



Protection & Advocacy Project

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P&A Announces 2027 Focus Areas

(Bismarck, ND) The Protection & Advocacy Project (P&A) is the leading civil rights organization for individuals with disabilities in North Dakota. P&A provides services at no cost to individuals with disabilities. These include information and referral, self-advocacy assistance, advocacy representation, legal representation, and protective services.

P&A collected public input to help inform P&A's focus areas, which guide the administration of services to individuals with disabilities. Forty percent of individuals engaging in public comment activities were individuals with disabilities who've received P&A services and sixty percent of feedback came from other stakeholders such as family members, provider agencies, and advocacy organizations.

Public input highlighted the issues most important to the disability community: 1) abuse, neglect, or exploitation 29%; 2) community inclusion 19%; 3) education 19%; 4) criminal/juvenile justice 10%; 5) employment 9%; and 6) assistive technology 6%. These top issues have been fairly stable over time. Additional items of note included concerns about Medicaid benefits and voting.

In response, P&A has identified three primary focus areas for federal fiscal year 2027: 1) abuse, neglect, and exploitation (ANE); 2) criminal/juvenile justice; and 3) community inclusion. Efforts under the ANE focus area will include screening and investigating reports of ANE, monitoring service providers, and reviewing representative payees. Within the criminal and juvenile justice focus area, work will be centered on ensuring appropriate disability-related treatment within the justice system. Community inclusion will emphasize access to community-based services, education, employment barriers, voting rights, and assistive technology. Additionally, P&A will engage in limited work within its PAIR program to focus on Medicaid denials of disability-related medically necessary healthcare. Not all focus areas apply to all program and not all requests will result in direct case services. Please visit our website at www.ndpanda.org or call 1- 800-472-2670 to learn more.

P&A's mission is to champion the equality and inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of life. Established in 1977, P&A is a federally mandated, independent state agency advancing the human and legal rights of people with disabilities.

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