

Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid
Minnesota Disability Law Center (MDLC)
430 First Avenue North, Suite 300
Minneapolis, MN 55401

5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

A. MDLC'S WORK

MDLC's advocacy includes:

- providing individual and group legal advocacy for persons with disabilities;
- conducting monitoring visits and investigations to ensure safety and appropriate services;
- providing outreach to individuals with disabilities, their families, their advocates, and their service providers;
- delivering training and information on legal rights and self-advocacy; and
- educating policy makers on issues that affect people with disabilities.

B. STRATEGIC GOALS

To guide its work, MDLC has adopted this Five-Year Strategic Plan that has the following four, broad goals:

1. ELIMINATE ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Consistent with the policy of our federal grants and implementing statutes, MDLC places primary emphasis on protecting persons with disabilities from abuse and neglect. This includes guarding against the following:

- physical abuse;
- neglect of health and safety needs;
- improper use of restraint and seclusion; and
- financial exploitation.

2. INCREASE INTEGRATION & DECREASE DISCRIMINATION

Consistent with the principles underlying Olmstead, MDLC seeks to maximize clients' opportunities to live, work and recreate in inclusive, integrated settings of their choice. MDLC helps clients obtain individualized community-based services and supports in each of the following areas:

- Education;
- Housing;
- Employment; and
- Other community activities.

MDLC also works to protect clients' civil rights, including voting rights, and to eliminate discrimination in the above areas, as well as in the access to the following:

- Public services (services provided by local, county or state government); and
- Public accommodations (businesses serving the public).

3. INCREASE ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE SERVICES

MDLC recognizes the challenges that people with disabilities can face in accessing necessary and appropriate services. MDLC's advocacy focuses on:

- maximizing clients' choice among appropriate services and supports;
- increasing opportunities for clients to self-direct their services and supports;
- improving provider capacity to meet clients' needs; and
- maintaining and increasing funding available to meet clients' services and support needs.

MDLC helps persons with disabilities access and maintain services and supports in each of the following areas:

- Education;
- Housing;
- Employment;
- Other community activities; and
- Health care.

4. INCREASE STATEWIDE AWARENESS OF MDLC AS AN ADVOCACY RESOURCE

MDLC strives to provide quality advocacy services to persons with disabilities across the state of Minnesota. To fulfill its mission, MDLC endeavors to increase its visibility in the community and awareness of its work by:

- Conducting outreach to all stakeholder groups - persons with disabilities, their families and friends, service providers, and policymakers; and
- Conducting targeted in-reach to historically underserved communities.

C. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

To effectively target resources to the issues that matter most to persons with disabilities in Minnesota, MDLC has adopted the following process to review its work, gather stakeholder input, and modify its priorities as needed on an annual basis.

1. Gather and review information regarding disability-related advocacy needs from both internal and external sources, which may include:
 - Focus group members and interviewees;
 - Survey results;
 - MDLC work teams;
 - Key government and other organizational reports;
 - Court decisions and trends; and
 - Disability-related listservs.

2. Identify drivers of change that impact on client needs and rights.
3. Modify, with public input, MDLC’S annual Statement of Goals and Priorities.

This review of data and input resulted in the identification of the key issues and trends that will impact the needs and rights of MDLC’s client communities and our services over the next five years. The following chart summarizes these drivers of change and their correspondence to MDLC’s four strategic goals.

Drivers of Change	Strategic Goal/s			
	1	2	3	4
Positive behaviors support rule	X			
New state limits on use of restrictive procedures in schools	X			
State laws trending toward eliminating school’s use of restraint and seclusion	X	X	X	
Increasing levels of government funding support for segregated school sites	X	X	X	
State Olmstead planning and HCBS setting rule		X	X	
Increasing complexity with service systems		X	X	
Increasing demand from young adults and their parents for integrated employment while also a reverse trend for segregated services for targeted populations		X	X	
New state and federal requirements to integrate transition		X	X	
Federal health care reform transforming PCA into CFSS			X	
New Medicaid waiver residential employment services		X	X	
New comprehensive state Medicaid autism benefit		X	X	
State level legislative efforts to limit civil rights litigation		X	X	
Shifting Demographics: greater diversity, gaining population		X	X	X
Increasing identification of numbers of adults/children with disabilities				X
Political election year uncertainties	X	X	X	X

Strategic Goals:

1. Eliminate Abuse and Neglect
2. Increase Integration and Decrease Discrimination
3. Increase Access to Appropriate Services
4. Increase Statewide Awareness of MDLC as an Advocacy Resource