



WHO IS DISABILITY LAW COLORADO?

Disability Law Colorado protects and promotes the rights of people with disabilities and older people in Colorado through direct legal representation, advocacy, education and legislative analysis. We are committed to increasing opportunities for adults and children with disabilities to live, work and attend school in the community, enjoying independent and productive lives. We also protect the right of people in institutions to be treated with dignity and respect.



COLORADO'S PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEM

In 1977, the governor designated Disability Law Colorado to be Colorado's Protection and Advocacy (P&A) System for people with developmental disabilities. Over time, Congress expanded the P&A Network which now includes eight federally mandated programs that allow us to reach out to more people with disabilities. Today, Disability Law Colorado is recognized as a leader in the National Disability Rights Network made up of Protection and Advocacy programs from every state and territory.

COLORADO'S LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN & LEGAL ASSISTANCE DEVELOPER FOR ELDERS PROGRAMS

In 1988 Disability Law Colorado was selected to administer the Colorado Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (including the PACE Ombudsman in 2017) and the Legal Assistance Developer for Elders Program. Both of these programs work together to protect and promote the rights of Colorado's older adults to improve their quality of life and protect them from neglect and abuse.

PUBLIC POLICY & LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS

As we continue our commitment to protect and promote disability rights, elder rights and quality long-term services in Colorado, you'll find Disability Law Colorado:

- **In the conversation:** Informing and shaping the debate on disability rights, elder rights and long-term care; providing perspective to the media, partner groups, opponents, and thought leaders.
- **At the ballot:** Our advocacy efforts put important policies on the ballot, giving Coloradans the power to advocate for disability and elder rights with their votes.
- **At the legislature:** Elected leaders rely on Disability Law Colorado's expertise and unique insights on disability rights, elder rights and long-term care, often looking to us to better understand their communities' needs. We advance legislation and assist coalition partners with their goals.
- **In the community:** Disability Law Colorado connects with local leaders and residents from communities across Colorado through outreach events and educational meetings, and also builds strong coalitions to elevate issues.



PROTECTION & ADVOCACY TEAMS

Facilities | investigating abuse and neglect

Community Integration | community services and moving individuals from restrictive settings into the community

Education | ensuring equal access and appropriate education services

Access | housing, employment and public accommodations

Centralized Intake | streamlining information gathering and service referrals



LONG-TERM CARE & ELDER PROGRAMS

State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Legal Assistance Developer for Elders

State PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) Ombudsman

Medicare-Medicaid Advocates (MMA)



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STORY OF IMPACT | PROTECTING ELDER RIGHTS

A gentleman who was improperly admitted to an assisted living home contacted the ombudsman. After meeting with him, the ombudsman discovered that he had been improperly admitted to a secure (locked) unit by his wife. The wife was also using undue influence to coerce him into signing a Power of Attorney (POA) and petitioned the court for emergency guardianship. This was likely related to a pending multi-million dollar sale of his real estate. He requested ombudsman assistance to correct paperwork with the facility where his wife had improperly admitted him and limited his right to visitors and use of phone and mail through the POA. Through the coordination of Adult Protective Services, the client's private attorney, the ombudsman and a private case manager, an agreement was made whereby the wife dropped the guardianship petition, and he moved with support to his daughter's home where he was able to complete the sale.



STORY OF IMPACT | PROTECTING DISABILITY RIGHTS



Disability Law Colorado worked with a young man with significant intellectual/developmental disabilities. Jack Splitt was an outgoing gregarious young man who had spent his time in school mainstreamed with his typical peers, receiving special education supports and services in the classroom. Unfortunately, during middle school, Jack's medical needs increased and he was hospitalized. Though the law requires that children receiving special education services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP) be educated in whatever setting they find themselves, including a hospital, the school district failed to provide services to Jack while he was in the hospital for almost a year. Jack's parents contacted Disability Law Colorado, at which time DLC immediately intervened and filed a complaint with the Colorado Department of Education. In response, the school district arranged for Jack to have all his services – both academic and therapeutic – provided to him in the hospital. When Jack left the hospital, DLC also ensured that his services in his local school were appropriate.

DISABILITY LAW COLORADO PRIORITIES

Abuse and Neglect in Facilities – We will act to ensure that people with disabilities are free from serious abuse and neglect in facilities, including: jails, prisons, regional centers, day programs, children's residential treatment centers and state mental health institutes.

Community Integration – We will work to ensure that people with disabilities can overcome legal obstacles that either prevent them from leaving an institution to live in the community or put them at risk for institutionalization.

Employment – We will work with individuals and systemically on legal issues faced by people with disabilities in or entering the workforce.

Education – We will work on systemic issues with students with disabilities and their families to ensure that they are receiving appropriate educational services from birth through higher education.

Service & Assistance Animals – We will work on systemic legal issues related to the rights of a person with a disability to use a service or assistance animal.

Equal Access – We will work on systemic legal issues to ensure that people with disabilities living in the community have equal access to housing, services and businesses.

Colorado Long-Term Care Ombudsman and Colorado PACE Ombudsman – These programs work to support the legally guaranteed rights to quality care and quality of life for residents of assisted living facilities and nursing homes as well as participants of the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) across Colorado.

Legal Assistance Developer Program – The Legal Assistance Developer provides state leadership in securing and maintaining the legal rights of older individuals as well as developing the state's capacity to improve the quality and quantity of legal services provided to elders. Rights issues and discrimination in any setting.

Medicare/Medicaid Advocacy Program – This program was designed to provide advocacy assistance to participants receiving both Medicare and Medicaid in Colorado's demonstration project to coordinate care for these individuals. The people served by this program have very complex health problems and/or disabilities.



DISABILITY LAW
COLORADO™

Broker Change | Protect Rights | Improve Lives

