



HISTORY OF DRC-NH

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES ACROSS NEW HAMPSHIRE

1978

Disability Rights Center (DRC-NH) begins operating as Developmental Disabilities Advocacy Center, designated by Governor Meldrim Thomson, Jr. as New Hampshire's protection and advocacy agency.

1982

In *Developmental Disabilities Advocacy Center, Inc. v. Melton*, DRC-NH gains access to residents and records of Laconia State School and affirms the right of DRC and our sister agencies to sue on our own behalf.

1989

Timothy W v Rochester School District. The United States First Circuit Court of Appeals held that school districts must provide special education to all children with disabilities, including those with the most severe disabilities who had been historically excluded. Thousands of children with significant disabilities access special education services in New Hampshire as a result of this decision.

1991

James O v. Marston class action litigation is settled, ensuring children with disabilities who are placed in a facility under NH's juvenile laws receive appropriate special education and related services.

1994

DRC's Regional Action Committee (RAC) project sends over 150 people with disabilities across the state to enforce compliance with the recently passed Americans with Disabilities Act.

1996

In *Doukas v. Metropolitan Life Insurance*, the US District Court ruled that the Americans with Disabilities Act extends to private insurance companies. In this case, DRC-NH represented a woman with bipolar disorder who was denied mortgage insurance based on her disability.

1997

A class action settlement in *Eric L v. Bird* is approved paving the way for reforms of services for abused and neglected children in foster care. DRC represented children with disabilities in the class.

1997

In *Trovato v. City of Manchester*, U.S. District Court ruled that the city's refusal to allow residents with mobility impairments to build a paved parking space in front of their home violated the ADA, Fair Housing Act and Rehabilitation Act.

2003

Davis v. May Department Stores (Filene's) case is settled. Filene's agreed to make improvements to its three New Hampshire stores to assure that persons with physical disabilities have access to most of its merchandise.

2003

NH Supreme Court affirms William S. case, concluding that client was eligible for developmental disability services because of his learning disability.

2006

In *The Matter of B.T.*, NH Supreme Court clarified the standard for involuntary commitment and ruled that factual evidence of mental health symptoms in and of themselves, do not automatically constitute "dangerousness".

DRC-NH concludes lawsuit against Cheshire Medical Center for failure to provide interpreter services. Cheshire is required to establish an effective communications program and take various steps to ensure effective communication for Deaf and hard of hearing people.

2007

Class action settlement in *Carter, Cellucci, and Durgin v. Stephen* requires DHHS to determine eligibility for Medicaid under the APTD program within 90 days, except in unusual circumstances.

2009

NH Supreme Court decision in *Petition of Gretchen Parker* affirms individual's right to self-direction, choice and dignity of risk, enabling her to remain in her home without losing needed supports.

In *Tinker v. Town of Tilton*, NH Supreme Court orders town to provide snow and ice removal from sidewalk so that individual with mobility impairments can access his community.

2009-2010

DRC-NH issues two reports related to the inappropriate use of restraint at the Sununu Youth Services Center. The first involved the injury of a 14 year old boy during a restraint. The second report found a pervasive pattern of unnecessary and excessive force.

2010

DRC's advocacy at the NH legislature results in the passage of a law to restrict the use of restraint in schools and facilities that serve children.

2013

Litigation regarding accessibility at Phenix Hall is settled, paving the way for increased accessibility of all of downtown Concord NH.

DRC played a critical role in Concord's development and implementation of the "Complete Streets" project. As a result, Concord's main street is one of the most accessible in the country.

2014

DRC issues report about abuse and neglect at Lakeview Neurorehabilitation Center in Effingham, NH. Eventually, the facility and school it operated are closed.

Supreme Court affirms Medicaid recipients' right to free choice of provider in *Dube v. NH Department of Health and Human Services*.

Settlement of *Amanda D. v. Hassan*, class action lawsuit to provide effective community-based services to citizens with mental illness.

2017

NH Supreme Court affirms the right of people with developmental disabilities to be served by their area agency where they reside in *Petition of Wayne S.*