



**Disability  
Rights  
Arkansas**

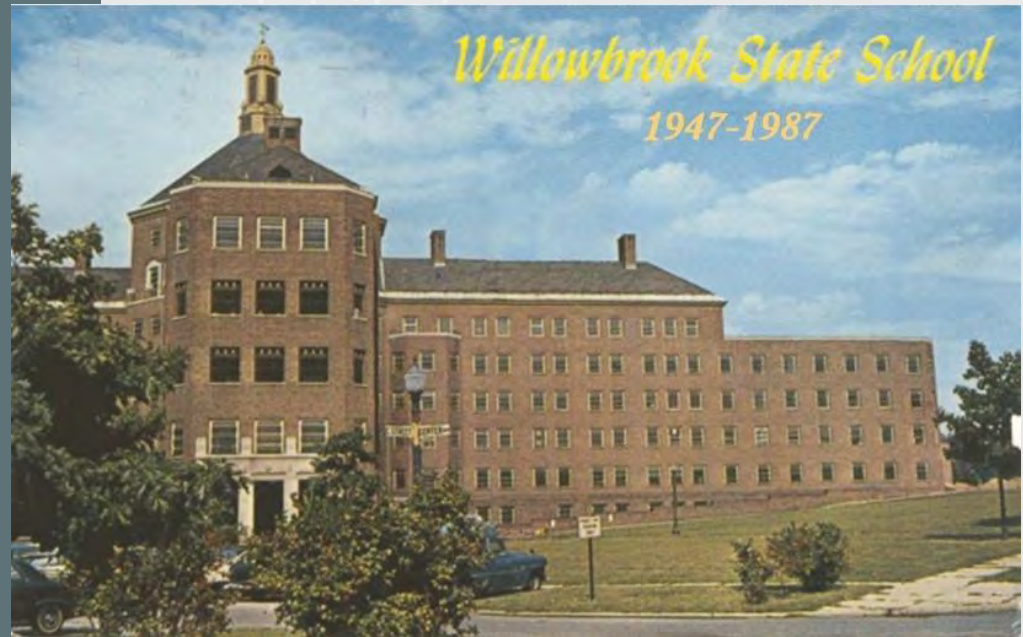
**Who we are & What we do**

# Disability Rights Arkansas's Mission Statement:

To vigorously advocate for and enforce the legal rights of people with disabilities in Arkansas.



# History of the P&A System



# Rivera's story draws national attention/ public outcry

Using a "borrowed" key, Geraldo Rivera climbed the fence and entered Willowbrook one night with a hidden camera in the first of a series of investigative reports for WABC in New York.

The expose, entitled *Willowbrook: The Last Disgrace*, captured the nation's attention. A class action lawsuit was filed against the State of New York on March 17, 1972. A settlement in the case was reached on May 5, 1975.



# Abuse and Neglect Exposed



# Legislation

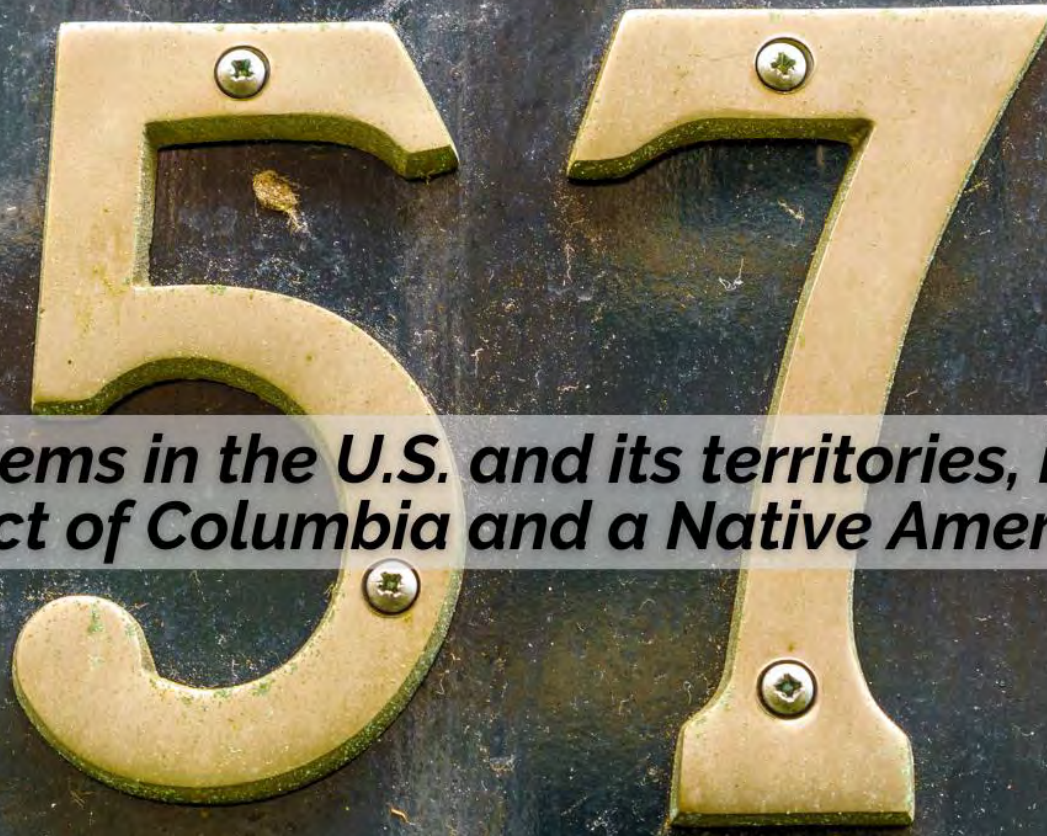
Congress passed the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act in 1975

Protection and Advocacy Systems (P&As) were established

P&As were charged with protecting and advocating for the rights of individuals with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities

P&As must operate with independence from the state or federal governments

THERE ARE



***P&A systems in the U.S. and its territories, including the District of Columbia and a Native American P&A.***



The P&A Network

# Establishment in Arkansas



Arkansas received grant funding in 1977



Advocacy Services, Inc. was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) domestic corporation in 1980



The corporation name was changed to Disability Rights Center of Arkansas in 2010, then to Disability Rights Arkansas, Inc. in 2014



# 9 Federally Funded Programs



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P&A for  
Assistive  
Technology -  
PAAT (1994)

P&A for  
Beneficiaries  
of Social  
Security -  
PABSS (1999)

P&A for  
Individuals  
with  
Traumatic  
Brain Injury -  
PATBI (2002)

P&A for  
Voting  
Access -  
PAVA (2003)

Strengthening  
Protections for  
Social Security  
Beneficiaries -  
Representative  
Payee (2018)



# What We Do

- Investigate allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation in both public and private settings where individuals receive services.
- Representation and advocacy for individuals with disabilities regarding rights violations.
- Training & Education on issues relative to our work.



# What We Do

- At the beginning of each fiscal year, the Board of Directors adopts priorities based on feedback from individuals with disabilities, family members, advocates and professionals.
- The priorities adopted by the Board determine the activities for the fiscal year.



# Fiscal Year 2025 Priorities

Priority 1: Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

Priority 2: Education and Employment

Priority 3: Institutionalization of Youth

Priority 4: Access to Medicaid or assigned to a PASSE

Priority 5: Voting

Priority 6: Self-Advocacy/Training

Priority 7: Outreach and Education

# Case Types



**Intake/Referral**



**Individual  
Advocacy**



**Assistance with  
Self-Advocacy**



**Investigations**



**Technical  
Assistance**



**Projects**

# Intake

Intake/  
Referral

Provide resources or referrals to those who can provide information or assistance.

Develop self-help/explainers for individuals and families.

Technical Assistance to those who do not have disabilities.



# Abuse/Neglect

- Monitoring facilities where individuals with disabilities reside or receive services.
  - Compliance with human rights
  - Access to services
- Investigations
  - Based on reported information or from monitoring
  - Can be secondary or initial
  - Report concerns to facility and state investigative authorities (private reports)
  - Public reports detailing concerns or findings





# What is DRA's access authority?

## Under the PADD Regulations

Under the DD Act, the P&A system shall have reasonable unaccompanied access to public and private facilities which provide services, supports, and other assistance for individuals with developmental disabilities in the State when necessary to conduct a full investigation of an incident or abuse and neglect.

# What is DRA's access authority?

## Under the PAIMI Regulations

A P&A system shall have reasonable unaccompanied access to public and private facilities and programs in the State which render care or treatment for individuals with mental illness, and to all areas of the facility which are used by residents or are accessible to residents. The P&A system shall have reasonable unaccompanied access to residents at all times necessary to conduct a full investigation of an incident of abuse and neglect.

# Special Education

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- Children who are suspended, expelled, or referred to law enforcement.
  - Observation of Due Process Rights
  - Behavior Supports
- Children who require health plans.
  - Life and death scenarios
  - Allergies, medications
- Children who need transition services from school to work/post-secondary education.
  - Vocational rehabilitation
  - Life skills





Disability Rights Arkansas



**ARE YOU FACING EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS DUE TO A DISABILITY?**

At Disability Rights Arkansas our Employment team can assist you in multiple ways including:

- Information/Education
- Referral
- Self-Advocacy
- Individual Advocacy
- Legal Representation

Arkansans with Disabilities should have access to the services, resources, and supports needed for competitive, integrated employment.

[www.DisabilityRightsAR.org](http://www.DisabilityRightsAR.org) (800)-482-1174

# Employment

- Access to supports and services designed to maintain, gain, or advance in employment.
- Arkansas Rehabilitation Services/Division of Services for the Blind.
- Segregated Employment
  - Subminimum Wage
  - Type of Work
  - Training
  - Supported Employment alternatives
    - ARS
    - PASSE



# Guardianship

Abusive, neglectful, or unnecessary guardianships.

Assist with terminating or limiting guardianships

Compliance with Ward's Bill of Rights.

# Medicaid

- PASSE Services
  - Managed Care Medicaid for Developmental Disabilities Home and Community Based Services Waiver and Behavioral Health Services
- Early, Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT)
- Assistive Technology



# Representative Payee



Audit  
Representative  
Payees.



Go through books  
and ensure there are  
not misused funds by  
those responsible for  
management.



Ensure compliance  
with SSA  
obligations.



Design Corrective  
Action Plans and  
refer to SSA for  
action.

# Contact DRA

## **Disability Rights Arkansas, Inc.**

400 W. Capitol Ave., Suite 1200

Little Rock, AR 72201

Local: (501) 296-1775

Toll Free: 1-800-482-1174

Email: [info@disabilityrightsar.org](mailto:info@disabilityrightsar.org)

Website: <https://disabilityrightsar.org>

Facebook: Disability Rights Arkansas

Twitter: @DRArkansas

