

March 14, 2024

Taneika Goldman
Office of Human Rights
Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
1220 Bank Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Taneika Goldman,

As you know, dLCV is the designated Protection and Advocacy organization for the Commonwealth of Virginia. We routinely monitor DBHDS-operated community facilities and institutions. Over the past several years while monitoring and speaking with clients we realized many Virginians with disabilities were not familiar with the Human Rights process. During our last fiscal year (FY23) we had an objective to survey 100 people receiving DBHDS licensed services to ascertain their knowledge of the Human Rights process, including if they had heard of, or been given a copy of, the Human Rights Regulations, if they knew who their assigned Human Rights Advocate was, if they knew how to file a Human Rights Complaint, and if they knew how to appeal a decision the Human Rights Committee made. Over the course of the year we were able to survey 126 respondents, with the help of the Office of Human Rights, and self-reporters who found the survey on our website.

We appreciated the Office of Human Rights assisting us with completing these surveys. Our hope is that with more knowledge dLCV and DBHDS can better protect and serve Virginian's with disabilities. By ensuring that everyone served knows their rights, knows how to contact their advocate if their rights are violated, or how to access the appeals process, we empower people to be better self-advocates and advocate for those who cannot. More education leads to more accountability which leads to a safer system for such a vulnerable population.

We expect to publish this report April 1, 2024, and will gladly publish at the same time any response you would like to us to include.

We look forward to working with you and the department to improve the quality of services and safety for individuals served by DBHDS licensed providers.

Sincerely,

V. Colleen Miller
Executive Director