



Executive Director

Position Specification
2026

Autism Society of Maryland Organization Overview

The Autism Society of Maryland is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and is an affiliate of the Autism Society of America.

Mission: The Autism Society's mission is to create connections, empowering everyone in the Autism community with the resources needed to live fully. Its vision is to create a world where everyone in the Autism community is connected to the support they need, when they need it.

Guiding Principles:

- Notes that when provided the opportunity, all individuals on the autism spectrum have a contribution to make to their family, to their community, and to society at large. Therefore, the Society supports meaningful participation and self-determination in all aspects of life for individuals on the autism spectrum and their families.
- Supports individuals on the autism spectrum of all ages and throughout the lifespan to find their own voice through self-advocacy.
- Informs individuals and families directly affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders and local service providers by seeking out opportunities to educate all in best practices in support and treatment.
- Promotes better awareness and understanding of the autism spectrum. It provides information and resources to the autism community and to the public at large in a manner that is most effective with each target audience.
- Advocates for public policy and funding that expands educational, vocational, therapeutic, recreational, social, and residential options as well as research opportunities and medical knowledge.
- Promotes collaborative relationships between individuals on the autism spectrum and their families, and their service providers.
- Encourages cooperation between schools, agencies, organizations, and other professionals involved in the lives of people within the autism spectrum.

Autism Society of Maryland

About AUSOM



For more than 30 years, the Autism Society of Maryland (AUSOM), formerly the Howard County Autism Society, has supported Autistic individuals and families. In response to growing community needs, AUSOM expanded its reach and rebranded in 2023. Headquartered in Columbia, Maryland, AUSOM now serves Howard, Montgomery, and Anne Arundel counties and surrounding areas.

AUSOM is recognized for delivering high-quality, responsive services. Through sustained advocacy, the organization has strengthened local systems of support, including contributing to Howard County's reputation for strong educational services that attract relocating families. In 2025, AUSOM served more than 18,000 individuals through 1,800 responses to resource requests; 3,100+ hours of resource navigation and special education support; 300 outreach, fitness, social, and support events serving 16,000 attendees; and 18 educational webinars and professional trainings.

Recent accomplishments include the opening of Patuxent Commons, a 76-unit inclusive, affordable housing community in Columbia developed with Mission First Housing Group; expansion of the Autism Hiring Program to Towson University through a \$440,000 U.S. Department of Labor grant, graduating 150+ job seekers and engaging 50+ employers; and statewide leadership in water safety and wandering prevention initiatives to reduce drowning deaths among Autistic children.

Our core services are designed to inform, support, and connect Autistic individuals and their families. **Information & Referral** services provide timely guidance on diagnosis, therapeutic options, behavioral health resources, and social opportunities. **Special Education Guidance** offers one-on-one consultation to families of children with disabilities in Howard County, helping them navigate complex school systems with confidence. Through **Support & Social Connection**, we host support groups and inclusive social events that foster belonging for Autistic individuals and caregivers. **Building Community** is at the heart of our work, reducing isolation and strengthening connections that promote well-being. Finally, our **Advocacy** efforts advance improved services and increased funding at the local, state, and national levels. All services are provided at no cost.

Autism Society of Maryland

Our Impact

Information and Referral: we are a go-to source of information and guidance for navigating the maze of state, local, and private resources available to autistic adults and their families. We guide more than 2,000 callers towards critical resources like special education, DDA services, autism waiver, Division of Rehabilitation Services, and more.

State and National Advocacy: we partner to introduce state bills, and advocate to share our voice with local, state, and national legislators and leaders.

Autism Hiring Program: created in 2021, our program advances workplace neurodiversity, connecting businesses with autistic adults and has placed 200 people into jobs. We offer a 10-week program for high school and college graduates that also provides training for employers' managers and staff.

Patuxent Commons: opened in 2025, this historic 76-unit apartment community offers affordable and market-rate homes with an intergenerational housing concept. It is a place where people of all ages, abilities, and incomes can live, thrive, and connect.

Support & Social Connection: we offer a variety of free support and social groups to connect autistic adults, families with children, and caregivers navigating the autism journey. Our groups provide safe, welcoming spaces for meaningful discussions, shared experiences, and community support. Our support groups and social events have served more than 20,000 people in 2026.

Special Education Guidance: 1:1 special education consultation for families of children with any disability across our service area, guiding families through the IEP process.



Autism Society of Maryland

The Executive Director Position

Position Title: Executive Director

Location: Columbia, MD (full-time on-site)

Salary Range: \$90,000 - \$110,000

Reports To: Board of Directors, Board President

Position Summary

The Executive Director provides visionary, strategic, and collaborative leadership on behalf of the Autism Society of Maryland (AUSOM), supporting its mission to serve individuals on the autism spectrum, their families, and their communities by providing information, support, and advocacy. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director leads organizational strategy, operations, financial stewardship, fundraising, community partnerships, and staff leadership while ensuring the delivery of high-quality programs and services. These include information and resource navigation, statewide advocacy, employment and housing initiatives, support groups, educational consultation and programming, and community events that empower autistic individuals and their families across the lifespan. The Executive Director will build upon AUSOM's foundation as a trusted statewide resource by strengthening organizational capacity, expanding strategic partnerships, diversifying revenue, and leading the organization through its next phase of sustainable growth and impact.

Since its founding in 1993 as the Howard County Autism Society, the organization has earned a reputation as a trusted resource across the state. In 2023, the organization expanded its reach beyond Howard County, rebranding itself as the Autism Society of Maryland, serving Howard, Montgomery, and Anne Arundel Counties. The next Executive Director will have the opportunity to honor the organization's rich history as an affiliate of the Autism Society of America, while shaping its future and continuing to expand its statewide impact.

Columbia, located within Howard County in central Maryland, is recognized for its highly rated public schools, abundant parks and outdoor recreation, vibrant arts and cultural attractions, and access to exceptional healthcare and higher education. The county is situated between Baltimore and Washington, D.C., providing convenient access to two major metropolitan regions.

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The Executive Director Position

Essential Duties

Strategic Leadership

- Provide visionary, collaborative, and mission-driven leadership that fosters organizational excellence and positions the Autism Society of Maryland for its next stage of impact.
- Partner with the Board of Directors to establish strategic priorities and ensure organizational strategies, operations, and resources are aligned with AUSOM's mission, strategic plan, and long-term objectives.
- Guide organizational growth while ensuring expansion aligns with community needs, organizational capacity, and long-term sustainability.
- Work closely with the Board to strengthen governance, committee effectiveness, and board engagement while maintaining clear distinctions between governance and management responsibilities.
- Collaborate with Board leadership to develop governance practices that emphasize mission focus, organizational performance, financial sustainability, and program impact.

Financial Stewardship

- Provide financial oversight, ensuring the organization's long-term fiscal health and sustainability.
- Develop and oversee the annual operating budget in partnership with the Board of Directors.
- Monitor financial performance, cash flow, and organizational resources.
- Ensure compliance with all financial reporting, including but not limited to completion of the annual Form 990, annual financial review or audit, and other tax, grant, and regulatory requirements.
- Provide financial transparency and regular reporting to the Board to support effective governance and oversight.

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The Executive Director Position

Essential Duties (continued)

Fundraising

- Develop and manage a comprehensive fundraising and development strategy that advances AUSOM's strategic priorities and long-term sustainability.
- Strengthen and diversify the organization's revenue portfolio through individual giving, major gifts, corporate partnerships, federal and state grants, foundation support, sponsorships, and special events.
- Assess revenue sources, funding restrictions, and organizational capacity to strengthen long-term sustainability and expand staff engagement in development activities and grant stewardship.
- Partner with the Board of Directors to cultivate a strong culture of philanthropy and support Board engagement in fundraising and donor stewardship.
- Lead grant strategy, proposal development, submission, and reporting to secure and steward public and private funding.
- Evaluate fundraising initiatives using performance metrics and return-on-investment analysis to maximize revenue, impact, and organizational sustainability.

Relationship Development

- Build and maintain strategic partnerships with individuals with autism, families, disability organizations, educators, employers, government agencies, businesses, and community leaders throughout Maryland, especially Howard, Montgomery, and Anne Arundel Counties.
- Lead statewide advocacy efforts, public policy initiatives, and partnerships that improve services, supports, and opportunities for individuals with autism.
- Promote collaboration that increases access to services, public safety, employment, housing, education, and community inclusion.

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Essential Duties (continued)

Organizational and Program Management

- Provide executive oversight for the planning, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement of AUSOM's programs and services.
- Ensure programs are responsive to community needs and aligned with the organization's mission.
- Use data, participant feedback, and measurable outcomes to evaluate program effectiveness and inform strategic decisions.
- Ensure organizational growth is supported by appropriate staffing, operational infrastructure, and sustainable resource allocation.
- Establish operational procedures, technology solutions, and performance measures that improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Build a scalable and sustainable operational infrastructure by implementing standardized operating procedures, documenting institutional knowledge, and strengthening business continuity and succession planning.

Administrative

- Provide executive leadership for the day-to-day operations of the organization.
- Hire, supervise, develop, and evaluate staff (including employees, contractors, and consultants) while fostering an inclusive, supportive, and high-performing workplace.
- Oversee human resources, risk management, contracts, vendor relationships, and regulatory compliance.
- Execute Board-authorized contracts, including but not limited to purchase agreements, rental agreements, grant agreements, and MOUs.
- Ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, affiliation requirements, grant requirements, and organizational policies.
- Support Board meetings by preparing reports, recommendations, and information that facilitate informed governance decisions.

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The Executive Director Position

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree
- Minimum of 10 years of progressive leadership experience
- Demonstrated experience partnering with a Board of Directors
- Proven success in fundraising, grant development, and revenue diversification
- Experience building strategic relationships with government agencies, external partners, funders, donors, vendors, and other key stakeholders
- Experience leading, managing, and developing staff and teams
- Demonstrated commitment to advocacy with and for the autism and developmental disability communities

Preferred Qualifications

- Master's degree
- Experience managing a \$1M+ budget
- Nonprofit, human services, disability services, and/or special education experience
- Experience navigating legislative and regulatory environments

About the Search Firm

ProFound Executive Search specializes in identifying and advancing exceptional leaders for nonprofits, foundations, corporations, and other mission-driven organizations.

We deeply value our personal connections and partnerships with the disability community. Our search process is designed to be accessible, inclusive, and respectful of all candidates.

We are honored to serve as a search partner to the Autism Society of Maryland.

Contact Us

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