

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 certain 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. So, dLCV may provide you with information, written materials or limited technical assistance that will help you in speaking for yourself. We will also refer you to other agencies or resources when we can.

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 set eligibility criteria for our services and require us to use funds in a focused and careful way. We set the focus for our work based on public input, experience, and 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 they help 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 choosing cases for direct representation, we will give priority to people who have already tried to advocate for themselves. Other things we consider include:

- Severity of harm.
- Imminence of risk.
- Potential of case to help change the systems in place or benefit other individuals.
- Availability of other resources to help the person 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, 2025 – September 30, 2026

Goal 1 – Entities that serve People with Disabilities are Held Accountable

Entities that serve People with Disabilities are Held Accountable through improved investigations and corrective action

We review incident reports across the Commonwealth, monitor conditions in facilities and investigate selected issues regarding seclusion, restraints, and suspicious deaths. We also investigate and review representative payees and report issues as warranted.

Entities that serve People with Disabilities are Held Accountable through administrative processes and litigation

We monitor the effectiveness of the Commonwealth's review of disability service providers. We also provide case services to a limited number of people with disabilities seeking help with administrative processes with vocational rehabilitation, Medicaid, guardianship, and human rights complaints.

Entities that serve People with Disabilities are Held Accountable through organizational and policy changes

Through education of policy makers, we advocate for state agencies, legislators, and other stakeholders to recognize issues with seclusion and mechanical restraint, vocational rehabilitation services, special education, and benefits management and make policy changes for systemic reform.

Goal 2 – People with Disabilities have Access to programs and services

People with Disabilities have Access to programs and services in the least restrictive setting

We will help with specific denials of services in post-secondary education, effective communication and architectural barriers issues in public and private programs; and substitute decision-making.

People with disabilities have access to government programs and services

We will help with denials of access to representative payee benefits, access to government buildings and services, voting, vocational rehabilitation services, and barriers to work for beneficiaries of Social Security.

Youth with disabilities have access to services, supports and spaces as they transition into adulthood.

We will monitor, educate, and serve youth facing barriers with services including facility discharge, special education access for individuals in correctional facilities, and supported decision-making issues, as well as Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and Vocational Rehabilitation.

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

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Call: 800-552-3962 or 804-225-2042 Email: info@dLCV.org.

You can also request assistance via our online portal found on our website at www.dLCV.org/get-help.