



## What Services does the disAbility Law Center of Virginia provide?

***The disAbility Law Center of Virginia (“dLCV”) advocates for and protects the legal rights of persons with disabilities.*** We do this through education, training, the promotion of self-advocacy skills for people with disabilities, and through information and referral services. We also provide direct advocacy services in particular cases that fall within our Strategic Goals and Focus Areas.

***Due to limited resources, it is not possible for dLCV to provide legal services or direct representation to everyone who calls for assistance. dLCV provides several levels of support and assistance.***

However, we believe that people with disabilities are their own best advocates. Therefore, dLCV may provide you with information, written materials or limited technical assistance that will assist you in speaking for yourself. We will also refer you to other agencies or resources when appropriate.

***dLCV has specific Strategic Goals and Focus Areas that are designed to affect the broadest improvements possible in Virginia’s disability services systems.*** Our federal grants establish eligibility criteria for our services and require us to use funds in a focused and careful manner. We establish the focus for our work based on public input, experience, and identified underserved areas and issues. The focus areas have been approved by our Governing Board. The selection of these focus areas does not mean that other issues are not important, but are intended to assist dLCV to use its resources most effectively.

***Within these Goals and Focus Areas, dLCV uses case selection criteria to decide the level of service that will be provided.*** In selecting cases for direct representation, preference will be given, where appropriate, to those individuals who exercised self-advocacy through technical assistance or short-term assistance provided by dLCV. These criteria include consideration of:

- Severity of harm.
- Imminence of risk.
- Potential of case to facilitate systems change or benefit other individuals.
- Availability of other resources to help the individual address the alleged violation.
- Self-advocacy ability of client or family.
- Availability of other appropriate, independent investigatory authorities.
- Availability of dLCV resources.
- Legal merit or available remedy.

If a case is being evaluated for litigation, additional factors may be considered. dLCV will seek prevailing party attorneys’ fees where appropriate. dLCV will not be able to provide you with legal services if you already have an attorney or other advocacy assistance or have the right to appointed counsel in a specific matter.

The following Goals and Focus Areas are the disAbility Law Center of Virginia’s strategic plan of action. They are the guidelines by which the dLCV determines the level of advocacy services provided. Cases may be opened outside of the stated Goals and Focus Areas only with the approval of the Executive Director.

## **dLCV's Strategic Goals and Focus Areas**

October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024

### **Goal 1 - People with Disabilities are Free from Harm**

#### **People with disabilities are free from harm in mental health facilities**

We monitor conditions in mental health facilities and investigate selected instances of death, serious injury, or abuse or neglect, and seek reforms.

#### **People with disabilities are free from harm in licensed and regulated community settings**

We investigate selected allegations of abuse or neglect in licensed and regulated community residential settings and day-support programs and seek reforms.

#### **Children and youth with disabilities are free from harm in schools**

We advocate for children in educational settings to be free from seclusion and restraint.

#### **Children and youth with disabilities receive appropriate services in juvenile justice facilities**

We advocate for children in juvenile justice facilities to receive appropriate mental health, educational and vocational services.

#### **The Commonwealth will maintain sustained compliance with the U.S. v VA settlement agreement**

We review the progress and status of the U.S. v VA settlement agreement and take appropriate action to maintain compliance.

### **Goal 2- Children and Youth with Disabilities Receive an Appropriate Education**

**This Goal is on hold for this fiscal year due to limited resources.**

### **Goal 3 – People with Disabilities Have Appropriate Access to Government Services**

#### **Government Programs Provide Reasonable Accommodations and Effective Communications**

We seek equal access to government buildings and programs under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Virginians with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act.

#### **Social Security recipients who have representative payees are free from exploitation**

We conduct reviews of Representative Payees on behalf of Social Security, investigate allegations of abuse, neglect or financial exploitation, and seek corrective action.

#### **People with disabilities have equal access to vote**

We advocate for individuals with disabilities to have a barrier free voting process. We also provide training and education on voting rights to the community.

#### **People with disabilities are assisted in Medicaid appeals**

We provide training, information and referral and advocacy to address Medicaid appeals.

## **Goal 4 – People with Disabilities Live in the Most Appropriate Integrated Environment**

### **The Commonwealth will appropriately transition all people when they are ready for discharge from state hospitals**

We assist individuals in state-operated facilities to receive appropriate discharge planning and timely discharge to integrated community placements.

### **People with disabilities have maximum individual choice**

We advocate for individuals with disabilities to have choice and control over themselves and their environment through supported decision-making and alternatives to guardianship.

## **Goal 5 – People with disabilities receive appropriate vocational rehabilitation services and employment supports**

We assist individuals with disabilities to receive appropriate vocational rehabilitation and independent living services.

## **Goal 6- People with disabilities have reasonable accommodations and effective communications in healthcare**

We provide education, training and advocacy for individuals facing barriers to accommodations while receiving healthcare services.

## **Goal 7 – People with Disabilities Become Better Self Advocates through Education and Training**

### **All people with disabilities who contact dLCV receive Information and Referral services**

We provide information and referral services relating to disability rights to all.

### **The general public is aware of dLCV's services and successes**

We provide training and outreach to the public to bring awareness of the agency and increase resources to operate.

### **Spanish speaking communities and children and youth in foster or kinship care are aware of dLCV's services**

We serve these underserved communities through targeted outreach, training and advocacy.

### **dLCV provides education, training, and outreach to assist victims of domestic violence and sexual assault**

We collaborate with other agencies serving victims of domestic violence and sexual assault to increase our ability to assist in this area.

### **The legal community and general public are aware of dLCV's advocacy through Amicus Briefs**

We provide Amicus Briefs on targeted legal issues to advocate for the rights of individuals with disabilities.

**If you feel like your legal rights have been violated, contact us!**

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