

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The mission of Disability Rights New Mexico (DRNM) is to *protect, promote and expand the legal and civil rights of persons with disabilities.*

DRNM is an independent, private nonprofit agency founded in 1979 and authorized through federal law and an executive order of the Governor of New Mexico as the [Protection and Advocacy Organization](#) for the State of New Mexico's disability community.

GOALS

The overall goal of DRNM is “to ensure individuals with disabilities live life to their fullest potential within the community and with full supports and opportunity.” – G.H.

FUNDING

DRNM receives funding from several state and federal agencies: the [Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities \(AIDD\)](#); the [Health Resources and Services Administration](#); the [Center for Mental Health Services](#) (within the U.S. Health and Human Services Department); the [Rehabilitation Services Administration](#) (U.S. Department of Education); the [Social Security Administration](#); the [New Mexico Civil Legal Services Commission](#); and the [New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Council](#)



SERVICES

Resources, Legal, & Policy

DRNM can answer general questions regarding legal rights and how to obtain disability services. The organization also provides: training and outreach on disability rights, client advocacy and court representation (case-by-case basis), and policy advisory and advocacy.

Trainings & Education

DRNM hosts and partners on training workshops and presentations regarding legal rights issues, policy framework, and steps on obtaining benefits throughout the year. Examples of workshops include: special education and IDEA Law, navigating the waiver process, and voting accessibility. Partners include: Parents Reaching Out, Developmental Disabilities Council, New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty, and the ACLU.

Additionally, DRNM also provides reference and resource materials available on the [website](#). Printed copies may be made available by request.

ASSISTANCE

Resources, Legal, & Policy

DRNM may serve any individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act and has a legal case or concern that is directly linked to a disability and meets the pre-determined [annual priorities and objectives](#) within the state of New Mexico. There is no cost for services to the individuals. Due to the high demand for the organization and limited staffing and funding, DRNM strictly adheres to the outlined priorities with a focus on issues that have a potential to make systemic changes.

Intake

DRNM may be reached via phone or email for general information and intake. The intake process for advocacy and legal assistance includes providing contact, general background, and demographic information, and reason for contact. After, an interview may be set up to evaluate the situation and ensure it aligns with DRNM's priorities. If accepted, the case will be transferred to the legal staff. If not, referrals to other agencies may be given.



IMPACTS

Cases

DRNM has been an instrumental part in the advancement of disability rights in New Mexico. Some of the most recent litigation DRNM has been involved in includes:

- [Kevin S. Settlement](#) – emphasized the state's [responsibility to protect the health and wellbeing of the children in its custody.](#)
- [NM Corrections Dept. To Provide Sped.](#) – created a [corrective action plan to ensure incarcerated special education students receive a FAPE.](#)
- [Jackson Lawsuit](#) – shined a light on the [conditions individuals with disabilities faced while living in institutions and pushed the idea of community-based care.](#)
- [Medically fragile children denied necessary in-home nursing](#) – suit against HSD and MCOs for failing to ensure private nurses were available to qualified families and lack of enforcement.

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