

P&A PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Program issues brought by individuals with disabilities, their legal representatives, or in some instances, pursuant to probable cause, must meet criteria of each specific P&A program. All program services are subject to P&A's General Policy on Case Acceptance and other agency policies and procedures. Other factors used in determining the draft goals and objectives include addressing unmet needs; non-duplication of services; consistency with funding requirements; the degree of compatibility with the P&A mission; potential for positive change affecting more than one person; and agency resources.

While P&A may provide direct legal representation to individual clients, legal issues that are systemic in nature will receive priority. The demand for P&A services far exceeds its resources. The agency must plan its activities in a strategic manner to effectively utilize its limited resources. Therefore, P&A may decline to provide direct advocacy assistance or legal representation in situations where a case may be within its priorities and meet case acceptance criteria.

P&A resolves disputes whenever possible through negotiation, mediation, and exhaustion of administrative remedies, where appropriate, prior to initiating legal action in a Federal or State court.

The following program goals and objectives apply to the four P&A programs which are required to set priorities. They are designed to primarily assist persons in institutional settings whose primary purpose is to provide services to persons with disabilities rather than institutions whose primary purpose is educational or correctional. Services will be prioritized at the Wyoming State Hospital, Wyoming Life Resource Center, the Wyoming Pioneer Home, and the Wyoming Retirement Center. As resources allow, services will be provided for persons residing in or receiving services from Home and Community Based Services providers or in community settings.

FREEDOM FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT (PAIR, PAIDD, AND PAIMI)

Priority 1: P&A will improve health and safety for persons at prioritized institutions or in Home and Community Based Services or community settings when facilities or community settings are notified of investigation findings and receive recommendations for correction.

Priority 2: P&A will monitor reports of incidents of suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation or death at prioritized institutions or in Home and Community Based Services or community settings.

Priority 3: P&A will provide individual advocacy or undertake systemic advocacy to enforce rights of persons residing at prioritized institutions.

Priority 4: P&A will provide individual advocacy or undertake systemic advocacy to enforce rights of persons residing in Home and Community Based Services or community settings.

COMMUNITY LIVING (PROGRAMS AS INDICATED BELOW)

Priority 1: P&A will assist with requests involving people with disabilities seeking to live or maintain living in the most integrated setting (PAAT, PAIR, PAIDD, AND PAIMI).

Priority 2: P&A will assist with prevention of and diversion from unnecessary institutionalization and homelessness (PAAT, PAIR, PAIDD, AND PAIMI).

Priority 3: P&A will assist with requests involving people with disabilities seeking housing accommodations (PAAT, PAIR AND PAIDD).

Priority 4: P&A will assist with requests involving people with disabilities seeking employment accommodations (PAAT, PAIR AND PAIDD).

ACCESSIBILITY (PAAT AND PAIR)

Priority 1: P&A will assist with requests to improve access to assistive technology devices and services throughout the lifespan in prioritized institutions and in Home and Community Based Services or community settings.

Priority 2: P&A will assist with requests to access barrier-free transportation including bus stops, paratransit, ground carrier and air carrier.

SUPPORTED DECISION-MAKING AND ALTERNATIVES TO GUARDIANSHIP (PAIDD, PAIR AND PAIMI)

Priority 1: P&A will have representation on the Guardianship Task Force and other venues to advance supported decision-making and alternatives to guardianship.

Priority 2: P&A will provide individual advocacy or undertake systemic advocacy to expand supported decision-making options in Wyoming.

Priority 3: P&A will provide individual advocacy or undertake systemic advocacy to address legal and constitutional issues involving the Wyoming Guardianship Code.

Priority 4: P&A will provide information and training to advance and support self-advocacy by persons with disabilities who do not have guardians to avoid unnecessary guardianship or unnecessary restriction of rights.