**Agency Accomplishments in FY 2019**

During fiscal year 2019, 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.

Overall, DRMS represented clients with a variety of disabilities and issues in 161 cases. It provided information and referral on 900 additional issues. DRMS also worked on over 100 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 several new board members.

DRMS reached out to the public electronically via its website, Facebook ,and Instagram. The website received almost 13, 700 hits. DRMS staff were present at many community events and distributed over 5,000 brochures throughout the year.

**Program Highlights**

**Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Development Disabilities (PADD)**

* Handled 57 individual cases.
* Represented individuals seeking to transition from facilities to the community.
* Continued to visit all state 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
* Filed several complaints with MS Department of Education which resulted in orders for individual and systemic relief for public school students with disabilities.
* Investigated a residential state school for proper oversight and educational services.

**Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI)**

* Handled 47 individual cases.
* Continued to monitor conditions in state psychiatric facilities.
* Solved problems and investigated allegations of mistreatment or rights violations.
* Continued to monitor licensed personal care homes and report unlicensed personal care homes.
* Provided assistance to people with disabilities incarcerated in jails or prisons.
* Obtained agreement regarding access to private residential treatment facility for youth with disabilities and began conducting regular visits.

**Protection and Advocacy for Individual Rights (PAIR)**

* Handled 59 individual cases.

**Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT)**

* Handled 5 cases.
* Represented people with disabilities who are in need of assistive technology

**Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)**

* Handled 5 cases.
* 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.
* Continued investigations of personal care homes where many SS recipients reside (see PAIMI).

**Protection and Advocacy for Traumatic Brain Injury (PATBI)**

* Handled 6 cases.
* 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.

**Representative Payee Program**

* Investigate the financial records of beneficiaries of Social Security benefits.
* Completed 65 reviews with 35 approved by the Social Security Administration