



Agency Accomplishments in FY 2018

During fiscal year 2018, Disability Rights Mississippi (DRMS) continued to diversify the types of individual cases handled, increased involvement in systems advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities, improved outreach and public visibility, and collaborated with other disability advocacy and service agencies on several key initiatives.

DRMS represented clients with a variety of disabilities and issues in 307 cases and systemic issues. It provided information and referral on 767 additional issues. DRMS also worked on over 200 projects, ranging from committee participation, training, outreach, and systems advocacy.

The DRMS Board remained active in budgetary and policy oversight, and approved priorities for the coming fiscal year. The agency welcomed four new board members.

DRMS reached out to the public electronically via its website, Facebook, and Twitter. The website received almost 15,000 hits. Social media, including Facebook and Twitter, are also active. DRMS staff were present at many community events and distributed 4,000 brochures throughout the year.

Program Highlights

Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Development Disabilities (PADD)

- Handled 78 individual cases and 347 I&R's.
- Represented individuals seeking to transition from facilities to the community.
- Continued to visit state and private facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities to monitor conditions, investigate concerns, and assist with transitions to less restrictive environments.
- Conducted investigations of allegations of abuse and neglect involving people with developmental disabilities
- Conducted one death investigation resulting in facility changes
- Filed several complaints with MS Department of Education which resulted in orders for individual and systemic relief for public school students with disabilities.

Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI)

- Handled 30 individual cases and 129 I&R's.
- Continued to monitor conditions in state psychiatric facilities.
- Solved problems and investigated allegations of mistreatment or rights violations.
- Investigated forensics mental health system in Mississippi.
- Provided assistance to people with disabilities incarcerated in jails or prisons.

Protection and Advocacy for Individual Rights (PAIR)

- Handled 35 individual cases and 253 I&R's.
- Program sponsored training for over 100 individuals working in higher education disability support services

Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT)

- Handled 6 cases and 8 I&Rs.
- Represented people with disabilities who are in need of assistive technology

Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)

- Handled 4 cases and 12 &R's.
- Advocated for the rights of social security beneficiaries seeking to obtain or maintain employment.
- Provided outreach and training about the program throughout the state, with a focus on WIN Job Centers.

Protection and Advocacy for Traumatic Brain Injury (PATBI)

- Handled 5 cases and 18 I&R's.
- Advocated for the rights of individuals with TBI to receive services in a more integrated setting.
- Collaborated with Traumatic Brain Injury Association and others who serve individuals with TBI.

Protection and Advocacy for Voting Rights (PAVA)

- Incorporated education about voting rights and issues for individuals with disabilities throughout all other work, including education transition, outreach to facility residents, and people in the general community.
- Continued to collaborate with the Secretary of State (SOS) and all county election clerks to insure knowledge and full implementation of laws related to accessible polling places and accommodations to the needs of voters with disabilities.
- Maintained a hotline number during elections to provide assistance to citizens who had questions about the voting process, and conducted voter registration activities.
- Responded to requests for information about Mississippi's Voter ID law.