Act—2018-448

Read more about GOOD's 2018 Legislative Session success in the Letter from the Executive Director, Dr. Graham L. Sisson, Jr., on page 3 of this report.

## GOOD Overview

The Governor's Office on Disability was created by Executive Order Number 43 in 1999. It was formed to serve as a statewide clearing house for information on disability and resources in Alabama. Its other major function is to act as a liaison to the Governor's Office on disability issues.

The Governor's Office on Disability's mission statement was revised in 2008 as follows:

**“Facilitate the inclusion of Alabamians with disabilities in education, employment, housing, transportation, healthcare, and leisure.”**

The Executive Order 15 in 2011 re-established the Governor's Office on Disability under the new administration. Because resources are scarce in Alabama, the Governor's Office on Disability seeks to maximize disability resources by identifying existing ones and fostering collaboration among public and private entities that serve people with disabilities.

The Governor's Office on Disability actively seeks to engage communication between individuals with disabilities and their families and entities that provide services to them. GOOD's website, [www.good.alabama.gov](http://www.good.alabama.gov), is one tool that is being expanded to facilitate open dialogue and access on disability resources and issues. To foster communication even more, GOOD developed a list serve. Anyone interested in issues affecting people with disabilities can join the GOOD list by accessing the website at [www.good.alabama.gov](http://www.good.alabama.gov), clicking the “Join the GOOD List” icon and entering in personal contact and email information. Periodically, cutting edge information on disability will be shared with list members.

## Strategic Plan

### (1) Legislation Initiative

Monitor Alabama's disability related legislation and policies and provide policy analysis to the Governor.

**Objective 1:** Monitor constituent issues with regard to policy formulation and recommendations for legislation.

**Objective 2:** Serve as a liaison to the Governor on all necessary matters of interest related to the GOOD mission.

### (2) Collaboration Initiative

Establish a united voice to determine and meet the needs of the GOOD mission.

**Objective 1:** Utilize local advisory committees to determine the unmet needs of Alabamians with disabilities.

**Objective 2:** Partner with public and private entities, inclusive of state agencies, that advance the achievement of the GOOD mission.

**Objective 3:** To accept and resolve referrals regarding disability issues from the Governor's Constituent Affairs Office and other referral resources.

### (3) Consultation Initiative

Serve as advisor on public disability-related issues in Alabama.

**Objective 1:** Provide informal legal opinions on disability issues to the Governor's Legal Office.

**Objective 2:** Provide analytical information to the Governor's Legal Office relative to the GOOD mission.

**Objective 3:** Act as an expert resource regarding the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and related laws.

### (4) Dissemination Initiative

Promote public awareness of actions and activities in fulfilling GOOD's mission.

**Objective 1:** Increase effective utilization of available resources for Alabamians with disabilities.

**Objective 2:** Establish a website as the primary dissemination method of GOOD actions, activities and publications.

**Objective 3:** Promote local and/or statewide media coverage of GOOD's actions and activities when possible.

## GOOD Stewards

The Governor’s Office on Disability understands the need for accountability and being good stewards of our State’s funds. Along with this important commitment, we are also committed to being compassionate, responsive, and caring to each caller or coconsumer we encounter. While we do track the number of calls we receive, we strive to make the caller feel like they are ‘more than just a number.’

The following are just a few of the many changes made beginning in 2014 and continued in the years that followed:

- Collaborate with other agencies and companies who provide resources for people with disabilities.
- Partner with other agencies and entities sponsoring disability employment fairs, summits, and advocacy events.

### A GOOD Experience

While we do track the number of calls we receive, we strive to make the caller feel like they are ‘more than just a number.’

### FY 2018 Budget

Personnel Costs .....	\$50,719
Employee Benefits .....	\$21,838
Travel-in-State .....	\$303
Travel Out-of-State .....	0
Repairs & Maintenance .....	0
Rentals & Leases .....	0
Utilities & Communications .....	\$183
Professional Services .....	\$1,085
Supplies, Materials & Operating Expenses .....	\$3,286
Grants & Benefits .....	\$16,774
Other Equipment Purchases .....	\$6,387
Total .....	\$100,575

### FY 2018 Smart Budget

<u>Number of Inquiries</u>		<u>Number responded to within 72 hours</u>	
Projected	1100	Projected	100%
Actual	880	Actual	100%

# **Governor's Office on Disability**

## **Goals and Accomplishments for FY 2018**

### **I. Disability Recognition, Summits, Conferences, and Job Fairs**

- Governor Kay Ivey's State of the State, January 8, 2018. Dr. Sisson was recognized during the address
- The Second Annual Governor's Employment Job Fair for People with Disabilities, October 25, 2018, in Huntsville
- Disability Awareness Summit, September 27, 2018 in Montgomery. Dr. Sisson was one of the guest speakers

### **II. Convening Disability Consumer Advisory Councils**

- 9 Regional Council Meetings during each fiscal year
- State Advisory Council meetings

### **III. Trainings/Disability Awareness**

#### **ADA**

- In collaboration with the Alabama's ADA toll free information services conducted FY 2018
  - ◊ 32 ADA Trainings
  - ◊ 10 Accessibility Reviews/Consultations

### **IV. Information and Referral**

- Number of inquiries on disability issues FY 2018
  - ◊ 880 inquiries

### **V. Website**

- Continuously updating website, resources, and corresponding with members on the GOOD List

### **VI. Legislation Initiative**

- GOOD worked on legislation to address some of the unmet needs of Alabamians with disabilities. This legislation included the following:
  - ◊ **Accessible Parking** - Authorize police to tow vehicles illegally parked in accessible parking and to ticket vehicles parked on access aisles
  - ◊ **Assistive Devices Warranty Act** - extend Lemon Law protection to purchasers of assistive devices
  - ◊ **Volunteer Transportation Provider Good Samaritan Act**- protect the transportation providers from simple negligence
  - ◊ **Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund**- \$100 fine for the trust fund mandatory to protect it from diversion programs

#### **The following legislation was passed in the 2018 Legislative Session:**

- Accessible Parking Bill - House Bill 140
- Assistive Device Warranty Bill - HB 139
- Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund - SB-142

### **VII. FAND—Functional and Access Needs in Disasters Task Force**

GOOD took a leadership role in this statewide taskforce in 2013 and continued through 2018. Originally named the Special Populations Taskforce, it was renamed Functional and Access Needs in Disaster to accurately reflect its purpose of ensuring Alabamians with functional and accessible needs are not only considered, but included in all phases of emergency management.

Dr. Sisson co-chairs this group along with Gretchen Richards, Ph.D. from Jacksonville State University. Dr. Sisson continues to serve as liaison between FAND and the Governor's Mass Care and Sheltering Taskforce. Those interested in joining this effort should contact Dr. Sisson at 800-441-7607 extension 7189.

**Governor's Office on Disability**  
**Goals and Accomplishments for FY 2018**

**VIII. Partnerships**

Amarex Corporation	Family Voices of Alabama
Alabama Association of Regional Councils Conference	Foley Career Center
Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities	Governor's Preparedness Conference
Alabama Community College Association	Governor's Summit on Disability Employment
Alabama Department of Corrections	Gulf State Park
Alabama Department of Public Health	Home Medical Equipment Licensure Board
Alabama Department of Human Resources	Huntsville Career Center
Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services	Jacksonville State University
Alabama Disability Advocacy Program	Jefferson County Workforce Development
Alabama Emergency Management Agency	Lakeshore Foundation
Alabama Fire College Medical Needs Shelter	Lee County Board of Education
Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund	Limestone County DHR
Alabama Governor's Office	Long-term Care Rebalancing Committee (Medicaid Agency)
Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum	Mass Care and Sheltering Taskforce
Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Council	Medicaid Infrastructure Grant
Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind	Mobile Center for Independent Living
Alabama Legislature	Montevallo University
Alabama Lifespan Respite Coalition	Montgomery Career Center
Alabama Multiagency Feeding Plan	Montgomery Center for Independent Living
Alabama Statewide Assistive Technology Advisory Council	Montgomery Library for the Blind Advisory Committee
Alabama State Interagency Transition Team	National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils
Alabama State University	North Alabama Fair Housing Center
Alabama Transit Coalition	OASIS Advisory Council
Alabaster Career Centers	People First
Anniston Career Center	Phenix City Career Center
Auburn University	Roanoke Career Center
Birmingham Career Center	Sheffield Towne Plaza
Birmingham Committee on ADA	Shelton State Community College
Blind Advisory Committee	Southeast ADA Network Training Team
Brewton Career Center	Sparks Clinic
Calhoun Community College	Special Education Advisory Panel
Camp ASCCA	State of Alabama Independent Living Council
Camp McDowell, Jasper	State Rehabilitation Council
Central Alabama Community College	Trenholm State
Child Care Resources, Inc.	Troy University, Montgomery and Troy Campuses
City of Auburn	Tuskegee Blind Veterans Group
City of Gulf Shores	Tuscaloosa Career Center
Dallas County EMA	UAB Birmingham
Deaf/Blind Coalition	UAB/Civitan-Sparks Consumer Advisory Council
Demopolis Career Center	United Ability
Dothan Career Center	United Way of Birmingham
DSPN Advisory Board, Huntingdon College	University of South Alabama
Disabilities Rights & Resources	Valley Career Center

## **GOOD Local Consumer Advisory Councils**

Councils serve as an opportunity for grassroots input from people with disabilities and their families and are located in the following areas:

- Anniston
- Gadsden
- Montgomery
- Birmingham
- Huntsville/Decatur
- Muscle Shoals
- Dothan
- Mobile
- Tuscaloosa

## **GOOD Community Partnerships, Consumer Advocates, & Consumer Advisory Council Meetings**

### **Disability Awareness Summit-Alley Station Warehouse, Montgomery, 9/22/18**



(Pictured left to right) Dr. Graham Sisson, Michael Davis, Executive Director of the Mobile Independent Living Center, Dan Kessler, Executive Director of the Birmingham Independent Living Center, Kelly Buckland, Executive Director of the National Council on Independent Living and Kent Crenshaw, Executive Director of the Independent Rights and Resources of Montgomery.

### **Disability Awareness Summit (Continued)**



(Pictured left to right) Pat Bledsoe, J.R. Martinez, Special Guest Keynote Speaker, Shannon Hartman. Ms. Bledsoe and Ms. Hartman are members of the GOOD VR Montgomery Consumer Advisory Council.

### **Jeff Ridgeway Award Presented to Sister Lucindia Cleghorn at the Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) Conference, 6/7-9/18. Sister Cleghorn is a very active member of the GOOD VR Mobile Consumer Advisory Council.**



(Pictured far left) James Tucker, Executive Director of Alabama Disability Advocacy Program (ADAP), (Pictured far right) Sister Lucindia Cleghorn, winner of the 2018 Jeff Ridgeway Award.



**Montgomery GOOD VR Consumer Advisory Council Meeting**

**Mobile GOOD VR Consumer Advisory Council Meeting**



## U.S. & AL Civilians Living in the Community By Disability Status: 2016

State	Total	Disability		No Disability	
		Count	%	Count	%
U.S.	318,175,867	40,747,411	12.8	277,428,456	87.2
AL	4,782,529	787,132	16.5	3,995,397	83.5

## U.S. & AL Civilians Living in the Community—Hearing Disability 2016

State	Total	Disability	Hearing		
			Count	% Total	% Disability
U.S.	318,251,368	40,852,226	11,430,339	3.6	28.0
AL	4,783,491	778,819	198,012	4.1	25.4

## U.S. & AL Civilians Living in the Community—Vision Disability 2016

State	Total	Disability	Vision		
			Count	% Total	% Disability
U.S.	318,251,368	40,852,226	7,668,316	2.4	18.8
AL	4,783,491	778,819	150,555	3.1	19.3

## U.S. & AL Civilians Living in the Community—Cognitive Disability 2016

State	Total	Disability	Cognitive		
			Count	% Total	% Disability
U.S.	318,251,368	40,852,226	15,490,907	4.9	37.9
AL	4,783,491	778,819	299,350	6.3	38.4

## U.S. & AL Living in the Community—Ambulatory Disability 2016

State	Total	Disability	Ambulatory		
			Count	% Total	% Disability
U.S.	318,251,368	40,852,226	21,235,966	6.7	52.0
AL	4,783,491	778,819	440,024	9.2	56.5

## U.S. & AL Living in the Community—Self Care Disability 2016

State	Total	Disability	Self-Care		
			Count	% Total	% Disability
U.S.	318,251,368	40,852,226	8,131,154	2.6	19.9
AL	4,783,491	778,819	148,508	3.1	19.1

## U.S. AL Living in the Community—Independent Living Disability 2016

State	Total	Disability	Independent Living		
			Count	% Total	% Disability
U.S.	318,251,368	40,852,226	14,784,957	4.6	36.2
AL	4,783,491	778,819	289,740	6.1	37.2

**Employment—Civilians with Disabilities Ages 18 to 64 Years Living in the Community for the U.S. & AL**

State	Total	Employed	
		Count	% [1]
U.S.	20,761,092	7,461,001	35.9
AL	421,135	115,799	27.5

**Employment—Civilians with Hearing Disabilities Ages 18 to 64 Years Living in the Community for the U.S. & AL**

State	Total	Employed	
		Count	% [1]
U.S.	4,005,393	2,071,694	51.7
AL	74,181	32,379	43.6

**Employment—Civilians with Vision Disabilities Ages 18 to 64 Years Living in the Community for the U.S. & AL**

State	Total	Employed	
		Count	% [1]
U.S.	3,928,723	1,710,056	43.5
AL	78,860	23,534	29.8

**Employment—Civilians with Cognitive Disabilities Ages 18 to 64 Years Living in the Community for the U.S. & AL**

State	Total	Employed	
		Count	% [1]
U.S.	8,931,533	2,352,368	26.3
AL	181,891	34,692	19.1

**Employment—Civilians with Ambulatory Disabilities Ages 18 to 64 Years Living in the Community for the U.S. & AL**

State	Total	Employed	
		Employed Count	% [1]
U.S.	10,097,156	2,502,518	24.8
AL	226,915	43,555	19.2

**Employment—Civilians with Self-Care Disabilities Ages 18 to 64 Years Living in the Community for the U.S. & AL**

State	Total	Employed	
		Count	% [1]
U.S.	3,653,028	564,411	15.5
AL	68,890	8,750	12.7

**Employment—Civilians with Independent Living Disabilities Ages 18 to 64 Years Living in the Community for the U.S. & AL**

State	Total	Employed	
		Count	% [1]
U.S.	7,412,570	1,257,947	17.0
AL	150,400	14,640	9.7



# It's All GOOD

**Join The GOOD List**

**[www.good.alabama.gov](http://www.good.alabama.gov)**

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