



2026 State Legislative Priorities

Disability Rights Florida (DRF) is the state's Protection and Advocacy (P&A) agency for disabled Floridians. Every year, DRF participates with others in the Florida legislative session and works on issues that matter to people with disabilities. For the 2026 legislative session, DRF is working on the following:

Community Integration

People with disabilities have the right to receive services in their communities, rather than in institutions, facilities, or hospitals. It costs less to do so and helps people to become a part of where they live, learn, work, and play. To protect this right:

- DRF supports making sure people who use mobility devices like wheelchairs, power wheelchairs, and mobility scooters can repair equipment affordably and quickly when it breaks or doesn't work. Repair shops should have everything they need to help if needed.
- DRF supports making sure that disabled parking permits are used by people with mobility impairments after receiving approval by a medical professional.
- DRF supports making sure that people with disabilities are safe during disasters and emergencies, and that people with disabilities help to plan and can provide their input.
- DRF supports making sure that transportation and paratransit systems are available and accessible to disabled travelers to make sure they can get to doctor's appointments, work, and other places.
- DRF supports making sure that housing is affordable and accessible to people with disabilities.

- DRF supports making sure that guardians can only keep people from visiting a person under guardianship when a court agrees, and that there is notice given to them and others when they're being transferred to a new place.

Criminal Justice and Corrections

There are lots of people with disabilities who are arrested and sometimes go to jails and prisons afterwards. To make sure that disabled people aren't put in prisons or jails unfairly, and that if they must go to prison or jail, they are safe and treated fairly:

- DRF supports making sure that people with disabilities who need to receive training and information before going to court are transferred from jail to a place where they can get assistance within 15 days.
- DRF supports making sure that only a judge can send a child to a court for adults.
- DRF supports making sure that people aren't placed in solitary confinement and left alone when they're in jails, prisons, or institutions.
- DRF supports making sure that people in jails and prisons can send and receive mail from their attorneys without being punished or having their mail read.
- DRF supports making sure that police officers receive training so they can interact and communicate safely with people that have disabilities.
- DRF supports making sure that more is known and understood about a child's disabilities during protective investigations in case a child's disability might look like abuse or neglect by mistake.
- DRF supports making sure that people with severe mental illness are not allowed to be executed.
- DRF supports making sure that others don't commit crimes against people with disabilities just because they have a disability.

Education

In Florida, students with disabilities must receive a "free and appropriate public education." To make sure this happens:

- DRF supports making sure that when students with disabilities are considering using a school voucher to go to private school that parents and guardians receive the information they need to make the best decision for a student.

- DRF supports making sure that schools don't use corporal punishment against students.
- DRF supports making sure that students who might wander or leave campus are kept safe, teachers and others are trained to help, and that classrooms and schools remain free to learn.

Elections

Voters with disabilities must be free to vote how they want, privately and independently. They must be able to ask for assistance when they want help, and the state should help people with disabilities become registered to vote. To help voters with disabilities access and participate in elections as they want:

- DRF supports making sure that people with disabilities can vote even when disasters and emergencies happen, and that they get the information they need to do so.
- DRF supports making sure that disabled voters can vote through the mail if they want.
- DRF supports making sure that voters with disabilities that cannot leave a facility they live in are given help and the chance to cast a ballot.
- DRF supports making sure that voters with disabilities that affect their ability to see or to print are given the chance to vote with an "accessible" mail-in ballot if they ask for one.

Employment

Workers with disabilities should be able to request reasonable accommodation and receive other services and support to work at jobs alongside workers without disabilities, and to be paid fairly. This means:

- DRF supports making sure the "Working People with Disabilities Program" is in the Florida Statutes so workers with developmental disabilities can receive Medicaid services without penalty.
- DRF supports making sure Florida passes a "Medicaid Buy-in" program to allow disabled Floridians to take advantage of job opportunities without the risk of losing other medical services.
- DRF supports making sure all disabled workers are paid competitive wages for work that keeps them in the community and working alongside other workers.

Health Care

Even though everyone deserves access to health care, people with disabilities often face barriers when trying to receive care. To address this:

- DRF supports making sure the CDC+ Medicaid program runs better by using the fees already collected from consumers in ways that help with the tasks that often must be performed by representatives or consumers themselves.
- DRF supports making sure that the state uses the most current definitions and standards for developmental disabilities like autism when deciding whether someone is eligible for services.
- DRF supports making sure that people applying for Medicaid iBudget services using an online application can let others know that they are experiencing a crisis when they apply.
- DRF supports making sure that very young children applying for Medicaid iBudget services aren't denied based on the incorrect belief that their disability will become less severe without services.
- DRF supports making sure that all disabled Floridians have good dental care, and that dentists are trained to help people with disabilities keep their teeth healthy.

Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder

Sometimes it is hard to find help for your mental health, especially if you have a disability. Every year, lots of Floridians are taken to be examined to see if they need help and other services. Florida should try to make more help available to people in their communities and near where they live. That means:

- DRF supports making sure that people are safe when they are in facilities and hospitals getting help for their mental health, and that staff in those places are trained well and have good plans to keep people safe.
- DRF supports making sure that when people are ready to leave a facility or hospital, they have all the services and help they need for their mental health when they go home.
- DRF supports making sure that people who are homeless are kept safe and healthy, and that the state keeps working to find places for people getting help with their mental health to live.

- DRF supports making sure that children with disabilities who also need help for their mental health can find that help in their communities and near where they live, including when they need help finding a safe place to live.