



Mural by Jill Wells Art

FY 2023-2025 Areas of Focus

DISABILITY RIGHTS IOWA

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DRI's Mission

The mission of Disability Rights IOWA (DRI) is to advance and protect the rights of Iowans who live with disabilities, including Iowans with significant mental health issues, to dignity, equality, integration, self-determination and appropriate services and supports. DRI envisions a world where individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to live, work and learn in the most integrated settings, with the supports and services they need, free of abuse, neglect, stigma and discrimination.

DRI's Vision

DRI works for a world where all people with disabilities are fully included in their community, have equal access to all opportunities and make their own decisions.

DRI's Core Values

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About Us

Disability Rights Iowa is a private, nonprofit organization focused on protecting and advancing the civil and human rights of Iowans with disabilities. As an independent law center, DRI is not a state or federal government agency. There is no charge for DRI's services.

Our Services

DRI provides 1) free legal and advocacy services to Iowans with disabilities. DRI has the authority to 2) investigate complaints of abuse or neglect of individuals with disabilities, including individuals with significant mental health issues.

DRI's Focus for 2023-2025

In June of 2022, DRI released a public survey. The results from the survey helped us determine which disability rights issue respondents found most important, which guides the future of our disability rights advocacy. DRI's Board of Directors replied upon the survey results, individuals with disabilities and their families, and DRI staff to identify our agency's three new

areas of focus 1) Ensuring Accountability of Systems, 2) Civil Rights, and 3) Community Inclusion for fiscal years 2023-2025. ¹

We will continue to release annual public surveys to track responses about disability rights issues from people with disabilities and their care networks. We will also conduct annual review of this document with our Board, the mental health advisory council, our clients, and other stakeholders. ²

Systems Change Advocacy

Input from DRI's 2022 Survey indicated there are systems in Iowa that create barriers for people with disabilities, do not protect rights of people with disabilities and/or violate the rights of people with disabilities. DRI's Board of Directors determined the most meaningful approach to addressing these systems barriers was a refocus on litigation/advocacy efforts from individual to systems advocacy. Systems advocacy seeks to address the root of the barrier and/or disability rights violation and provides relief for all affected individuals. Systems advocacy also maximizes DRI's scarce resources by providing relief for everyone experience the same disability rights "system" issue. Systems advocacy requires that DRI prioritize the most significant disability rights issues that impacts the largest number of Iowans. DRI will prioritize work that results in systems change through litigation, policy and education of stakeholders. The priority and preference for case acceptance will be on impact legal representation which can create change for a larger number of individuals and change to a system.

DRI's New Priority on Systems Change Advocacy

DRI will prioritize work that results in systems change through litigation, policy, and education of individuals with disabilities and stakeholders on the impact of disability rights and/or the impact of system barriers to the disability community. The priority and preference for case acceptance will be on

¹ DRI's fiscal year starts on October 1 and ends on September 30 of each year. This document covers October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2025.

² DRI recognizes impactful disability rights issues may arise while this document remains in effect—e.g. the disproportionate impact of COVID on people with disabilities. We will continue asking for feedback to revise our areas of focus as these challenges arise.

impact legal representation which can create change for a larger number of individuals and change to a system.

DRI will consider and accept individual litigation that will not create system change. DRI accepts individual service requests according to the areas of focus defined in this document. DRI will give priority to individual cases that that may create broad, systemic change.

Individual cases that meet the “system” issue criteria may include:

- Individual Litigation Case: a court case that results in an important remedy or outcome for the individual and makes a significant impact on an identified system barrier or issue.
- Individual Appellate Case: an appeal brought on behalf of one individual that addresses larger systemic legal and/or advocacy issue.
- Impact Litigation Cases to Create Systems Change: a court case that may have a broad impact on the system as a whole while assisting the individual or individuals involved. This type of case comes from an individual or a group. The result may provide systemic relief for more people than just the individual(s) seeking relief for their complaint/issue.
- Amicus: DRI may offer our expertise when we identify disability-related litigation where the outcome could affect a large number of lowans with disabilities and facilitate systems change. DRI is not a party to the case but submits a brief and/or presents oral argument as a friend of the courts.

Areas of Focus

PRIORITY ONE: ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY OF SYSTEMS

KEEP IOWANS WITH DISABILITIES SAFE

Objective 1

Ensure adults with disabilities are not abused or neglected in facilities and congregate care settings through investigations and monitoring of settings.

Why is this important?

Programs that serve or provide housing for people with disabilities are systems. Disability Rights Iowa protects people with disabilities from abuse and neglect by and in these systems. Systems include facilities, institutions, home and community based settings, organizational representative payees, among others. Preventing, reducing and stopping abuse and neglect in facilities through investigations is a core function of Disability Rights Iowa. Disability Rights Iowa collaborates with the Department of Inspections and Appeals, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman and others to prevent abuse or neglect. DRI also works to improve the investigations of other enforcement and oversight agencies and issues public reports, where appropriate, to create systemic change. Disability Rights Iowa is able to determine a facility's compliance with respect to the rights and safety of residents by conducting monitoring visits to facilities. Monitoring includes, among other things, meeting and communicating privately with individuals, interviewing administrators and other staff, inspecting, viewing and photographing all areas of a facility which are used by residents or are accessible to residents.

Possible DRI activities to achieve this objective:

- Conduct individual investigations into suspected abuse or neglect, including deaths and injuries of individuals with disabilities resulting from abuse or neglect
- Provide, information, referrals, and individual advocacy including self-advocacy assistance, negotiation, legal or other assistance, to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities or mental illness receiving services in facilities or service settings
- DRI will monitor a variety of settings including but not limited to, residential care facilities; both mental health institutes, both state resource centers, intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities, provider of services for individuals with traumatic brain injuries, and nursing facilities

Objective 2

Ensure people with disabilities are not abused or neglected in home and community-based settings through investigations and monitoring of settings.

Why is this important?

The Department of Inspections and Appeals does not investigate abuse and neglect in home and community-based settings. Instead, the Department of Human Services, which also contracts with providers of home and community-based services, investigates dependent adult abuse reports. To ensure that an independent entity investigates abuse and neglect in home and community-based service settings, DRI has made this an area of focus. This is important so that all individuals with disabilities can live in a truly integrated community.

Possible DRI activities to achieve this objective:

- Conduct individual investigations into suspected abuse or neglect of service recipients by HCBS providers, including deaths and injuries of individuals with disabilities resulting from abuse or neglect
- Provide individual representation or advocacy including self-advocacy assistance, negotiation, or other assistance, to protect HCBS service recipients' rights related to abuse and neglect
- Continue to monitor HCBS settings to ensure that
 - the rights of individual residents are protected
 - residents are free from abuse and neglect
 - residents have full access to the community and control over their daily live decisions, including what services they receive and who provides them, and
 - Residents are receiving appropriate person-centered planning

Objective 3

Ensure youth facilities in Iowa are not violating the legal rights of youth with disabilities in their care.

Why is this important?

Youth with disabilities that reside in juvenile justice, child welfare, residential treatment, and other youth facilities have federal and state legal rights. These legal rights help ensure an environment safe from abuse and neglect as well as promote an environment where mental health treatment is provided in an appropriate manner. Youth with disabilities, particularly Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) youth and youth who identify within the

LGBTQI+ community, are disproportionately represented in these facilities and are often times disproportionately subject to rights violations. It is the main function of the P&A to ensure the rights of individuals with disabilities in institutions.

Possible DRI activities to accomplish this goal:

- Monitor or investigate facilities serving youth with a focus on overuse of restraint and seclusion and lack of mental health care, using an intersectional lens
- Provide intersectional individual advocacy to youth who have been inappropriately restrained and secluded (this includes overuse of restraint/seclusion and/or use of restraint/seclusion in conflict with state/federal regulations) or who are not provided appropriate mental health care, paying particular attention to disproportionality issues
- Educate youth in out-of-home placements regarding their legal rights
- Educate administrators and staff of facilities, juvenile court officers, caseworkers, attorneys, and judges about the legal rights of individuals with disabilities residing in facilities
- Engage in systemic advocacy in reducing the number of youth in out-of-home placements in the juvenile justice, child welfare, and mental health systems and ensuring that fines/restitution do not entrap youth with disabilities into the juvenile justice/criminal justice system
- Engage in advocacy efforts to change state laws/regulations governing youth facilities in Iowa to create more safe environments for youth with disabilities

Objective 4

Ensure that organizational representative payees are not subjecting individuals with disabilities to fiscal mismanagement.

Why is this important?

Disability Rights Iowa has a grant from the Social Security Administration (SSA) to conduct reviews and educational visits of representative payees to verify that payees are using benefits properly on behalf of beneficiaries and carrying out payee responsibilities and duties correctly. Through this program, DRI has the unique opportunity to identify payees with histories of abuse or

neglect of persons in their care through its services, programs and direct contacts with beneficiaries. The review process, the payees to be reviewed, the educational visits to be conducted, and the number of payees for both reviews and educational visits are specified by SSA. DRI's reviews ensure that payees fully understand their duties and responsibilities, and are on the right track with respect to recordkeeping and reporting. Through this program, DRI monitors the rights, safety and wellbeing of beneficiaries to ensure their needs are being met and they are free from abuse and financial exploitation.

Possible DRI activities to accomplish goals:

- Conduct reviews of Representative Payee's according to assignments from the Social Security Administration
- Collaborate with DRI's facilities team to monitor potential incidents of misuse of benefits discovered or suspected during monitoring and investigations
- Communicate regularly with DRI's intake specialist to monitor calls related to issues or concerns by beneficiaries related to complaints about their representative payee
- Provide outreach to community partners to share information regarding DRI's expertise regarding rights of beneficiaries with representative payees and our ability to submit requests for and conduct reviews

PRIORITY 2: CIVIL RIGHTS

ALL PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POSSESS THE CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS AFFORDED TO ALL

Objective 1

Enforce the right of individuals with disabilities to have equal opportunities to access state and local government services, programs and activities.

Why is this important?

Iowans with disabilities are entitled to access government services, programs and activities under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The inclusion of people with disabilities necessitates a wide and comprehensive approach, one which gives people with disabilities the opportunity to be included in every avenue of community life. Yet, community living doesn't just take the form of supportive services or the narrow bands of activities stereotypically linked to people with disabilities. Integration means the full weaving of disability into the greater communal narrative.

Possible DRI activities to accomplish these goals:

- Provide individual and systemic legal advocacy concerning denial of equal access to state/local government services or other Title II public entities
- Enforce the right of students with disabilities to reasonable accommodations necessary for equal access to programs, services, activities, excluding accommodations related to an IEP pursuant to IDEA

Objective 2

Enforce the right of individuals with disabilities to places of public accommodation.

Why is this important?

People with disabilities are entitled to equal access to all places of public accommodation. Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act protects people with disabilities from discrimination based on disability in places of public accommodation such as grocery stores, restaurants, sporting events, etc.

Possible DRI activities to achieve this goal:

- Survey places of public accommodation to ensure that they are accessible and if not, to make recommendations on how they can become accessible

- Provide legal advocacy or representation concerning denial of requests for accommodations or denial of equal access to places of public accommodation

Objective 3

Self-Determination: Reduce the number of Iowans with unnecessary substitute decision makers.

Why is this important?

People with disabilities are at disproportionate risk of having their right to make their own decisions and control their own lives stripped by courts or family members who believe their disability makes them incapable of doing so, or exposes them to risk of harm or exploitation. Although guardianships and conservatorships are intended to be limited and imposed only as a last resort, less restrictive alternatives and the legal obligations of guardians, conservators, their attorneys, and courts, are too often overlooked in practice.

Possible DRI activities to accomplish goals:

- Outreach to schools, providers and families to educate families of children with disabilities turning age 18 about alternatives to guardianship and supported decision-making options
- Participate in the Iowa Guardianship and Conservatorship Association to continue the discussion on reform and education
- Provide legal representation to individuals to assist with terminating, modifying or resisting establishment of unnecessary or abusive guardianships/conservatorships or other substitute decision makers
- Develop FAQ for DRI's website on substitute decision making
- Develop resources for adults under guardianship who want to self-advocate for less restrictive alternatives
- Draft Powers of Attorney for individuals as an alternative to guardianships and/or conservatorships

Objective 4

Voting: Ensure voting is fully accessible for people with disabilities.

Why is this important?

More than 300,000 Iowans have some kind of disability. They represent 11.7% of the civilian, noninstitutionalized population. Although many issues affect their lives, many Iowans with disabilities do not vote.

Possible DRI activities to achieve this goal:

- Educate individuals with disabilities about their voting rights
- Provide individual advocacy to individuals with disabilities whose voting rights have been violated
- Collaborate with other organizations to increase advocacy regarding the need for accessible absentee ballots and accessibility of polling places
- Collaborate with the Secretary of State to produce poll worker training materials on accessibility
- Conduct surveys of polling places to ensure accessibility including voting equipment
- Explore accessibility barriers and options of caucuses and voter identification requirements

Priority 3: COMMUNITY INCLUSION

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES LIVE, WORK, AND LEARN IN THE COMMUNITY OF THEIR CHOICE WITH NECESSARY SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

Objective 1

Advocate for people with disabilities to move from institutions to the community with all supports and services they are entitled.

Why is this important?

Individuals with disabilities have the right under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the U.S. Supreme Court's Olmstead decision to receive services in the most integrated setting. Individuals with disabilities have the right to move from an institution into the community of their choice, and to receive necessary services and supports in their home. Community Inclusion means having the right to make independent decisions regarding where to live, how to receive your services, and being fully included in the community.

Possible DRI activities to accomplish the goal:

- Review the State of Iowa's plan for closure of Glenwood Resource Center and provide advocacy to individuals to transition to the community
- Provide advocacy to institutionalized individuals on home and community-based services (HCBS) and supports available to transition to the community
- Conduct targeted outreach to individuals at Woodward Resource Center and Glenwood Resource Center and their families/guardians to know their rights about living in the community
- Collaborate with other agencies and organizations to promote community integration of state resource center residents
- Monitor Nursing Facilities to identify residents who are inappropriately placed and would like to move to the community

Objective 2

Advocate for people with disabilities to remain living in the community of their choice with the necessary supports and services they are entitled to, and are not at risk of being placed in an institution.

Why is this important?

Individuals with disabilities have the right under the American's with Disabilities Act and the U.S. Supreme Court's Olmstead decision to receive

services in the most integrated setting. Selecting where to reside and where to receive necessary services and supports is one of the most impactful decisions regarding independence.

Possible DRI activities to accomplish this goal:

- Review and address any systemic issues in managed care to ensure the State's compliance with relevant state and federal laws
- Provide advocacy to individuals not receiving person centered planning
- Research possible options to address lack of HCBS settings
- Educate Policy Makers on lack of due process in involuntary discharge from HCBS settings
- Review and advocate for Iowa's compliance with the home and community-based settings rule of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Objective 3

Ensure access to Medicaid long-term services and supports, including durable medical equipment and Early, Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment for children up to the age of 21.

Why this is important?

Iowa has privatized its Medicaid system. Medicaid recipients have experienced many issues in the delivery of necessary services under managed care, especially individuals receiving long-term services and supports. This subjects people currently living in the community at risk of unnecessary institutionalization and segregation due to cost-cutting measures and flawed implementation of the service delivery system. Medicaid members with disabilities are entitled to durable medical equipment that is required because of their medical condition. When the equipment is medically necessary, reasonable, and used for a medical purpose, Medicaid should approve it. Examples of durable medical equipment include but not are limited to manual and power wheelchair, hospital and/or safety beds, standing frames, etc. Under the Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) provisions of the Medicaid Act, children under the age of 21 have the right to receive regular screening and medically necessary treatment, including, but not limited to crisis services, mental health counseling, case management and in-home services and supports. Iowa

children and adolescents need adequate, effective, and appropriate services to correct or ameliorate their conditions.

Possible DRI activities to achieve this goal:

- Provide legal representation in the grievance and appeal processes including but not limited to state fair hearings, to individuals for whom specific long-term care services and/or DME have been denied, reduced or terminated
- Provide legally based advocacy and representation to children in administrative appeals when they are denied their rights under the EPSDT provisions of the Medicaid Act by a managed care organization or the Iowa Department of Human Services
- Evaluate the capacity and adequacy of children's behavioral and mental health services in Iowa and provide systemic advocacy where needed

Objective 4

Increasing assistive technology and services for adults and children with disabilities at school, home, work, facilities, and in the community

Why is this important?

Technology has become one of the main engines for economic activity, education, and innovation in the United States. Advancements in technology profoundly impact individuals with disabilities. Assistive technology (AT) devices are items, pieces of equipment, or product systems which increase, maintain, or improve the functional capacities of individuals with disabilities, maintain health and enhance independence. AT services are any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in selecting, acquiring, or using AT devices. However, assistive technology is often underfunded and individuals with disabilities do not realize the assistive technology that they might use to increase, maintain or improve their functional capacities. By increasing access to and understanding of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities in Iowa, more individuals will be able to fully engage in their community.

Possible DRI activities to achieve these goals:

- Provide individual and systemic advocacy to assist individuals with disabilities in securing assistive technology

- Increase awareness of rights to available assistive technology by conducting outreach to students, parents, school staff, caregivers and organizations

Objective 5

Advocate for employees and job applicants with disabilities to ensure that reasonable accommodations are provided.

Why this is important:

Congress enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act over thirty years ago with the goal of eradicating discrimination based on disability. Congress intended to create a world where individuals with disabilities have the opportunity for full inclusion, full access, equal opportunity, independence and self-sufficiency. Engaging in competitive employment is key to achieving these goals set by Congress. More than three decades after the ADA, only 19.1 percent of the workforce comprises people with disabilities.

Possible DRI activities to achieve this goal:

- Provide legally-based advocacy or representation to applicants or employees who need reasonable accommodations in their workplace
- Provide legally-based advocacy or representations to applicants or employees limited to administrative proceedings before the Iowa Civil Rights Commission and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission based on denial of workplace accommodations

Objective 6

Providing planning and assistance to Social Security beneficiaries who want to return to work, but are fearful of losing essential supports.

Why is this important?

Individuals receiving social security disability benefits often do not realize that Social Security provides various work incentives to enable beneficiaries to explore employment and ease the transition from benefits when returning to part-time or full-time work. They may need help from skilled benefit planners who can help them understand this process and create a clear, viable transition plan based on their individual employment goals.

Possible DRI activities to accomplish goals:

- Provide comprehensive benefit planning assistance to individuals who are interested in, actively looking for, or already engaged in work through wage employment or self-employment

- Receive and follow-up on referrals from the Ticket to Work Help Line and/or DRI Intake Process for benefits planning services
- Provide outreach and services regarding benefits planning to individuals with disabilities, particularly transition-aged youth and other underserved populations
- Partner with Employment Networks, disability service providers, and other organizations/agencies serving individuals with disabilities to educate staff on benefits planning and referring beneficiaries for support.

Objective 7

Assisting individuals who want to use employment services to navigate vocational services or other Employment Networks

Why is this important?

People with disabilities can and should work in the community if they receive sufficient supports, services and reasonable accommodations. However, many individuals with disabilities are struggling to navigate complex bureaucracies, and secure needed services.

Possible DRI activities to accomplish goals:

- Assist beneficiaries to understand and advocate for themselves within the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation system
- Provide legally-based advocacy or representation to eligible individuals who received improper or inadequate services from an employment network, service provider, services provided by Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, or other entities involved in the individual's work effort

Objective 8

Assist Social Security beneficiaries with barriers to employment.

Why this is important?

In addition to employment discrimination Social Security beneficiaries experience other barriers to work. Disability Rights Iowa helps Social Security beneficiaries maintain employment and pursue a career with greater confidence.

Possible DRI activities to achieve this goal:

- Provide advocacy to beneficiaries with Social Security overpayments when such overpayments are barriers to work

- Address systemic barriers within our state’s transportation system to support lowan’s with disabilities struggling to receive services
- Provide outreach and assist PABSS eligible transition aged students with disabilities to prepare for post-secondary education or work experiences

Objective 9

Keep students with challenging behaviors in school all day and assist them in making adequate progress in the curriculum

Why is This Important?

Students with challenging behaviors related to their disability need to be in school and in their classroom all day so that they can receive specially designed instruction from qualified special educators. Research has shown that frequent use of suspensions or expulsions has no educational benefit, is strongly associated with low achievement, increases the risk of a student dropping out, and creates a greater likelihood of juvenile justice involvement. The use of shortened school days and other similar exclusionary measures in lieu of appropriate positive behavioral supports and services can be a violation of federal and state laws. The inappropriate and overuse of restraint and seclusion is not only dangerous but also keeps students with challenging behaviors from valuable instructional/learning time. The use of SROs/Police in lieu of providing the appropriate positive behavioral supports and services also results in loss of instructional/learning time as well as increases the numbers of youth with disabilities in the delinquency system. All of these exclusionary measures disproportionately impact students with disabilities, particularly BIPOC and LGBTQI+ students with disabilities.

Possible DRI activities to achieve this goal:

- Provide students who have been suspended for 10+ days in a school year or have been subject to other exclusionary disciplinary measures such as a shortened school day, restraint, seclusion, or inappropriate use of SROs/Police, legal assistance and advocacy ensure appropriate behavioral supports and services in the least restrictive environment
- Train parents and students regarding their rights with respect to discipline issues

- Provide TA to ASK Resource Center and other advocacy/provider agencies regarding the legal rights of students with disabilities with respect to school exclusionary measures
- Conduct targeted outreach to under-served populations of youth with disabilities, especially BIPOC and LGBTQI+ youth, who are disproportionately suspended, expelled, restrained, secluded, and have disproportionate contact with SROs/police, as well as their families and professionals who work with these youth
- Engage in various government and non-government taskforces and collaborate with community activist/advocacy organizations to make systemic change in this area of educational services for students with disabilities
- Engage in systemic advocacy to address the widespread use of shortened school days for special education students with challenging behaviors

FAQ

How do I request assistance from DRI?

- Online: <https://disabilityrightsiowa.org/online-intake-form/>
- Telephone: 515-278-2502; Toll Free: 1-800-779-2502
- Fax: 515-278-0539; Relay 711

What do we consider when accepting an individual service request?

- What is the legal merit or available remedy for the issue?
- Did the individual's issue arise because of their disability?
- Is the individual eligible for services under one of our grants?
- Is the individual's issue within DRI's areas of focus?
- Is the individual or their care network able to self-advocate?
- Does our staff have the particular expertise to advocate for the individual's legal issue.
- Do we have the resources to provide services to the individual?
- Are other resources available to help the individual address the issue?
- Are other independent, investigatory authorities available to help the individual address the issue?
- What is the severity of harm to the individual?
- Is there an imminent risk to the individual?
- Could the service request benefit everyone experiencing the same disability rights "system" issue?
- Potential impact of the legal/advocacy issue to affect change beyond the individual requesting services.
- Does the request have the potential to remove systemic barriers for Iowans with disabilities?

What types of cases does DRI not take?

Regardless of the individual's disability or their initial eligibility, DRI will not accept cases, but will only provide information and referral services, for the following issues:

- Divorce, child custody, and adoption
- Bankruptcy
- Estate planning (wills and trusts)
- Criminal or juvenile delinquency representation or Civil mental health commitment including appeals
- Representing parents with respect to termination of parental rights
- Establishing that a Child is in Need of Assistance

- Housing
- Tax law, corporate or business law, consumer law, debtor-creditor law
- Personal injury (other than injuries arising from abuse and neglect)
- Malpractice
- Social security eligibility or appeals
- Worker's compensation cases
- Civil litigation that does not relate to the legal or civil rights of an individual with a disability
- Civil litigation related to ADA Title 1 claims of employment discrimination based on disability in state or federal court
- Initiation of guardianship or conservatorship of a person; and
- Cases involving inmates at county or state correctional facilities (other than denial of disability-related accommodations)

What will DRI provide to individual requesting services when DRI decides it cannot take a case?

DRI will try to provide information and referral to other resources. DRI is also developing additional self-advocacy materials to provide additional information as well as advocacy tips for self-advocates in DRI's Areas of Focus.

DRI's Grievance Policy

Individuals may seek review of DRI's denial by DRI's Executive Director. Individuals interested in seeking a review, must submit a written request to the Executive Director. Individuals may seek a final review of the denial of their service request from DRI's Board of Directors. DRI's grievance policy may be found on our website: <https://disabilityrightsiowa.org/grievance-policy/>.

Federally-Funded Protection and Advocacy (P&A) Programs

Protection and Advocacy for Developmental Disabilities (PADD)

DRI receives funding from the Administration on Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under the Protection and Advocacy for Developmental Disabilities (PADD) Act to provide protection and advocacy services to individuals with a developmental disability as defined by federal law.

Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI)

DRI receives funding from the Center for Mental Health Services of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, for providing protection and advocacy services to individuals with a significant mental illness or emotional impairment under the Protection of Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI) Act. The eligibility for this program was expanded several years ago to include individuals with a significant mental illness or emotional impairment living either in facilities or in the community. However, pursuant to Congressional mandate, DRI gives priority to serving individuals with a significant mental illness or emotional impairment who are living in facilities, are in the process of being admitted to facilities, or are being involuntarily confined in a municipal detention facility for reasons other than serving a sentence resulting from conviction for a criminal offense.

Protection and Advocacy for Individual Rights (PAIR)

DRI receives funding from the Rehabilitation Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Education under the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) Program to provide protection and advocacy services to all individuals with disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), except for those eligible for PADD or PAIMI.

Protection and Advocacy for Voting Accessibility (PAVA)

DRI receives funding as part of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) to provide education, training and assistance to individuals with disabilities that will promote their full participation in the electoral process.

Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries with Traumatic Brain Injury (PATBI)

DRI receives funding from Health Resources and Services Administration within HHS to provide protection and advocacy services to individuals with traumatic brain injury.

Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT)

DRI receives funds from the Administration on Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under the Assistive Technology Act to assist individuals with disabilities in the acquisition, utilization and maintenance of assistive technology devices or services.

Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)

DRI receives funding from the Social Security Administration to provide advocacy and other services to assist beneficiaries of Social Security to secure, maintain or regain gainful employment.

Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries with Representative Payees

DRI receives funding from the Social Security Administration to conduct reviews of representative payees and to conduct educational visits to representative payees.

Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA)

DRI receives funding from the Social Security Administration to provide benefits planning and assistance to Social Security Beneficiaries who are returning to work.