2027 Goals, Priorities and Strategic Objectives

(As Approved by the Board of Directors September 18, 2026)

Vision: Disability Rights Florida envisions an inclusive world that provides equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities to freely participate in a society with equity, dignity and respect.

Mission: Disability Rights Florida advocates, educates, investigates, and litigates to protect and advance the rights, dignity, equal opportunities, self-determination and choices for all people with disabilities.

Equal Opportunity and Community Inclusion

Goal 1: Challenge Barriers to Equal Opportunity and Community Inclusion

Vision Statements	Focus Issues
• Students with disabilities, including very young children, will receive Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in	▪ Education ▪ Vocational training

the least restrictive environment and appropriate early intervention services. • People with disabilities who want to work will have the opportunity to engage in competitive integrated employment through vocational training, access to assistive technology, and reasonable accommodations from employers. • People with disabilities will have access to affordable accessible and integrated homes or apartments where they choose to live.	▪ Work-related barriers ▪ Housing

Priorities

1.1 **Free and appropriate public education.** Advocate on behalf of students with disabilities to secure Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment, and appropriate early intervention services.

1.2 **Inappropriate discipline and restraint in public education.** Advocate on behalf of students with disabilities who are inappropriately disciplined, restrained, secluded, suspended, expelled, arrested, or involuntarily committed under the Baker Act.

1.3 **Vocational training and work-related barriers.** Advocate on behalf of people with disabilities, including transition-aged students with disabilities, who face barriers to securing appropriate vocational services, barriers to reasonable accommodations from employers, and other work-related barriers.

1.4 **Fair housing and housing-related accommodations.** Advocate on behalf of people with disabilities who face barriers accessing fair housing and housing-related accommodations.

1.5 **Funding for housing.** Advocate for increased funding for housing for people with disabilities that is safe, accessible, integrated, and affordable.

1.6 **Rights education for families and professionals.** Provide education on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Rehabilitation Act for families, personnel in school districts, and personnel at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Division of Blind Services.

Strategic Objectives

- Increase outreach on FAPE issues to students with disabilities in underserved populations. [1.1.1]
- Intervene for young offenders with disabilities confined in Florida corrections facilities who had or need an individualized education plan before or during their incarceration to secure FAPE in the least restrictive environment. [1.1.2]
- Increase access to vocational services for people with disabilities in underserved populations. [1.3.1]

Self-Determination and Transition to Independence/ Community Living

Goal 2: Support the Right of Self-Determination and Transition to Independence/Community Living

Vision Statements	Focus Issues
• Students with disabilities leave school prepared for life as adults in the community. • People with disabilities are not subject to unnecessary guardianships. • People with disabilities who live in institutional settings are provided with services needed to transition from institutions to community settings.	▪ Transition to adulthood ▪ Supported decision making. ▪ Self-determination ▪ Transition from institutions to community

Priorities

2.1 **Transition to adulthood.** Advocate on behalf of students with disabilities to obtain appropriate transition services from their school district and to secure reasonable accommodations in post-secondary settings.

2.2 **Alternatives to Guardianship and Rights Restoration.** Advocate for the increased use of Supported Decision Making (SDM) and other alternatives to guardianship as well as for the restoration of rights of individuals under guardianship and guardian advocacy.

2.3 **Education on self-determination and transition-to-independence.** Provide education on self-determination and the transition-to-independence process for families, personnel in school districts and post-secondary settings, and personnel at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Division of Blind Services.

2.4 **Transition from institutions to community.** Advocate for people with disabilities to transition from institutions to the community.

Strategic Objective

- Increase outreach and education on the transition-to-independence process to transition-aged students with disabilities and families from underserved populations. [2.1.1]

Access to Community-Based Supports and Services

Goal 3: Improve Access to Community-Based Supports and Services

Vision Statements	Focus Issues
• People with disabilities will have access to appropriate community-based services to allow them to live in the community with their choice of necessary supports and services. • People with disabilities, including those who have complex medical or behavioral needs, will be able to avoid institutionalization through access to the services and supports they may need to allow them to continue to live in the community and as independently as possible.	▪ Community-based services ▪ Medically necessary healthcare ▪ Long-term care services ▪ Mental health services

Priorities

3.1 **Healthcare and community-based services.** Advocate on behalf of people with disabilities for access to medically necessary healthcare and other appropriate community-based services.

3.2 **Funding for community-based services.** Advocate for increased funding for community-based services to support people with disabilities living in the community.

3.3 **Alternatives to institutionalization.** Advocate for state and county policies that provide alternatives to institutionalization.

3.4 **Education on availability of community supports.** Educate policy makers on the impact of proposed legislation, rules, or policies that would decrease the availability of community supports and increase the risk of institutionalization for people with disabilities.

3.5 **Advocate for Accessible Sexual and Domestic Violence Survivor Services.** Advocate for programs and policies that address the needs of survivors with disabilities on an individual and systemic level.

Strategic Objective

- Expand community-based services for individuals with a dual diagnosis of IDD and mental health conditions, by prioritizing our individual advocacy on those clients with intense behaviors, unnecessarily housed in institutional settings. [3.2.1]

Access to Public Programs/Services

Goal 4: Improve Access to Public Programs/Services

Vision Statements	Focus Issues
• People with disabilities will have equal access to public accommodations and services, including medical providers and services.	▪ Public accommodations

• People with disabilities will be able to fully participate in the electoral process. • People with disabilities will have full and equal access to public and private transportation systems. • People with disabilities will have access to government buildings, programs, and services.	▪ Government services including emergency services/shelters ▪ Voting ▪ Transportation

Priorities

4.1 **Accessible public accommodations and services.** Advocate on behalf of people with disabilities for access to public accommodations and services, including medical providers and services.

4.2 **Accessible government services/programs.** Advocate on behalf of people with disabilities for access to government services and programs.

4.3 **Accessible disaster planning and recovery services**. Advocate on behalf of people with disabilities for access to disaster planning and recovery services that are appropriate, accessible, and equivalent to services received by others.

4.4 **Accessible voting.** Advocate for the expansion of accessible voting and polling places for people with disabilities.

4.5 **Accessible public and private transportation.** Advocate for people with disabilities to have full access to safe, reliable, and accessible public and private transportation systems consistent with federal and state anti-discrimination laws and policies.

4.6 **Accessible Sexual and Domestic Violence Survivor Services.** Advocate on behalf of survivors with disabilities in order to ensure accessible, inclusive, and equitable access to services and supports within the sexual and domestic violence services array.

Abuse, Neglect and Rights Violations

Goal 5: Protect People with Disabilities in the Community, Institutions, and other Facilities from Abuse, Neglect, and Rights Violations

Vision Statements	Focus Issues
• People with disabilities residing in or receiving services/support or other treatment from institutions or facilities are protected from abuse, neglect, or rights violations. • People with disabilities who reside in institutions or facilities receive education about their rights and self-advocacy.	▪ People with disabilities residing in institutions or facilities, including: Group homes; ICF/DDs; assisted living facilities; state mental health treatment facilities; Baker Act receiving facilities; prisons, jails and Juvenile Justice facilities; facilities that specialize in caring for people with Traumatic and Acquired Brain Injuries; PRTFs and RTFs; foster care, group homes, and other congregate living settings.

Priorities

5.1 **Abuse/neglect or rights violations (claims).** Investigate claims of abuse/neglect or rights violations of people with disabilities residing in or receiving services/support or other treatment from institutions or facilities.

5.2 **Abuse/neglect or rights violations (monitoring).** Prevent abuse neglect or rights violations of people with disabilities through periodic monitoring of institutions or facilities.

5.3 **Abuse/neglect or rights violations (institutional intake).** Maintain dedicated intake systems for people in institutional settings.

5.4 **Education on abuse/neglect or rights violations.** Conduct education, training and outreach to people with disabilities residing in institutions or facilities to educate them about their rights and self-advocacy.

Public Awareness and Policy Change

Goal 6: Build Awareness of Rights of People with Disabilities & Educate Policy Makers

Vision Statements	Focus Issues
• People with disabilities, especially those in underserved populations, will understand the laws protecting their rights. • People with disabilities will have an accurate understanding of the services provided by DRF to secure their rights. • People with disabilities will enhance their self-advocacy skills through access to DRF training and advocacy materials. • People with disabilities will participate in advocacy and policy making to address major systemic issues that directly impact the lives of people with disabilities. • Policy makers and stakeholders understand the laws protecting the rights of people with disabilities.	▪ Rights Awareness ▪ Role of DRF in securing rights for people with disabilities ▪ Self-advocacy ▪ Education of policy makers

Priorities

6.1 **Outreach/education on rights.** Expand outreach and education, especially to underserved populations, to increase understanding of the rights of people with disabilities.

6.2 **Public awareness of DRF services.** Expand public awareness, especially to underserved populations, of DRF services and advocacy efforts.

6.3 **Information and referral.** Educate people with disabilities on the availability of community resources by providing information and referral through DRF's intake process.

6.4 **Self-advocacy.** Educate people with disabilities on effective self-advocacy skills.

6.5 **Evolving issues.** Implement a public policy agenda in response to critical and evolving issues using input and participation from people with disabilities and other stakeholders.

6.6 **Education for policymakers on rights.** Educate policymakers, organizations, and advocates on legislation and regulations that impact the rights of people with disabilities.

6.7 **Education on Sexual and Domestic Violence Survivor Rights and Services.** Provide education on the rights and autonomy of survivors, as well as the services available to them.

Strategic Objectives

- Increase use of DRF services by people with disabilities in underserved populations, especially those in rural areas. [6.1.1]
- Increase promotion of DRF self-advocacy materials to underserved populations. [6.4.1]
- Increase the number of advocacy posts related to mental health and disability, on DRF digital and other marketing assets across all goal areas. [6.1.2 & 6.6.1]
- Increase outreach and education on the rights of and services available to sexual and domestic violence survivors with disabilities. [6.7.1]