

Proposed Panda Goals & Priorities FY 2025

Goal 1: Decrease the incidents and risk of abuse and neglect of people with disabilities in institutions and the community, including schools.

- Provide self-advocacy assistance to people with disabilities who are abused or neglected or at risk of serious abuse and neglect in institutional, community, and educational settings. Provide representation in egregious cases or when likely to result in systemic improvement.
- Review (1) Statements of Deficiency; (2) resident deaths in state-operated facilities; (3) situations involving egregious allegations of abuse or neglect against people with disabilities in community or institutional settings. Issue reports and recommend policy or systems changes as appropriate.
- Monitor institutional and community settings for concerns regarding abuse, neglect, or serious rights violations. Address concerns with facility leadership or other oversight entities as appropriate.
- Collaborate with partner agencies to strengthen regulatory oversight and improve collaboration between systems designed to investigate or prevent abuse and neglect.
- Conduct trainings for consumers, family members, and professionals aimed at reducing the risk that people with disabilities will face relating to abuse, neglect, or serious rights violations. Partner with others, especially people who have lived experience, to conduct joint trainings when possible.
- Engage in systems advocacy focused on decreasing abuse and neglect by (1) submitting public comments (2) participating in stakeholder committees; (3) meeting with state and county and local decision-makers; (4) filing amicus briefs with the court in select 3rd party litigation; and (5) media appearances.

Goal 2: Ensure that adults and children with disabilities have access to an adequate array of high quality, community-based support services that promote self-direction and care in the least restrictive, most integrated setting and with the least imposition on their liberty as possible.

- Provide self-advocacy assistance to people with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities facing barriers accessing appropriate Medicaid-funded and other community-based services or at risk of discharge from hospital, nursing home, or other facility without a safe plan. Provide representation in egregious cases or when likely to result in systemic improvement.
- Engage in systems advocacy focused on improving access to community-based services and supports by (1) submitting public comments (2) participating in stakeholder committees; (3) meeting with state and county and local decision-makers; (4) filing amicus briefs with the court in select 3rd party litigation; and (5) media appearances.
- Conduct trainings for consumers, families, and others aimed at overcoming barriers and receiving services and supports necessary to live and work in the least restrictive, most-integrated setting. Partner with others, especially people who have lived experience, to conduct joint trainings when possible.

Goal 3: Work to ensure people with disabilities have equal access to employment, housing, transportation, and places of public accommodation free of disability discrimination, even when that requires reasonable accommodations or modifications.

- Provide self-advocacy assistance and in limited situations, individual advocacy to individuals seeking:
 - To access, keep, or regain Competitive Integrated Employment.
 - Reasonable accommodations on the job or facing disability discrimination in employment.
 - Reasonable accommodations and reasonable modifications in their housing or facing disability discrimination in housing.
 - Reasonable accommodations to access services, programs, or places of public accommodation.
 - Appropriate, accessible transportation.
- Provide legal representation to individuals in egregious cases or when likely to result in systemic improvement.
- Engage in systems advocacy focused on improving access to Competitive Integrated Employment and transportation by (1) submitting public comments; (2) participating in stakeholder committees; (3) meeting with state and county and local decision-makers; (4) filing amicus briefs with the court in select 3rd party litigation; and (5) media appearances.
- Conduct trainings aimed at educating consumers, family members, and others about rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Fair Housing Act, Wisconsin Fair Employment Act, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and Rehabilitation Act. Partner with others, especially people who have lived experience, to conduct joint trainings when possible.

Goal 4: Protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in the criminal legal system.

- Provide legal representation in egregious cases or cases likely to result in systemic change regarding allegations of (1) abuse and neglect with risk of death or serious bodily harm; (2) ongoing failure to provide mental health treatment; (3) failure to accommodate disabilities; or (4) disability discrimination.
- Investigate deaths of people with disabilities in correctional facilities when abuse, neglect, or failure to provide adequate medical treatment may have been a factor.
- Engage in systems advocacy to address concerns regarding disability discrimination or issues raised by the above instances.
- Provide input about the reorganization of the juvenile justice system to ensure that the needs of youth with disabilities are considered.

Goal 5: Increase the number of children with disabilities who receive Free Appropriate Public Education in the least restrictive setting.

- Provide self-advocacy assistance, and in limited situations, individual advocacy to students with disabilities and their parents / guardians regarding
 - School exclusion due to expulsion, repeated suspension, law enforcement intervention, or shortened school schedule;
 - Behavioral services and supports, assistive technology (AT) devices, and AT services;
 - Inappropriate seclusion or restraint;
 - Integrated transition planning;
- Provide legal representation in egregious cases or cases determined likely to result in system-wide improvement.
- Conduct trainings for families, students and collaborators aimed at understanding the rights of students with disabilities. Partner with others, especially people with lived experience, to conduct joint trainings when possible.
- Engage in systems advocacy to address specific, widespread, or systemic concerns for students with disabilities raised by individual case work.

Goal 6: Improve the accessibility of Wisconsin elections and assist people with disabilities to exercise their rights under the law to fully participate in the electoral process.

- Provide self-advocacy assistance and education to voters with disabilities regarding voter registration, absentee voting, casting a ballot at their polling place, and voter rights. Prioritize outreach and support for voters navigating multiple systems of oppression or facing multiple barriers such as isolation, limited literacy, no or limited access to technology, or living in a residential care facility.
- Engage youth in transition to become registered voters and understand their voting rights.
- Work with the Disability Vote Coalition to grow the coalition and increase the number of organizations and individuals working to advance our mission and engage voters statewide.
- Increase awareness about the Wisconsin Elections Commission complaint process and support voters' efforts to make complaints.
- Provide outreach and education regarding voting rights for individuals under guardianship and the process restore voting rights.
- Provide resources to educate candidates about priorities for the disability community.
- Work with coalition partners and policy makers to implement an Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant, accessible absentee ballot.
- Partner with the Wisconsin Elections Commission to develop and improve training and educational resources for Wisconsin clerks and poll workers.
- Monitor voters' access to the ballot and voting rights violations on Election Day and throughout the electoral process in partnership with Wisconsin Voting Rights Coalition, Disability Vote Coalition, and DRW's Voter Hotline.