



Current Goals & Priorities 2007-2008

Approved by Board of Directors September 18, 2007

OAC provides information and referral services to all. OAC provides direct advocacy services only to individuals with disabilities. In order to receive representation, the individual must have a legal problem that is associated with the disability and that falls within OAC priorities. OAC only accepts cases that have a reasonable likelihood of success based upon the facts and law, and for which OAC has sufficient staff resources and expertise to offer competent representation. Cases in which a person with disabilities is at risk of severe or long-term harm and cases which impact a large number of people with disabilities are given enhanced consideration. We provide services through outreach, education, information and referral, individual case work, administrative advocacy and litigation.

Preface: The order of the Goals and Priorities of the Oregon Advocacy Center do not indicate a level of importance; they have equal importance. They are integrated goals and priorities that reflect the needs of individuals with disabilities in Oregon and that guide the types of cases accepted by all of OAC programs. In providing services, we try to balance the types of advocacy we use to best meet the needs of individual clients with the need to create systemic changes for the larger client community. We strive to reach out into underserved populations and to provide culturally appropriate services statewide.

GOAL #1: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION - OREGONIANS WITH DISABILITIES HAVE FULL ACCESS TO THEIR COMMUNITIES.

- A. Removal of access barriers in public accommodations with emphasis on education, transportation, and the court system.
- B. Getting accessible housing for Oregonians with disabilities.
- C. Receipt of reasonable accommodations by tenants with disabilities.
- D. Freedom from inappropriate guardianship restrictions on rights and liberty.
- E. Getting and retaining in-home supports.
- F. Ensuring full participation in the electoral process for individuals with disabilities, including registering to vote and casting a vote.

GOAL #2: HEALTH CARE - OREGONIANS WITH DISABILITIES HAVE ACCESS TO ADEQUATE HEALTH CARE.

- A. Removal of access barriers to medical care and information.
- B. Access to medically necessary services, including assistive technology.

GOAL #3: DD & TBI SERVICES - OREGONIANS HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY COMMUNITY SERVICES

- A. Implementation of self-directed appropriate services.
- B. Getting DD & TBI services for applicants who have been found ineligible despite substantial evidence of disability.
- C. Getting adequate training and support for individuals and their families to be effective self-advocates

GOAL #4: EDUCATION - OREGONIANS WITH DISABILITIES RECEIVE A FREE AND APPROPRIATE EDUCATION.

- A. Preventing exclusion of students from school because of their disabilities.
- B. Implementation of appropriate special education services for minority children.
- C. Implementation of appropriate transition plans.

- D. Implementation of a fair, parent-friendly dispute resolution process.
- E. Resolution of extreme failures to provide services in the most integrated environment
- F. Getting assistive technology devices and services, appropriate assessments, implementation of AT recommendations and training necessary to ensure implementation
- G. Eliminating the inappropriate use of restraints, seclusion, aversive techniques and police involvement to address behavior of children with disabilities in educational settings.

GOAL #5: MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES - CONSUMER/SURVIVORS/EX-PATIENTS HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

- A. Getting adequate training and support for individuals to be effective self advocates.
- B. Presence of a legal rights perspective and consumer participation on state and county policy making bodies.
- C. Enforcement of anti-discrimination laws to remedy unnecessary institutionalization.
- D. Getting adequate mental health services for individuals found unable to proceed in defending criminal charges.
- E. Getting adequate comprehensive mental health services for children living in community settings.

GOAL #6: INSTITUTIONS - INDIVIDUALS IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE SETTINGS OR AT RISK OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION ARE FREE OF RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.

- A. Getting desired treatment, care and services including appropriate continuity of care provisions with an emphasis on mental health issues.
- B. Protection of the rights of children in institutions.
- C. Diminished use of forced medication, forced hospitalization and court procedures to restrict individual liberties.
- D. Getting information regarding client rights and the availability of advocacy services.

GOAL #7: EMPLOYMENT/INCOME - OREGONIANS WITH DISABILITIES HAVE ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO ACHIEVE AND MAINTAIN SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

- A. Proper and adequate services provided to Social Security and SSI recipients with disabilities by a service provider, employer or other entity involved in the recipient's employment effort.
- B. Proper and adequate services and benefits are available to clients and client applicants of programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.
- C. Getting assistive technology devices and services including appropriate assessments and implementation of AT recommendations.
- D. Information and referral to appeal improper overpayments and termination of Social Security or SSI Disability benefits.
- E. Review of overpayments caused by employment efforts.
- F. Access to reasonable accommodations in the workplace and employment related licensure.
- G. Getting information to individuals receiving SSDI or SSI who want to understand their benefits and learn how their benefits could be affected by work.

GOAL #8: OREGONIANS WITH DISABILITIES ARE FREE FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- A. Investigation of deaths of individuals with disabilities in treatment, care or correctional settings.
- B. Discovery of and remedies for improper use of seclusion or restraint.
- C. Thorough and objective governmental investigation of allegations of abuse or neglect of individuals with disabilities.
- D. Investigation of allegations of abuse or neglect leading to serious injury of an individuals with disabilities when governmental investigation is inadequate

GOAL #9: OTHER COMPELLING ISSUES (REQUIRES APPROVAL FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)