



# FY2024 ANNUAL REPORT



# Letter From Leadership

Tom Masseau  
Executive Director



Dear Friends and Advocates,

It is with deep appreciation and pride that I share with you our 2024 Annual Report.

This past year has been one of both challenge and progress in the fight for disability rights and inclusion. At Disability Rights Arkansas, we've continued to advance our mission to build a state where all people with disabilities are respected, empowered, and fully included in every aspect of community life. We have persevered through the year despite unheard of challenges imposed on the agency.

With your partnership, we achieved key milestones in advocacy, access, and equality. From expanding our work in investigating abuse and neglect, to ensuring individuals in the Medicaid/PASSE system understand their rights, to working to ensure individuals have access to transition services and quality education supports, our impact is growing—and so is our movement. We also deepened our commitment

to intersectionality, recognizing that disability rights are human rights, and that our work must reflect the diverse identities and experiences within our communities.

This report shares information about the number of individuals we served and the stories of individuals who we have been fortunate enough to advocate for on their behalf. The report also provides an outline of our financial activities.

We know there is more work to do. Barriers persist, but so does our determination. Together, we will continue to push for systemic change, create space for leadership by people with disabilities, and demand a future rooted in dignity and justice.

Thank you for standing with us. Your belief in this work fuels our progress.

Sincerely,  
Tom Masseau, Executive Director

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## DRA LEADERSHIP TEAM

Tom Masseau, Executive Director  
Mary Forst, Chief Financial Officer  
Thomas Nichols, Legal Director  
Reagan Stanford, Managing Attorney  
Rose Lewis, Representative Payee  
Susan Pierce, Grants Manager  
Amy Trickett, Human Resources

# DRA By The Numbers

**2,195**

Inquiries Received

**1,944**

Abuse/Neglect Reports Reviewed by DRA Investigators

**42**

Individual Investigations of Abuse/Neglect Undertaken by DRA

**165**

Follow up by DRA Abuse/Neglect Team on Serious Occurrence Reports

**289**

Polling Sites Monitored Across 31 Counties



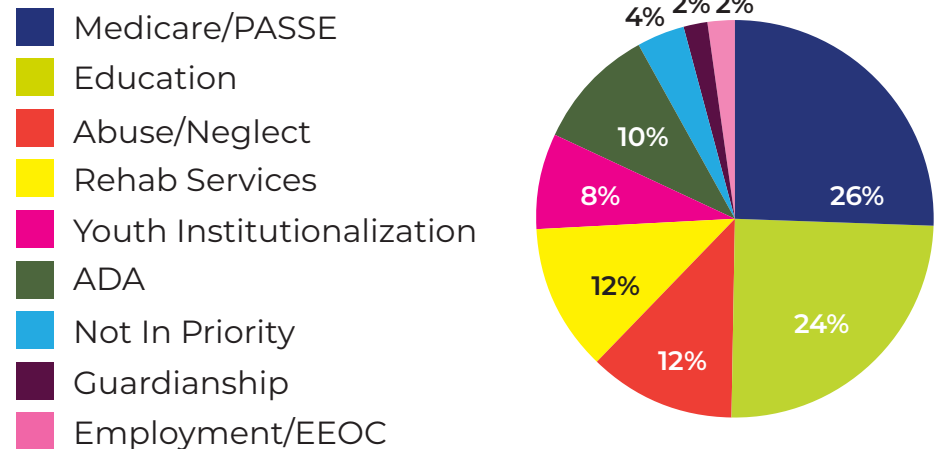
## Urban vs. Rural Requests



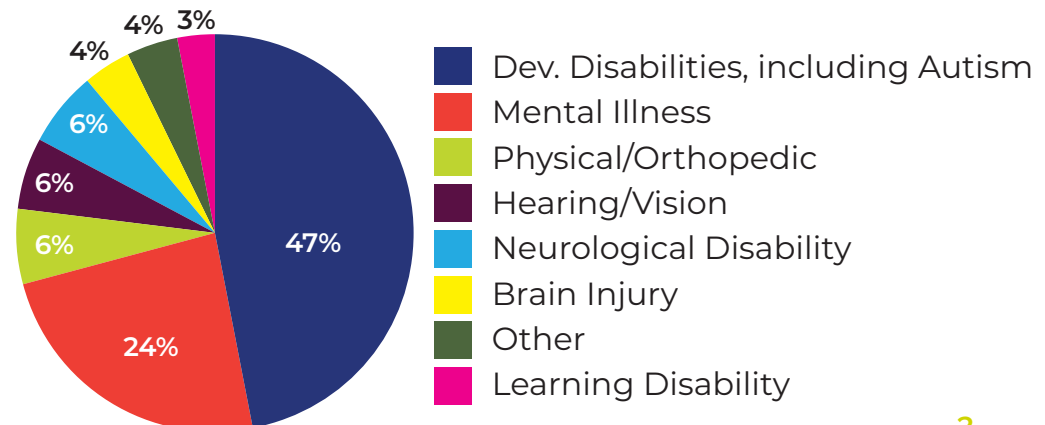
## DRA Case Age Ranges



## Cases By Problem Area



## Cases By Type of Disability



# Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation

DRA's Abuse/Neglect team played a pivotal role in safeguarding the safety and well-being of individuals across Arkansas in FY2024. Under the leadership of Managing Attorney Reagan Stanford, the team reviewed 1,944 reports of abuse and neglect in a variety of facilities, including human development centers (HDCs), psychiatric residential treatment facilities (PRTFs), and the Arkansas State Hospital (ASH). The team's comprehensive approach to DRA's mandate to protect individuals with disabilities against abuse, neglect, and exploitation includes requesting and reviewing incident reports secured through both our federal access authority and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), following up on allegations of abuse and neglect reported to DRA by parents, guardians, and anonymous sources, and in-person monitoring of facilities.

Abuse includes any willful action by a caregiver or other individual that results in injury or harm to the individual with a disability, including inappropriate or excessive restraint (physical, mechanical, or chemical) or seclusion, aversive therapy, physical or sexual assault, suspicious death, and verbal abuse by facility staff.

Neglect is defined as the failure of a caregiver or other responsible party to

provide appropriate medical or mental health treatment or failure to provide necessary or appropriate personal care or safety.

Through their unwavering commitment to individuals most at risk of abuse and neglect, the Abuse/Neglect team at DRA continues to champion the rights of individuals with disabilities, ensuring they are safe from abuse and neglect and are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

## Some Incidents DRA Investigated in FY2024

An adolescent who was punched in the face by staff at a PRTF.

A teenager who was malnourished and severely underweight at an HDC. Several other HDC residents were subsequently identified as being underweight and/or malnourished.

A teenager at a PRTF whose head was slammed into a table several times by another resident, resulting in a concussion.

Sexual and physical abuse of a youth by facility staff at a PRTF. A patient at ASH who was repeatedly denied medical treatment until he became septic and required a six-day hospitalization.

A teenager who was repeatedly slapped by a police officer after staff at a PRTF called the police to intervene.





## Medicaid and Medicaid Managed Care

DRA continues to secure favorable decisions in Medicaid fair hearings, where we assist people with disabilities who are receiving their services under the Medicaid Managed Care System. The Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) responsible for delivering these services are referred to as Provider-Led Arkansas Shared Savings Entities (PASSEs). The PASSE's are obligated to ensure Medicaid services are delivered to individuals with developmental disabilities and individuals with behavioral health needs. Many of our cases involve decisions to cut personal care and supportive living services; these services are vital and can be the single most important factor as to whether someone can continue living in their own home or with family members, or whether they have to move to a long-term care facility, such as an HDC or a nursing home. Of the 31 cases active in FY2024 which have concluded, DRA was successful in getting services restored in 87% of them.

# Education and Employment

DRA remains steadfast in our determination to ensure students with disabilities who are being suspended, expelled, and otherwise excluded from school are provided appropriate services so they may remain in school, receive a quality education, and are not routed to the juvenile justice system as part of a school-to-prison pipeline. We also work to ensure students receive appropriate health plans and nursing services, access to assistive technology, and finally, transition services, so they may ultimately progress to meaningful employment.

Rehabilitation services play a pivotal role in the pursuit of post-secondary education and other pre-employment services necessary for the transition from K-12 education to successful employment. DRA's Client Assistance Program (CAP) specifically assists individuals eligible for and receiving vocational rehabilitation services to ensure they are able to access the full array of services they need to achieve their end goal of employment.

## Some Clients DRA Represented in FY2024

A student who was placed on homebound services after numerous suspensions who successfully resumed attending school in person.

A student whose school day was reduced by half, and who was required by a principal to be in a room by himself.

A student who was expelled despite recently spending a year in inpatient psychiatric facilities after only his learning disability was considered during the manifestation determination process.

A student whose parents were warned they were risking court intervention for unexcused absences if they continued speech and occupational therapies outside of school, despite the school denying the request that they provide those services.

A student whose high school refused to re-enroll him after he completed an extended mental health inpatient program.

An individual who lost the use of three limbs due to a spinal cord injury who needed a lift and other vehicle modifications so he could continue driving.

A young man whose mother who had for years requested a communication device for her son, who ultimately received an iPad with specialized software.

# Voting

Ensuring that individuals with disabilities enjoy equal access to voting is a fundamental aspect of a democratic society. Through our Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access (PAVA) grant, DRA works to promote voting rights through a multi-faceted approach that includes ensuring polling sites are accessible, educating people with disabilities regarding voting rights, assistance with registering to vote, educating poll workers and other elected officials, and engaging in legislative information and education efforts.

To this end, we have developed a Polling Place Accessibility Map, which allows users to check the accessibility status of polling sites statewide. This tool serves to:

- Empower voters by enabling them to verify the accessibility of their designated polling site in advance, which allows them to contact county officials or the Secretary of State or DRA about accessibility issues. In counties utilizing voting centers, voters can use this tool to select locations that best serve their accessibility needs.
- Be a resource to election officials, who can utilize the map to identify and rectify accessibility issues at polling sites in their district.



# 2024 Statement of Financial Activities

Year Ended September 30, 2024

Revenues	Without Donor Restriction	With Donor Restriction	Total
Federal Grants	\$2,424,201	-	\$2,424,201
Program Revenue	\$5,025	\$48,358	\$53,383
Other	\$22,797	-	\$22,797
<b>Total revenues and support</b>	<b>\$2,452,023</b>	<b>\$48,358</b>	<b>\$2,500,381</b>












Expenses	Without Donor Restriction	With Donor Restriction	Total
Program Services	\$1,918,158	-	\$1,918,158
Management and General	542,499	-	542,499
Fundraising	\$1,719	-	\$1,719
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$2,462,376</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$2,462,376</b>

<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>(\$10,353)</b>	<b>\$48,358</b>	<b>\$38,005</b>
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<b>Net assets, beginning of year</b>	<b>\$90,208</b>	<b>\$135,658</b>	<b>\$225,866</b>
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<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b>\$79,855</b>	<b>\$184,016</b>	<b>\$263,871</b>
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# Revenue by Program

Assistive Technology - PAAT	\$70,527	3%	
Beneficiaries of Social Security - PABSS	\$165,172	7%	
Client Assistance Program - CAP	\$163,484	7%	
Developmental Disabilities - PADD	\$479,112	19%	
Individual Rights - PAIR	\$215,329	9%	
Individuals with Mental Illness - PAIMI	\$537,303	21%	
Traumatic Brain Injury - PATBI	\$64,151	3%	
Voting Access - PAVA	\$171,770	7%	
Social Security Rep Payee - SBSSB	\$369,165	14%	
Self Advocacy Network Development - SAND	\$241,372	9%	
Other Grants, Donations, etc.	\$22,996	1%	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$2,500,381</b>		



400 W. Capitol Ave. #1500  
Little Rock, AR 72201

## Your support changes the game for people with disabilities.

Support DRA with a one time or monthly donations on our website  
at [disabilityrightsAR.org](https://disabilityrightsAR.org)

Sign up for Kroger Rewards & Amazon Smile!



Visit us online at [disabilityrightsAR.org](https://disabilityrightsAR.org)



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