



## **Statement of Goals and Priorities FY2021**

### **Individuals with disabilities will be free from abuse, neglect, and violation of individual rights.**

- Identify and investigate instances of rights violations of individuals with disabilities in any/all public and private living settings.
- Investigate 100% of all allegations of abuse, wrongful death, or neglect received by DRMS.
- Complete investigation of conditions in both licensed and unlicensed personal care homes. Present state government leaders with report of any/all significant issues and the statutory and regulatory frameworks that have created or contributed to problems of safety, abuse, neglect, and violation of individual rights for people with disabilities.
- Expand presence in Mississippi prisons, county jails, and juvenile justice facilities to monitor and gather data in regard to medical care, mental health care, and accessibility for individuals with disabilities in these facilities.
- Investigate assigned representative payee reviews. Where appropriate, a corrective action plan will be issued and/or the affected beneficiary will be referred to traditional Protection and Advocacy services.
- Assemble dedicated Medicaid team and develop monitoring policies, procedures, and metrics for measuring success therein.
- Investigate children (in CPS custody) who remain in a residential setting longer their treatment requires.



**People with disabilities will be integrated into the community and have access to appropriate, individualized services that will enhance their ability to live safely, independently, and with the best quality of life.**

- Protect and advance the rights of students with disabilities to an appropriate an education in the least restrictive environment with appropriate services and support.
- Encourage individuals to vote privately and independently.
- Continue to audit polling locations across the state of Mississippi for accessibility.
- Monitor JATRAN litigation with an aim for resolution in 2021.
- Continue to conduct surveys of accessibility of sidewalks throughout the state of Mississippi.
- Complete accessibility surveys of IHL athletic facilities.
- Conduct accessibility survey of Mississippi courthouses in partnership with Mississippi Access to Justice and the Mississippi Supreme Court.
- Advocate for PAIMI eligible children to receive appropriate psychiatric services, including appropriate discharge and recovery planning for those residing in facilities, as well as home- and community-based support.



DRMS will actively seek methods to engage and educate people with disabilities and their advocates/caregivers about pertinent current events, including the 2020 election and COVID-19.

- Protect and advance the rights of students with disabilities who are denied services due to COVID-19.
- Provide materials and resources to parents and students in relation to COVID-19.
- Closely monitor voting procedural changes and voter safety in the wake of COVID-19.
- Provide materials and resources to individuals with disabilities with regard to voting in the 2020 election, alternative voting methods, and voting safely amid COVID-19
- Hold voter registration events and pursue alternative educational and awareness methods, such as traditional and digital advertising.

*PAVA*



**DRMS will increase its capacity to fulfill its message by educating both the disability community and the general public about DRMS services, self-advocacy, and disability awareness.**

- DRMS will undergo a rebrand, including: a new logo to better represent inclusion and DRMS' mission; an updated website and materials to better engage external audiences, and a robust new media plan to best utilize both digital and traditional means to reach and educate the disability community and the general public.
- DRMS will train students about the rights of individuals with disabilities receiving accommodations in the college classroom.
- DRMS will network with other agencies and nonprofits to build working relationships in order to better advocate for people with disabilities.
- Closely follow 2021 legislative session to identify bills and policy activity related to disability issues; seek opportunities to educate policymakers and participate in awareness days when applicable.
- Plan and promote outreach events, particularly in underserved areas of the state (within realm of possibility with respect to COVID-19).
- Increase fundraising efforts through events, outreach, and media efforts.
- Address rights of students with disabilities to effective school and community-based transition services via outreach activities and resources for students and their parents.
- Establish calls with the Choctaw reservation liaison officer.