

# THE SC **SUPPORTED Decision Making** PROJECT

## SUPPORTED DECISION MAKING POSITION STATEMENT

- We believe all adults with disabilities should be presumed to have the capacity to be able to live in the manner in which they desire and to be provided with the opportunity to refuse support, assistance, or protection if preferred.
- We support less restrictive alternatives to guardianship such as supported decision-making (SDM). SDM establishes a formal process of using trusted advisors to help the individual decision-maker make decisions related to health, home, community, employment, and more. At the core of supported decision making is a person in control of their own life, surrounded by a network of support. SDM allows disabled adults requiring decision-making assistance to choose trusted friends, family members, and/or professionals to help them thoroughly understand situations they face and the choices associated with those situations so they can make an informed decision. Through SDM and, when needed, additional supports, the person is able to actively self-direct their own life without sacrificing their rights or dignity.
- We strongly encourage individuals and families we support to seek the least restrictive option of decision making support and aim to ensure that personal autonomy and healthy modes of interdependence persist.
- We do not believe that the way an adult with a disability communicates with others or makes their needs known is reasonable grounds for deciding that the adult is incapable of effective decision-making. Communication can involve using pictures, communication devices, and more. It's important to work creatively with individuals to find effective ways to communicate.
- All adults with disabilities should be involved to the fullest extent possible in all conversations and general management relating to their personal affairs.