

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**DISABILITY
RIGHTS
MAINE** 

Annual Report 2017/18



Dedication

This report is dedicated to the memory of Charlie Knowles, and to all young people who may be struggling to live lives true to themselves.

It is our role, as adults and caring citizens, to show young people the respect, support, and love they deserve, and to create a state where all young people - with and without disabilities, gender conforming or not - feel safe and valued.

Charlie's memory will be in our thoughts as we work toward these goals in everything we do.



DISABILITY
RIGHTS
MAINE 

A Message from the Executive Director

DRM is supported by grants from:

Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Center for Mental Health Services

Rehabilitation Services Administration

Social Security Administration

Federal Communications Commission

State of Maine

Acadia Hospital

Maine Civil Legal Service Commission

Private donations

We thank all supporters who enable our work, and hope this report illustrates how important your support is to the disability community.

You can help support us at drme.org/support

This report is available in alternative formats upon request

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Once again, I am happy to share our annual report with you. This document reflects the scope of the challenges faced by people with disabilities in Maine, as well as our response to those challenges. Disability Rights Maine's commitment to the rights of our clients is reflected in these pages.

As always, I am thankful to the dedicated staff at DRM, our Board of Directors, partners, contributors, and collaborators. Their energy and commitment makes the challenges we face easier to confront.

Most importantly, though, I am grateful for the resiliency and strength of will of the people with disabilities with whom we work. I have been doing this advocacy work for a long time, but I never cease to be amazed and awed by the humor, energy, and passion that people with disabilities bring to confronting their challenges. It is an honor to do this work and to partner with them to make Maine better for everyone who lives here.

Respectfully,

Kim Moody, Executive Director

Preventing Restraint and Seclusion of Children

In schools, residential programs, and hospitals across Maine, young people with disabilities are restrained and secluded against their will. These practices are dangerous emergency interventions that can result in serious injury to body and mind.

“When schools, providers, and hospitals respect the rights of kids with disabilities and plan properly, these brutal and traumatizing interventions are unnecessary.”

Last year, a DRM investigation determined that in Maine schools there are an average of 13,000 restraints and seclusions forced on students each year – the majority of them performed on students with disabilities. Restraints in hospitals can be shocking – children held down by four staff, others lashed onto a hospital bed with a net—as well as re-traumatizing and dangerous. This is not the best we can do for our youth with serious needs.

DRM is committed to preventing restraint and seclusion of Maine’s children with disabilities. Through individual advocacy, systemic interventions, and policy reform, we seek client-centered, trauma-free interventions for kids facing challenges.

Research supports our belief that these practices are harmful and excessive and should be stopped. When schools, providers, and hospitals respect the rights of young people with disabilities and plan properly, these brutal interventions are unnecessary.



Preventing Restraint and Seclusion of Children

After Anna, a 16 year old patient at a major hospital in Maine, was physically restrained because she refused to disrobe and wear a hospital gown, DRM intervened. As a result of our advocacy and Anna's resolve, the hospital changed their policies and practices to provide a safer, more trauma-informed environment for children. They committed to increasing staff training on the rights of people with disabilities to be free of unnecessary restraint.

The hospital worked with Anna to improve the design of "safe clothing", including undergarments for young people in the emergency department.

DRM's commitment to preventing restraint and seclusion is steadfast.

We are working in partnership with members of the Coalition Against Restraint and Seclusion to educate the public and advocate for elimination of these practices.

In 2017, DRM published "Restraint and Seclusion in Maine Schools", a report on the use of dangerous physical interventions on Maine students. The report highlighted the disproportionate use of restraint and seclusion on students with disabilities, and sounded the alarm that even the high numbers reported to the State of Maine were likely due to incomplete and unreliable data from schools. The report garnered extensive media coverage in Maine newspapers, television, and radio, as well as some national attention.

The Maine Department of Education responded to the report with a commitment to quality data-gathering, updated training for schools, and plans for new materials and stakeholder groups to address these concerns.



Empowering Individuals through Supported Decision-Making



Adults with disabilities in Maine face guardianship - the loss of legal personhood and the denial of many basic rights – often almost by default when turning 18 years of age. Guardianship becomes commonplace in their lives for years, and decisions on matters great and small are made for them by others.

The unintended consequences of guardianship are clear: a sweeping loss of basic civil liberties, the feelings of disempowerment and loss of control, the perpetuation of viewing disability as an accumulation of a person's deficits.

Guardianship often occurs at the time that people with disabilities transition from school into adulthood, particularly so if the individual has an intellectual disability. Despite our investment during the school years in moving toward true inclusion and development of the young person, society short-circuits that process when it adopts guardianship as a matter of course when a person turns 18.

Guardianship unnecessarily denies basic rights of citizenship. Supported Decision-Making helps restore autonomy and fairness.

Empowering Individuals through Supported Decision-Making

DRM's core mission is empowering people with disabilities to control their own lives. In response to our advocacy, **Maine's Probate Code now requires that Supported Decision-Making be considered before any guardianship order can occur.** This is a major shift away from the status quo and toward autonomy for people with disabilities.

DRM's legal intervention led to a first-of-its-kind victory in Maine for our client Joshua Strong, who had been under guardianship and wanted to increase his agency and independence. DRM, Joshua, and his service provider partnered in Supported-Decision Making, an alternative to traditional guardianship that emphasizes decision making as a skill. After the probate court agreed to end Joshua's guardianship, DRM stated that "Josh's hard work and victory creates a new narrative about civil rights and liberties in Maine." Joshua's new freedom, a goal of his for years, serves as a ground-breaking model for other people with disabilities.



Obtaining Justice for Workers with Disabilities



Employment is a gateway to independence. It contributes meaning to our lives, but for many Mainers with disabilities, employment is a dream that can't be realized, due to needless barriers and sometimes due to outright hostility and discrimination.

DRM is holding employers accountable for workplace discrimination

DRM Obtains Settlement for Woman with Cerebral Palsy Taunted at Work, Denied an Accommodation

Laurie, a woman with cerebral palsy who worked for a cleaning service, was subjected to physical and verbal harassment at her workplace. She faced taunting and ridicule about her disability while also denied a reasonable accommodation. With DRM's representation, Laurie filed a discrimination claim and prevailed at the Maine Human Rights Commission. On the basis of that finding, DRM filed a complaint in court to address the serious abuse our client had endured. Laurie received a financial settlement, and the employer was held accountable for the discriminatory harm they had caused her.

Obtaining Justice for Workers with Disabilities

DRM Client Feels Vindicated Following Successful Negotiation

A company that fired a man because of his mental illness adopted a nondiscrimination policy, conducted ADA training and compensated his losses after DRM represented him.

Keith had received glowing work reviews from his supervisors soon before his mental illness was exacerbated at work and necessitated crisis services. Keith was evaluated, hospitalized for a short period and upon discharge from the hospital, was referred to an intensive outpatient treatment program which had been effective in the past. He brought a doctor's note to work and explained that he would need six weeks off for treatment. Keith was then told that he was not meeting standards and was fired on the spot. His request for a written reason for his termination was denied. DRM filed a complaint with the Maine Human Rights Commission and engaged in negotiation at a formal mediation to resolve the case. After the case resolved, Keith said he felt vindicated and the DRM assistance was integral to his recovery and well-being.



A DRM attorney trained 60 individuals on legal protections

available under the Maine Human Rights Act and Title I of the ADA to individual's diagnosed with Alzheimer's and their caregivers, as part of a panel on how people with Alzheimer's disease and dementia can remain in the workplace.

Pushing Back on the Criminalization Of Disability

In residential programs, hospitals and schools across Maine, young people with disabilities are disproportionately arrested, criminally charged, and incarcerated for behaviors that are related to their disabilities – in some cases, punished for the very conditions that led them to seek help from these programs in the first place.

Our youth need
care and
treatment, not
incarceration

The cost of incarcerating our youth is astronomical. The cost of incarcerating our youth due to mental illness is inexcusable.

Maine is not immune to the phenomenon known as the school-to-prison pipeline: those misguided policies and practices that push our children, especially our most at-risk children, out of classrooms and community treatment settings and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. When our schools and treatment programs fail to meet the needs of young people with behavioral challenges, and instead rely on law enforcement, our youth suffer life-changing consequences.



Pushing Back on the Criminalization of Disability

DRM is committed to preventing the criminalization of disability. Years of research support the use of positive behavioral supports and other therapeutic interventions, not arrest and punishment, to address behavioral challenges in youth and children.

We conduct monthly visits to Long Creek Youth Development Center and engage directly with young people seeking help in obtaining treatment services. DRM successfully advocated for community re-entry for a young man with mental health disabilities after he had been incarcerated for five years and, in state custody, was placed in multiple residential treatment programs.

DRM is partnering with allies and concerned citizens to advocate for the development of best practices and alternatives to the use of law enforcement to address the therapeutic needs of young people. DRM continues to engage in individual advocacy representation as well as monitoring of residential treatment programs in Maine.

DRM is Investigating Law Enforcement Interventions

Following up on numerous concerns identified in our outreach and individual advocacy, DRM issued a report ***Assessing the Use of Law Enforcement by Youth Service Providers***. DRM reviewed records from 21 law enforcement agencies, documenting 815 calls to them from provider organizations. For many of these calls, law enforcement was relied upon to address behaviors that merited a therapeutic response.

The report sparked a cross-system discussion of better interventions for youth.

“If providers find it necessary to call law enforcement to intervene with a youth in an intensive treatment setting, then we must start questioning whether the treatment being provided is effective. Otherwise, we are criminalizing behavior for which youth are actively seeking treatment “

- Katrina Ringrose, DRM children’s advocate.

Confronting Patient Dumping and the Abandonment of People with Serious Disabilities

Due to a number of factors, from payment rates to chronic staffing shortages, Maine is facing an epidemic of discrimination against people with significant disabilities—including mental health and intellectual disabilities, brain injuries, and other conditions—who are being hospitalized and denied the opportunity to return to the residential settings where they live. Patient dumping is a national challenge.

DRM is confronting the discriminatory and abusive practice of patient dumping. We have aggressively used licensing and regulatory options, and increasingly are invoking the Maine Human Rights Act and the federal Fair Housing Act as tools to protect the rights of people subjected to this practice.

Luke, a 51 year old man with mental health disabilities, was brought by an assisted living facility to an emergency room for assessment. He was treated and cleared to return home, but the assisted living facility refused to allow him back for several months.

DRM filed a discrimination lawsuit on Luke's behalf, resulting in a financial settlement for him along with the facility agreeing to training and policy changes.



Confronting Patient Dumping and the Abandonment of People with Serious Disabilities

Client Dumped into E.R. Returns after DRM Successfully Appeals

David, a 48 year old man with mental illness, experienced a mental health crisis and was brought to the E.R. He was treated and ready for discharge, but his assisted living facility balked and refused to readmit him. DRM filed an administrative appeal in order to hold his bed available, and while a hearing was pending, negotiated with David's community and hospital providers. Staff at the assisted living facility received training and David returned there.

DRM presented a Continuing Legal Education workshop, *Litigation Strategies Utilizing Contract and Fair Housing Laws to Address Resident Dumping in Emergency Rooms*, at the National Association of Rights Protection and Advocacy annual conference in Portland, Maine. The workshop was attended by a national audience and was targeted at providing attorneys from across the country litigation strategies to confront patient dumping.



Shining a Spotlight on Maine's Forgotten Kids

In DRM's work with kids with disabilities, some populations are uniquely vulnerable. This includes children with significant disabilities who are in state custody and foster care, placed in treatment settings out of state due to a lack of available care in Maine, and who are homeless or living in situations of impermanence.

These children are often the most in need of DRM's advocacy. They face severe challenges in receiving the services they need to be successful in normal, community-based settings alongside their peers without disabilities.

"Maximizing stability for kids creates better outcomes for them, proves more cost-effective, and strengthens our communities."

DRM believes that all Maine children with disabilities should receive the services they need here at home – in state, with the support of consistent caregivers and providers. Maximizing stability for kids creates better outcomes for them, proves more cost-effective, and strengthens our communities.

DRM is committed to working to keep vulnerable youth from falling through the cracks and getting stuck in out-of-state placements, enduring lengthy hospitalizations, and spending years in special purpose private schools. Instead, DRM advocates for our children to be served at home, in the least restrictive educational and treatment settings.



Shining a Spotlight on Maine's Forgotten Kids

DRM represented Caleb, a 10 year old boy with autism in state custody, who was forced to stay at a psychiatric hospital for several months past any medical necessity for him to be there, due to a delay in the state's ability to obtain a more appropriate and clinically recommended placement at a residential treatment program for him. DRM's involvement galvanized the problem solving process, allowing Caleb's team to address the obstacles to placement so that he could finally move to the more appropriate and less restrictive setting to which he was entitled.

DRM wants to draw attention to this issue and promote better outcomes for kids who are especially vulnerable. We are working to identify and promote broader solutions to these challenges, including increasing availability and access to in-home and community services, ensuring that residential services provide treatment that is truly individualized to children's needs, and creating systems that will track and assist children who change educational placements.



Promoting Rights for People with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities Facing a System in Crisis

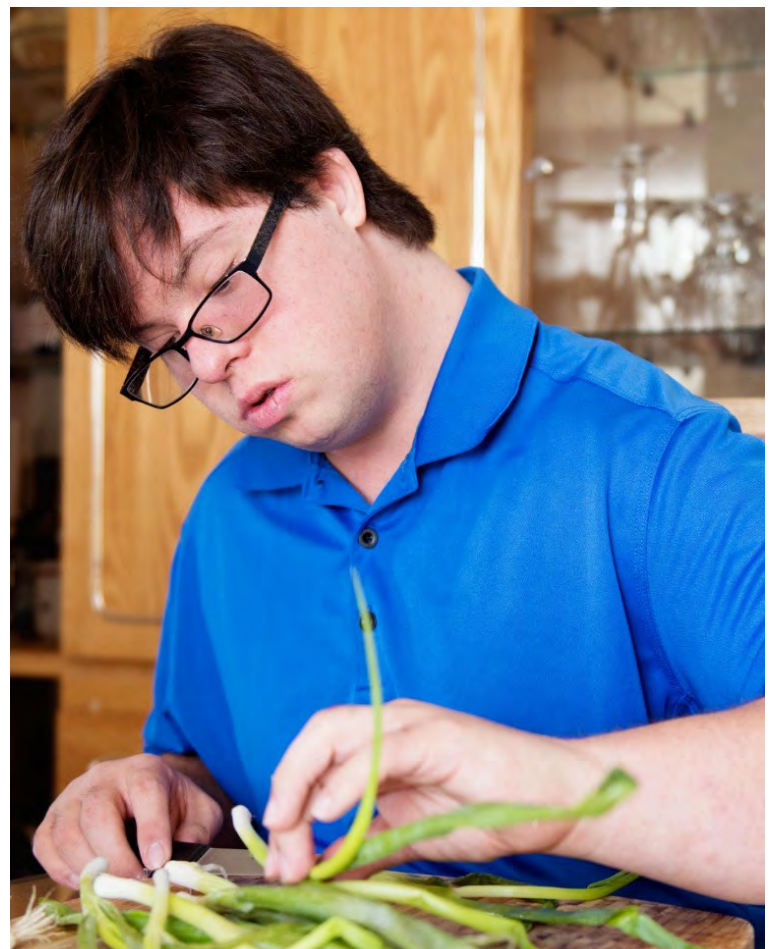
Restraint, coercion, and restrictions on basic rights are commonplace in the lives of people with Intellectual and developmental disabilities in Maine.

DRM Intervenes to Obtain Recognition of Client's Trauma, Need for Female Staff

DRM received a report concerning Lisa, a young woman with an intellectual disability and brain injury. The report alleged that Lisa, who had been the victim of sexual abuse, was not physically capable of cleaning her pelvic area and needed physical assistance in self-care. Despite this history, Lisa was receiving physical assistance from male staff during showers. The agency allegedly responded that the agency was an 'equal opportunity employer' and could not accommodate the request to have only female staff members assist individuals with intellectual disabilities with showering. At an emergency crisis meeting, DRM intervened to obtain an accommodation for Lisa and agency personnel agreed that female staff

DRM believes that people with developmental disabilities should not be subjected to the indignity inherent in physical restraint and other rights restrictions, and should be given the chance to learn prosocial behavior and coping skills.

DRM believes that people with disabilities have the right to participate fully in processes that limit their rights and actions, including review teams that develop detailed restrictive plans affecting them.



Promoting Rights for People with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities Facing a System in Crisis

DRM Enforces Privacy Rights

DRM received a report that the rights of David, a man with an intellectual disability, were violated when his staff tried to prevent him from having privacy in his room and then embarrassed him in front of his girlfriend. The advocate at DRM talked to David and intervened with his staff, protecting his rights, including his right to privacy and dignity and respect. The staff person involved in the reportable event apologized to David and the supervisor at the agency provided assurances that David will have privacy in his room or where ever he wants it. The agency director also assured DRM that staff will be more respectful when talking to David about sensitive issues and concerns.

DRM Assists to Obtain Greater Community Access for Client

DRM received a report alleging that Denise, a 58 year old woman with an intellectual disability, was pressured to attend a day program over her objections. A DRM advocate met with the client, house manager, and day program director to discuss this reportable event and determined that the client had been pressured to attend the day program even though she expressed interest in greater community-based activities. DRM's intervention ensured that the client's choices were honored, agency staff received DRM rights training, and that direct support professional staff would be reassigned in line with the client's wishes.



Promoting Communication Access as a Civil Right

Deaf and hard of hearing Mainers have to navigate countless barriers to communication access. This extends from being able to hear or understand at home, to effective communication at work and beyond.

DRM is working in partnership with Deaf and hard of hearing Mainers and their allies to overcome barriers to communication access and assistive technology, and to confront the discrimination and denial of civil rights that isolates them and denies them opportunities for full engagement in our society.

DRM will help enforce the civil rights of Deaf and hard of hearing Maine citizens. We provide direct legal advocacy to people confronting discrimination or denial of their rights.

We provide technology, training, and outreach to Deaf and hard of hearing people statewide, and conduct self-advocacy workshops to empower people to advocate for themselves.



Promoting Communication Access as a Civil Right

Movies Theater Becomes Accessible After DRM Files with Maine Human Rights Commission

A movie theater will become accessible to people who are Deaf and hard of hearing after DRM represented Carl, a Deaf man who complained that the theater refused to provide closed caption technology. The theater manager indicated that they did not have to provide closed captioning, and that it was too expensive. DRM represented Carl at the MHRC, which found that the theater was required to provide closed captioning and it was not an undue burden. After the Commission unanimously found reasonable grounds, the parties engaged in conciliation discussions and the theater agreed to comply with the ADA regulations, providing closed captioning.



DRM Intervenes to Increase Communication Options for Nursing Home Client

DRM was contacted regarding Gloria, a 68 year old Deaf woman with dementia, living isolated in a nursing care facility, who could not communicate with her staff. DRM advocates provided a Deaf awareness training to Gloria's staff and created a personalized visual communication book for her. Gloria's communication situation was significantly improved.

DRM Obtains Communication Access for Hospitalized Man

Troy, 45 year old Deaf man has a Deaf relative who suffered a severe stroke. All his family members and supporters are also Deaf. The hospital was refusing to provide American Sign Language interpreters for family meetings with the doctors or for the patient's care. DRM intervened with the facility and qualified interpreters will be provided for family meetings and the patient's interactions with the doctor.

Enforcing the Right to Real Educational Opportunities for Maine Children



Children with disabilities are entitled to individualized educational services targeted to their unique needs and crafted to prepare them for future learning, employment, and independent living. DRM's legal and public policy advocacy, and collaboration with families is aimed at leveling the playing field for kids and their families.

DRM Enforces Right to Early Intervention Services

DRM filed a due process hearing request on behalf of David and Isaac, two 3-year-old brothers with developmental delays who were not receiving the services in their Individual Education Plans and had been without services for 4 months. The State's early intervention services provider failed to timely implement the boys' IEPs and there was no placement proposed. At mediation, the parties reached a settlement that included immediate placement, compensatory education, parental reimbursement, and attorneys' fees.

Enforcing the Right to Real Educational Opportunities for Maine Children

DRM Obtains Return to School for Boy

It took two due process hearings and a trip to federal court for DRM to restore the educational rights of Ethan, a 7-year-old boy with multiple disabilities, returning him to a full school day after he had been removed from school with no educational program. DRM obtained a robust compensatory education fund to address the time Ethan was denied an appropriate education, obtained agreement to pay an expert in inclusive education for ongoing consultation to develop a plan to support the student in returning to his neighborhood school, and received a significant contribution toward fees and costs to address the violation of Ethan's educational rights.



Promoting Full Access to Voting for Maine Citizens with Disabilities

Despite state and federal laws requiring their access, Maine voters with disabilities, particularly those living in small towns, have no guarantee that they can enter public buildings in their communities to cast a ballot or attend a town hall meeting.

People with disabilities have the same right to cast a private and independent ballot as their fellow Mainers.

Even when assured physical access, Maine citizens with disabilities report that they encounter obstacles to using accessible voting technology in their towns. In some cases, people report being wrongfully denied the opportunity to register to vote, based on discriminatory attitudes around guardianship status or the way people with intellectual disabilities are perceived.

DRM plays a crucial role in fulfilling the promise of the Help America Vote Act. We work in partnership with people with disabilities to ensure their full participation in the electoral process in Maine, including registering to vote, and being accommodated in the voting process.



Promoting Full Access to Voting for Maine Citizens with Disabilities

DRM works collaboratively with election authorities to survey and adapt polling places for accessibility, selecting balloting equipment that is accessible to all voters, ensuring the accessibility of voter outreach materials, and training poll workers on disability rights and voting.

DRM Vindicates Right to Vote for 3 Individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

After 3 men with intellectual disabilities were denied the right to vote, their support staff contacted DRM. We determined that the town clerk had refused to provide assistance to the voters and as she could not understand their communication style, she would not allow them to cast ballots. DRM intervened with the town. Their support staff reported that in the next election, they were welcomed at the polling place and voted successfully.

“More than 35 million eligible voters in the U.S.—about one in six—have a disability. And in the last presidential election, almost a third of voters with disabilities reported having trouble casting their ballots...whether it was getting into the polling place, reading the ballot, or struggling with a machine.” *National Public Radio, October 24, 2017*

In 2018, when Maine chooses a new governor and legislature, DRM will be conducting extensive statewide voter outreach and education to people with disabilities to promote their active engagement in public affairs.

We will be partnering with the Maine League of Women Voters to develop American Sign Language and spoken word versions of their comprehensive voting guide.

DRM will conduct voting fairs and voter registration activities to encourage people with disabilities to come off the sidelines and get involved.

Systemic Work & Trainings Highlights

Developmental Services Trainings

DRM advocates and attorneys conducted over 20 rights trainings in the fiscal year, reaching over 500 people with ID/DD and their supporters statewide. The trainings incorporate a presentation on self-advocacy, grievance processes, and the right to due process in important decisions impacting their lives.

Supported Decision-Making Training for People with Disabilities DRM trained 150 people on the principles of supported decision-making and the opportunities for autonomy it provides.

Supported Decision-Making Training for Professionals DRM trained over 100 service providers and professional on SDM.

Case Manager Training

In the summer of 2017, DRM conducted a series of three trainings on education rights for community case managers and other related professionals who work with children with disabilities. These took place in Augusta, Bangor, and Portland. 205 individuals were trained.

Mental Health Advocacy Trainings

DRM advocates and attorneys conducted over 150 training/awareness events and reached over 3,000 people regarding the rights of mental health consumers.

Deaf Services Trainings

DRM conducted trainings on rights and awareness to Law Enforcement agencies and MHRC staff, and Visual/Gestural Communication strategies to hospital and nursing home staff and administrators, and educators.

Systems Change Training: Bullying and Students with Disabilities

A DRM attorney presented to 100 people at Creating Positive Climates for Youth Conference on the topic of bullying and students with disabilities, emphasizing student rights, school obligations, and strategies for changing the climate of bullying and harassment.

our clients

DRM provided direct representation to 1261 clients for 1719 cases. Information and referral services were provided to an additional 2106 individuals.

Client Age

4 and under	22
5 to 12	146
13 to 18	173
19 to 25	163
26 to 64	673
65 and over	84

Clients by County

Androscoggin	131
Aroostook	73
Cumberland	265
Franklin	34
Hancock	19
Kennebec	126
Knox	34
Lincoln	28
Oxford	55
Penobscot	181
Piscataquis	18
Sagadahoc	35
Somerset	59
Waldo	32
Washington	16
York	146
Out-of-State	9

Client Disability

Blindness/Visual Impairment	6
Brain Injury	18
Deafness/Hard of Hearing	90
Developmental Disability	822
Learning Disabilities	10
Mental Illness	264
Physical Disability, Health Impairment, Chronic Illness	51

Case Problem Area

Abuse/Neglect & Other Rights Violations	1052
Community Integration	240
Education	172
Employment	82
Government Services & Public Accommodations	117
Guardianship	29
Housing	26
Voting	1

financial summary

Year Ending September 30, 2017

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Federal Grants	\$1,086,880
State Grants	\$1,3518,776
Contributions	\$23,979
Other Revenue	\$534,147
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,963,782

EXPENSES

PADD	\$250,927
PAIMI	\$376,254
PAIR	\$194,715
PAAT	\$62,539
PABSS	\$98,812
PATBI	\$42,807
PAVA	\$67,351
EA	\$112,448
Psychiatric Ctr Adv	\$142,594
Maine Civil Legal Svs	\$39,260
Rep. Payee Reviews	\$0
Developmental Svc Adv	\$498,091
Deaf Advocacy +	
Comm Access Prog	\$598,243
Supported	
Decision-Making	\$848
Supporting Services	\$312,049
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,856,404

2018 board of directors

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Claire Ginder, Esq., Treasurer
Eric McVay
Chad Hansen, Esq.
Kathleen Shevenell
Willie Tarr
Rachel Violette, Esq.
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Mary Herman
Pat O'Brien, MBA, CAS
Howard Reben, Esq.
David Webbert, Esq.
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Suzanne Burke McKay,
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John Shattuck, Advocate
Jeffrey Skakalski, Attorney
Sara Squires, Public Policy Director
Denise Tuggle, Advocate
Kevin Voyvodich, Attorney
Lauren Wille, Attorney



programs

PADD: Protection and Advocacy for Developmental Disabilities serves individuals who have a severe, chronic disability as a result of a “physical or mental impairment” that arose prior to age 22, is likely to continue indefinitely, and causes substantial functional limitations in three or more areas of life activity, such as self-care, mobility, language, learning, self-direction, capacity for independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.

PAIMI: Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness serves individuals who have a diagnosis of a serious mental illness with priority given to persons residing in facilities.

PAIR: Protection and Advocacy for Individual Rights serves individuals who have a disability and who are not eligible for either the PADD or PAIMI programs. PAIR focuses on civil rights violations.

PAAT: Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology serves individuals who have a disability and who need assistance in obtaining assistive technology devices or equipment in order to live more independently, work, attend school, or meet medical needs.

PABSS: Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security serves individuals who have a disability and who receive Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and who want to work, return to work, or are working and need assistance with respect to benefits.

PATBI: Protection and Advocacy for Traumatic Brain Injury serves individuals who have a brain injury and who have experienced a rights violation or discrimination.

PAVA: Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access was created by the Help America Vote Act and works to increase access to voting and represents individuals who have been denied the right to vote.

EA: Educational Advocacy is funded by the State of Maine and provides representation to parents of children with disabilities in accessing appropriate special education services.

Contract Mental Health Advocacy is funded by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Acadia Hospital and provides advocacy to residents of Riverview and Dorothea Dix Psychiatric Centers and Acadia Hospital.

DSA: Developmental Services Advocacy is funded by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Aging & Developmental Services. With this funding, DRM provides legally-based advocacy to individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism from offices in Augusta, Bangor, Caribou, Lewiston, Portland, and Rockland.

Children’s Advocacy is funded by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services. In addition to individual representation, DRM conducts outreach and monitoring of children’s services in the community, hospitals, residential treatment facilities, and out-of-state placements.

Deaf Services is funded by the Federal Communications Commission, the Maine Department of Labor, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, and Hamilton Relay Services. Individual programs include Employment Advocacy, Civil Rights Advocacy, Communication Technology and Outreach, Peer Support Group (PSG) and Visual Gestural Communication (VGC), the Deaf-Blind Equipment Program, and the Telecommunication Equipment Program (TEP).

DISABILITY RIGHTS MAINE

our mission

Disability Rights Maine is a private non-profit organization, incorporated in Maine, governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and designated by the Governor of Maine to serve as Maine's independent advocacy agency for people with disabilities.

Our mission is to enhance and promote the equality, self-determination, independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion of people with disabilities through education, strategic advocacy and legal intervention.

DRM Board and staff believe that people with disabilities must:

- Be free from abuse;
- Control the decisions that affect their lives;
- Receive the services and supports necessary to live independently;
- Have the opportunity to work and contribute to society; and
- Have equal access to the same opportunities afforded all other members of society.

Please consider donating to support us in this mission. Donations accepted at our website.

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