

DisAbility Rights Idaho

Statement of Objectives and Priorities

October 1, 2008 - September 30, 2009 (revised March 25, 2009)

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

PRIORITY I: People with disabilities will live free from abuse and neglect.

Objective 1: Reduce the amount of time people are held in restraints and/or seclusion in selected facilities.

Objective 2: Affect changes in policy or practice by investigating instances of death at facilities.

Objective 3: Accept and address cases of alleged abuse or neglect.

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

PRIORITY I: People with disabilities will live in the community of their choice with the supports they need.

Objective 1: Assist five (5) people with disabilities to move from long-term institutions to living in the community.

Objective 2: Seek discharge to community placements for long term residents at ISSH whose guardians oppose discharge.

Objective 3: Address barriers to community housing for people with mental illness.

PRIORITY II: People with disabilities will have assistive technology devices and services that they need.

Objective 1: Provide individual and systemic advocacy to ensure access to assistive technology, including assessment, training and support.

Objective 2: Investigate accessibility of information technology at employment services sites.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

PRIORITY I: Public entities and places of public accommodation will not discriminate on the basis of disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504, or the Idaho Human Rights Act.

Objective 1: Accept and address cases of alleged non-employment related, illegal discrimination by places of public accommodation.

Objective 2: Accept and address cases of alleged illegal discrimination by state or local government entities.

Objective 3: Reduce the number of public parking lots in Idaho that do not conform to the statutory requirements.

Objective 4: Increase accessibility to Idaho courts and court related services.

PRIORITY II: Housing providers will not discriminate against people with disabilities in violation of the Fair Housing Act (FHA).

Objective 1: Identify and address violations of the FHA based on disability.

EDUCATION

PRIORITY I: Students with disabilities in Idaho will receive appropriate education services.

Objective 1: Provide individual and systemic advocacy to students with disabilities in selected school districts.

Objective 2: Address inappropriate practices concerning restraint and seclusion of students with disabilities in public schools.

Objective 3: Address inappropriate diversion of students with disabilities to the criminal justice system by public school personnel.

EMPLOYMENT

PRIORITY I: Social Security beneficiaries will obtain or retain employment.

Objective 1: Reduce barriers to employment for beneficiaries of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

Objective 2: Ensure eligible transition age students have access to RSA and employment services through individual and systemic advocacy.

Objective 3: Provide work incentives planning and assistance to ensure beneficiaries are informed about how work will impact their benefits.

PRIORITY II: increase access to Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) funded services [e.g., Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Independent Living Centers].

Objective 1: Provide individual and systemic advocacy to address barriers in accessing RSA funded services.

GUARDIAN/CONSERVATORSHIP ISSUES

PRIORITY I: People with disabilities will not be subject to unnecessary or abusive guardianships or conservatorships.

Objective 1: Increase awareness of individuals with disabilities and others regarding alternatives to guardianship and the importance of self determination.

Objective 2: Change guardianship/ conservatorship laws to protect individual rights.

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

PRIORITY I: People with disabilities will have access to Social Security benefits.

Objective 1: People with disabilities will be given information about the Social Security eligibility application and appeal process.

PRIORITY II: People with disabilities will have the information and skills to advocate for themselves or others.

Objective 1: Collaborate with the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities and the University Center of Excellence for Developmental Disabilities to develop long range plan of support for the Self Advocate Leadership Network.

Objective 2: Provide self advocacy training to people with mental illness.

PRIORITY III: People with mental illness will have their rights upheld.

Objective 1: Accept and address cases of alleged serious violations of the Idaho Hospitalization of the Mentally Ill Act that do not pertain to an individual's commitment hearing.

PRIORITY IV: County jails in Idaho will have policies that reflect best practices with respect to suicide prevention and the administration of medications for individuals with mental illness.

Objective 1: Policies at selected county jails will be analyzed and best practices recommended to county authorities.

PRIORITY V: Individuals facing mental health commitment will have adequate legal representation by counsel.

Objective 1: Provide people with mental illness information about their rights to effective assistance of counsel.

MEDICAID

PRIORITY I: People with disabilities will have increased access to Medicaid services.

Objective 1: Address Medicaid's definition of medical necessity as it applies to children's eligibility determinations.

Objective 2: Increase access to Medicaid EPSDT during school hours.

Objective 3: Select and address up to two FY09 changes in Medicaid's practices and policies that significantly reduce services for recipients and that have a legal remedy.

OUTREACH

PRIORITY I: People with disabilities in Idaho will have increased access to services.

Objective 1: Conduct outreach to active duty military personnel, veterans and their families and veteran organizations.

Objective 2: Conduct outreach to selected unserved and underserved populations.

Objective 3: Conduct outreach to selected facilities.

Objective 4: Promote cultural competence services.

Objective 5: Conduct outreach in the community to increase awareness of our services.

Objective 6: Law enforcement, emergency response personnel and judges will receive increased training about people with disabilities.

Objective 7: Provide disability related advocacy to selected unserved or underserved populations.

Objective 8: Participate on task forces, workgroups and councils that provide the opportunity to advocate on behalf of people with disabilities.

PRIORITY II: Information and Referral (I&R) will be accurate and comprehensive.

Objective 1: Provide I&R when resources limit services provided.

Objective 2: Update and maintain an accessible agency website.

Objective 3: Update and maintain agency brochures.

PUBLIC POLICY

PRIORITY I: Individuals with disabilities will have better access to appropriate mental health care coverage and services.

Objective 1: Influence policy makers to improve the quality of community mental health services.

Objective 2: Increase protections for people with mental illness from commitment to mental health prison facility.

PRIORITY II: Idaho's Medicaid program will provide access to adequate community based treatment and services for people with disabilities.

Objective 1: Address systemic public policy issues in the Idaho Medicaid program.

Objective 2: Advocate for Medicaid rate increases for community based rehabilitation and waiver services for people with disabilities.

PRIORITY III: Influence public policies to reduce abuse and neglect for people with disabilities.

Objective 1: Explore possibility of passing legislation to mandate reporting of deaths in mental health care facilities to P&A.

Objective 2: Amend Medical Consent & Natural Death Act to better define procedures regarding "informed consent".

Objective 3: Introduce bill to apply statutory sterilization protections to children.

Objective 4: Preserve and expand protections for people with disabilities in decisions about withholding of life saving medical treatment and end of life decisions.

PRIORITY IV: People with traumatic brain injury (TBI) will have access to services they need in the communities in which they live.

Objective 1: Collaborate with the Institute on Rural Health, and other organizations and agencies concerned with services for people with TBI to improve TBI related services.

RIGHTS IN FACILITIES

PRIORITY I: People in facilities will not have their rights violated.

Objective 1: Provide individual and systemic advocacy that addresses significant violations of the rights of people with disabilities in facilities.

Objective 2: Identify and address unlawful denials of P&A's access rights to residents and records in facilities.

PRIORITY II: Licensed residential facilities in Idaho will have policies and procedures regarding residents' rights that comply with state and federal laws.

Objective 1: Policies and procedures at select mental health facilities will be analyzed, and those not complying with state and federal laws will be brought into compliance

VOTING

PRIORITY: People with disabilities will have full access to the voting process.

Objective 1: Collaborate with other agencies and organizations to ensure access to the voting process.

Objective 2: Address barriers to the voting process for individuals with disabilities.

Objective 3: Conduct training ensuring people with disabilities have full access to the voting process.

***PRIORITIES** are areas of concern which DisAbility Rights Idaho hopes to address through activities described in the Objectives.*

***OBJECTIVES** describe the specific activities for which DisAbility Rights Idaho has committed resources in this fiscal year and the types of cases we will accept in the priority areas.*

To comment on these priorities and objectives, or to suggest new ones for next year, please contact us:

By Mail: **Public Comment**
DisAbility Rights Idaho
4477 Emerald Street, Suite B-100
Boise, Idaho 83706

Phone: (208) 336-5353
toll free: (866) 262-3462 (V/TDD)
e-mail: info@disabilityrightsidaho.org
website: www.disabilityrightsidaho.org