

Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities



Images: On the left, a white couple with intellectual and developmental disabilities hug each other. In the middle, a young Latino child using a wheelchair is smiling. On the right, a white man with disabilities wearing assistive technology smiles.

**The Protection and Advocacy System for People
with Disabilities in Wisconsin**

Protection and Advocacy

Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW) is a statewide resource for individuals, families, service professionals, and others concerned with disability issues. Designated by the Governor to ensure the rights of all state citizens with disabilities through individual advocacy and system change, DRW is a private non-profit that is part of a national system of federally mandated Protection and Advocacy agencies.

Disability Rights Wisconsin helps people across Wisconsin gain access to services and opportunity through its advocacy and legal expertise. We regularly challenge systems and society to create positive change and improve the lives of people with disabilities.

DRW Program Brochure:

Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities

Disability Rights Wisconsin is governed by an independent Board of Directors, a majority of whom have a disability or have family members with a disability. The Board is also supported by a Mental Health Advisory Committee.

We support the right of each person to live in dignity, to work and to attend school in the mainstream of society. The agency also works on disability issues with state and local governments. In addition to annual federal appropriations for our Protection and Advocacy programs, Disability Rights Wisconsin receives financial support from individuals and private foundations and from training fees and government grants.

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Advocacy Action Areas

Individual Advocacy

We help people overcome barriers to independence and identify the right community support services. Disability Rights Wisconsin advocates work one-on-one with individuals to identify goals and achieve positive change.

Systems Advocacy

We promote positive legislative policy and program initiatives. Disability Rights Wisconsin attorneys and advocates work at the state and county levels, and in coalition with other organizations to protect the rights of people with disabilities in Wisconsin. Our advocacy efforts serve people living in community settings, in state, county, and private institutions, and in prison and jails.

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Training

We provide informational training and other learning opportunities for consumers, family members, attorneys, and others who support people in the disability community. Disability Rights Wisconsin trainers offer effective strategies to strengthen individual advocacy skills, improve the system's response to issues of access, broaden the understanding of disability rights, and more.

Legal Support

We take action that challenges rights violations related to identified priority issues for people with disabilities. Disability Rights Wisconsin attorneys bring the law to bear on issues of individual and systems advocacy. We address access, inclusion, dignity, most-integrated choices, and equal rights issues.

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Serving People with All Disabilities

Disability Rights Wisconsin serves people of all ages, including people with developmental disabilities, people with mental illness, people with physical or sensory disabilities, and people with traumatic brain injury.

Disability Rights Wisconsin respects the cultural values and personal choices of those seeking our services. We value diversity in all aspects of our agency's operations.

Protection and Advocacy Division

Priority Issues:

- Abuse and neglect
- Patient and resident rights

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- Community integration
- Long-term care
- Equal educational opportunity
- Voting rights
- Discrimination in employment and housing
- Barriers for accessibility
- Assistive technology
- Access to community services, benefits, and supports

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Special Programs:

- SSI Managed Care External Advocacy
- Medicare Part D Helpline
- Program Attorney services for Disability Benefit Specialists
- Family Care and IRIS Ombudsman

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Contact Us for Help

Disability Rights Wisconsin has offices in Madison and Milwaukee. Our advocacy services are free for persons with disabilities and their families.

- **Madison:** 608-267-0214
- **Milwaukee:** 414-773-4646
- **Toll-free for all offices:** 800-928-8778
for persons with disabilities and their families.

An Intake Specialist will ask about your concern. If your concern is an identified priority, a DRW staff member will discuss with you if we can help with:

- Information and referral
- Advice and guidance in self-advocacy

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- Investigating, negotiating, or mediating on your behalf
- Representing you in certain legal proceedings

Disability Rights Wisconsin does not provide legal assistance with:

- Bankruptcies
- Traffic tickets
- Criminal cases
- Family law issues like child custody, child support, or divorce.

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Disability Rights Wisconsin: Our Vision

All persons with disabilities and their families shall be empowered to exercise and enjoy the full extent of their rights and to pursue the greatest possible quality of life.

Our Core Values

Diversity: Advocacy for people from all backgrounds in every part of Wisconsin.

Dignity: Access to basic benefits and services.

Independence: Autonomy and choice in individual life decisions.

Accessibility: Working for a barrier-free society for everyone.

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Inclusion: Living, working, and learning in the most integrated setting.

Human Rights: Protection from abuse and neglect in institutions and the community.

Liberation: Defending people's rights to move out of institutions and other segregated settings and to be free of seclusion, restraint, and unwarranted deprivations of liberty.

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Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities

Contact Us

Toll-free phone: 800-928-8778

Agency Fax: 833-635-1968

Website: disabilityrightswi.org

Email: info@drwi.org

Our Offices

Madison

1502 West Broadway

Suite 201

Madison, WI 53713

Madison Phone: 608-267-0214

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Milwaukee

6737 W. Washington St.,

Suite 3230

Milwaukee, WI 53214

Milwaukee Phone: 414-773-4646

Statewide Drug Benefit Medicare Part D Helpline

Toll-free Phone: 800-926-4862

Disability Rights Wisconsin Voter Hotline

Toll-free Phone: 844-347-8683

Tenemos empleados que hablan español.

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Language translation on the phone is provided for non-English speakers.

We provide reasonable accommodations upon request. Alternative formats of this brochure are available upon request.