

NEVADA'S PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

2023 Priorities

Promotion of Racial and Social Justice Outreach and Advocacy

NDALC will understand the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression in the lives of individuals with disabilities, and the agency will promote racial and social justice in all its outreach and advocacy services.

Abuse and Neglect

Goal: Reduce or eliminate instances of abuse and neglect among people with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness.

Priority 1: Investigate cases of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect involving persons with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness in public and private facilities, where there appears to be a pattern or recurrence of significant abuse or neglect including reported deaths.

Priority 2: Monitor facilities, detention centers, and community-based programs serving persons with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness to identify possible abuse and/or neglect and to ensure compliance with resident rights and safety, including reviewing incident reports from Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities.

Priority 3: Provide outreach and conduct trainings in facilities serving individuals with mental illness and/or developmental disabilities in order to inform residents of their rights and the availability of NDALC's services to investigate and resolve problems.

Priority 4: Collaborate with Nevada's Long Term Care Ombudsman to ensure the rights of persons with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness are protected.

Priority 5: Identify, develop, and pursue as appropriate advocacy strategies to systemically address abuse, neglect, and discriminatory practices in facilities, schools, the criminal justice system, and/or community-based programs.

Assistive Technology

Goal: Children and adults with disabilities will have access to services and to assistive technology.

Priority 1: Ensure consumer choice is considered when selecting assistive technology.

Priority 2: Ensure appropriate assistive technology is provided to transition age students.

Protection & Advocacy for Voting Access

Goal: People with disabilities will be educated about their voting rights; barriers to voting will be eliminated.

Priority 1: Promote participation in and equal access to elections by surveying polling places for accessibility and providing outreach and training on the rights of voters with disabilities.

Priority 2: Monitor changes in state- and local-level election administration practices to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

Client Assistance Program

Goal: Assist people with disabilities in resolving problems they are experiencing with Nevada's federally funded rehabilitation programs.

Priority 1: NDALC will advocate for applicants or clients of the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Priority 2: NDALC will advocate for applicants or clients of the Bureau of Services to the Blind/Visually Impaired.

Priority 3: NDALC will advocate for applicants or clients of Independent Living program services.

Priority 4: NDALC will provide information on vocational rehabilitation services or Title I of the ADA.

Individual Rights

Goal: People with disabilities will have their rights protected.

Priority 1: Accept cases of alleged denial of rights of individuals with disabilities by care and treatment service providers.

Priority 2: Provide self-advocacy training and resource materials about personal rights; including rights under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Priority 3: Ensure appropriate discharge planning by state and private facilities that provide care for persons with disabilities.

Priority 4: Ensure equal access to individuals with disabilities in targeted cases involving architectural barriers, communication access, and education.

Priority 5: Systemically advocate for increased access to community-based services for individuals with disabilities with an emphasis on children's behavioral health services.

Developmental Disabilities Partners

Goal: NDALC will support the activities of the Developmental Disability partners in the State of Nevada.

Priority: NDALC will collaborate with the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities on activities that support persons with developmental disabilities.

Representative Payee Project

Goal: NDALC will conduct representative payee reviews and educational visits to ensure payees are using benefits properly on behalf of beneficiaries and are carrying out the representative payee responsibilities and duties correctly.

Health Care

Goal: Persons with disabilities will have increased access to the health care services they need.

Priority 1: Address systemic issues in the Medicaid program that decrease access to services to individuals with disabilities.

Priority 2: Ensure access to Health Care coverage and services, including managed care, for people with disabilities.

Priority 3: Develop resources for transition age youth regarding health care services and supports

Education

Goal: Students with developmental disabilities in Nevada will have access to quality special education services.

Priority 1: Accept cases of students with developmental disabilities where eligibility, discipline, programming, and/or placement issues seriously threaten the provision of a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

Priority 2: Ensure appropriate transition services are provided to students.

Employment

Goal: Social Security beneficiaries will obtain or retain employment.

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

Priority 2: Provide individual and systemic advocacy to ensure eligible transition age students with disabilities have access to vocational rehabilitation services and employment supports.

Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Advisory Council

Goal: NDALC will support the activities of the Advisory Council.

NDALC Case Selection Criteria

- a. The applicant must meet the program eligibility guidelines and the legal problems must fall within an objective or priority for services.
- b. Services will be provided only to persons whose legal problems are related to their status as an individual with a disability, whose legal problems are susceptible to resolution by NDALC staff, and whose claims have legal merit.
- c. Services will generally only be provided to individuals whose problems cannot be solved through self-advocacy or by other individuals, agencies, attorneys or organizations.
- d. While NDALC will provide direct legal representation to individual clients, legal issues that are systemic in nature will receive priority.
- e. The demand for NDALC services exceeds the available resources, and the agency must plan its activities in a strategic manner to effectively utilize its limited resources. Therefore, NDALC may decline to provide direct advocacy assistance even in situations where a case may be within the priorities and meet case acceptance criteria.
- f. NDALC resolves disputes whenever possible through non-adversarial means such as negotiation, mediation, conciliation, and exhaustion of administrative remedies, where appropriate, prior to initiating legal action in a Federal or State court.

