



NORTHEAST ALABAMA
MR/DD AUTHORITY, INC

FIVE-YEAR PLAN
FISCAL YEARS
2026 THROUGH 2030

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Five-Year Plan (2026–2030) sets forth the vision, mission, and strategic priorities of Northeast Alabama MR/DD Authority. Our focus remains on empowering individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities through person-centered, HCBS-compliant supports. The plan outlines key goals for service delivery, stakeholder engagement, financial stability, and organizational growth. By 2030, we envision a stronger, more connected community where individuals live with dignity, choice, and opportunity in every aspect of life.

II. STATEMENTS

A. Mission Statement

The mission of Northeast Alabama MR/DD Authority is to empower individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities by providing compassionate support, coordinated services, and opportunities for growth in the environments they choose and value most.

B. Vision Statement

Our vision is a community where every individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities is valued, empowered, and fully included—living with dignity, choice, and opportunity in every aspect of life.

III. PLAN DEVELOPMENT

A. Planning Cycle

The Authority updates this plan annually to reflect community needs, emerging challenges, and input from stakeholders. The Five-Year Plan (2026–2030) provides both stability and flexibility in guiding our work.

B. Roles of Stakeholders

Stakeholders include individuals served, families, service providers, and community partners. Annual surveys and engagement activities ensure that services remain person-centered, responsive, and aligned with both individual and community goals. These questionnaires provide valuable input that NEA uses to update the overall plan. These surveys are conducted near the end of each fiscal year with the results published in an Annual Report in October of the next fiscal year.

C. Monitoring and Evaluation

Management monitors progress monthly, with outcomes reported to the Board at least annually. Key metrics include service satisfaction, waitlist movement, timely referral processing, and financial sustainability. Adjustments are made as needed to stay on track with strategic priorities.

D. Current and Future Funding

The Authority receives funding through the Federal Medicaid Waiver program by way of funding from the Alabama Department of Mental Health. Future funding is expected to come through the same funding sources.

IV. SERVICE PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy that has been our guide in planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities include the following elements:

1. Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are, first and foremost, people with basic human needs, aspirations, desires, goals, and emotions; second, citizens of a community who are afforded all the rights, privileges, opportunities, and responsibilities afforded other citizens; and finally, individuals who happen to have a disabling condition.
2. Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are recognized as having diverse needs, concerns, strengths, motivations, goals, and abilities which can be best addressed through cooperative effort.
3. Family, both traditional and non-traditional, are frequently the most important resource and support for individuals with disabilities.
4. The rights, wishes, values, and needs of individuals and family members are paramount in planning and operating any service delivery system.
5. For the majority of individuals to be served, a natural setting in the community is the best and most appropriate for providing any services.

V. SUPPORT COORDINATION

A. Description

Support coordination (case management) ensures individuals receive services aligned with their needs and goals.

B. Current Situation

NEA will begin this planning cycle serving approximately 270 individuals across Etowah, Cherokee, and DeKalb counties. The breakdown of those served are as follows:

1. Etowah County
 - a. 179 Individuals Served
 - b. Etowah County has five (5) full-time Support Coordinator positions along with one (1) employee working part-time in a support coordinator role.
2. Cherokee County
 - a. 26 Individuals Served

- b. Cherokee County has only one (1) full-time Support Coordinator serving the entire caseload.
- 3. DeKalb County
 - a. 65 Individuals Served
 - b. DeKalb County has two (2) full-time Support Coordinator positions.

C. Projections

1. Etowah County

According to tracking data supplied by the Department of Mental Health for the statewide waiting list, there are currently 61 individuals waiting to receive services in Etowah County

2. Cherokee County

According to tracking data supplied by the Department of Mental Health for the statewide waiting list, there are currently 12 individuals waiting to receive services in Cherokee County

3. DeKalb County

According to tracking data supplied by the Department of Mental Health for the statewide waiting list, there are currently 47 individuals waiting to receive services in DeKalb County

4. Support Coordination Projections

We expect caseloads to remain relatively stable over the next five years, with minor fluctuations.

D. Goals

The goal of support coordination will be to meet or exceed the projections of this report. In doing so, the total number of projected billable hours, per support coordinator, are anticipated to remain at the current amounts (full time 1530).

E. Summary

It is anticipated that the projections noted herein are a fair and close approximation of the expectations of attrition and addition to caseloads. If these numbers remain a close approximation, then there would be no reason to expect the addition or removal of positions in this area, however, planning for the retirement of long-term staff is needed.

VI. SINGLE POINT OF ENTRY

In addition to support coordination (case management) services, NEA is the “single point of entry” for Etowah, Cherokee, and DeKalb Counties. The Alabama Department of Mental Health (DMH) maintains a statewide waiting list for individuals seeking services through the ID and LAH waivers. Local 310 Boards, such as NEA, are responsible for

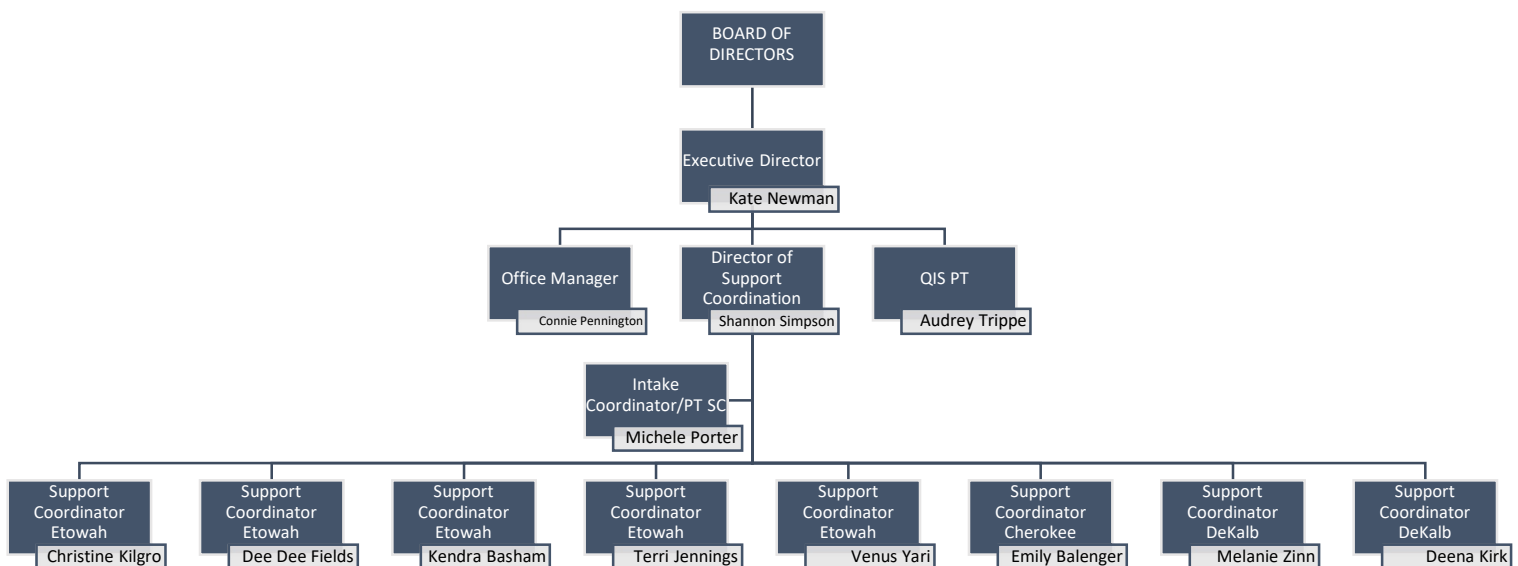
accepting referrals for this list. As the single point of entry, NEA assists individuals in getting the required tests and documentation needed for eligibility assessment and then submits it all to DMH for review. Once approved for the waiting list, NEA monitors the individual's position on the list, updates contact and criticality information as needed, and, if selected to receive services, ensures individuals receive the services and supports for which they are approved.

VII. GREATEST UNMET NEED

NEA receives the most requests and greatest number of questions regarding the Alabama DMH statewide waiting list. Many individuals are awaiting needed services through the waiver or awaiting approval to be added to the waiting list. Since there is no timeframe given to these individuals and their families, they consistently inquire about updates on their own cases. NEA continues to keep records up to date for those on the list and collect information as requested by DMH to add new individuals requesting services to the waiting list (see single point of entry section).

VIII. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- A. Organizational Chart: The Authority operates as a support coordination board with an organizational chart approved annually by the Board of Directors (current chart below).



B. Budgeting

Personnel costs remain our largest expense. Budget projections include annual cost-of-living adjustments for staff and anticipated increases in benefits, but overall operating costs are expected to remain stable.

C. Personnel Planning

Succession planning is a priority given possible staff retirements. This may require the addition of a Support Coordination Supervisor, temporarily, prior to a shift in management staff. This need will be re-evaluated as planned retirements are announced but cross-training, leadership development, and mentorship programs will be implemented to ensure smooth transitions and organizational continuity.

IX. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (2026–2030)

With the information presented herein, the committee has listed the following goals and objectives for the next five-year period:

1. Identify and track new referrals in each county with quarterly reporting.
2. Ensure each individual has at least two meaningful service options and three settings options documented in their annual person-centered plan.
3. Further improve relationships between the Authority and its Board, Management, Staff, Service Providers, and Alabama DMH.
4. Develop a formal succession plan for management staff and coordinators by FY2028.
5. Guarantee financial stability through annual budget reviews and cash flow forecasting.

X. Vision for 2030

By 2030, Northeast Alabama MR/DD Authority will be recognized as a model of person-centered support coordination. Our community will see empowered families, highly trained staff, and strong provider partnerships. Most importantly, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities will live fuller lives with dignity, choice, and opportunity.