



**Paving the Way to a
More Accessible
Lone Star State**

2024 Impact Report

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Message from our Executive Director, Sean Jackson

We experienced many successes in 2024, but we also faced many challenges. Despite those barriers, our staff continues to do this important work with passion and dedication. No matter what is happening in the world around us, our course remains steady – we will continue to ensure people with disabilities are treated with dignity and respect and are able to exercise their legal rights.

Thank you for your unwavering support that allows us to do this critical work.

Our History

In the early 1970s, reporter Geraldo Rivera aired a story on deplorable conditions in a New York facility where children with disabilities lived. The news caused Congress to pass a federal law in 1975 mandating the creation of protection and advocacy agencies – called P&As – in each U.S. state and territory.

Disability Rights Texas (DRTx) opened its doors in 1977 as the designated P&A for people with disabilities in Texas. For nearly 50 years our dedicated staff has advocated for tens of thousands of people with disabilities so they can live meaningful, productive, and full lives and have access to healthcare, housing, education, jobs, and more.

Our Focus

Our advocacy efforts are focused on the following disability rights issues:

- Accessibility
- Community Living
- Disaster Resilience
- Education (K-12 and post-Secondary)
- Employment and State Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Guardianship Alternatives and Rights Restoration
- Healthcare
- Housing
- Institutional Rights and Protections
- Transportation
- Voting

Our Strategies

Our staff protects the rights of Texans with disabilities by:

- Providing direct legal assistance to people with disabilities whose rights are threatened or violated.
- Initiating legal action through the courts and justice system.
- Educating policymakers about how issues impact people with disabilities.
- Informing people about their rights.
- Making referrals to other programs and services.

Impact of Your Support in 2024

To continue our work, your generous donations are more critical now than ever before. Last year, your support helped us achieve the following:

- 3,350 new cases opened
- 3,085 cases completed
- 24,700 resources distributed
- 2.4 billion people reached through news coverage and digital materials
- 7,041 people trained on their disability rights
- 329,966 people who used our website to get help

2024 Highlights

We were able to ensure access to healthcare, employment, education, housing, and more for thousands of Texans with disabilities. Here are a few of the many things we were able to accomplish with your support.

Restoring Critical Healthcare Coverage for Texans

When the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration expired, so did auto re-enrollment in Medicaid. Unfortunately, Texas Medicaid dropped millions of people who were still eligible. DRTx took action by reaching out to clients and constituents to ensure they had the information needed to appeal and regain coverage. We also filed a federal complaint regarding Texas Medicaid's burdensome and inaccessible renewal process.

Removing Work Barriers for Adults with Autism

Nine young adults with autism were pursuing careers in IT. When their specialized post-secondary training through Texas vocational rehab (VR) was suddenly cut off, they contacted us to intervene. We filed federal complaints for each individual, citing a systemic issue in Texas VR services for people with autism. The

complaints received prompt attention, leading to multiple meetings with federal authorities. We're expecting a positive outcome that ensures all VR clients with autism can access the training they need for their chosen careers.

Helping Voters with Disabilities Participate in Elections

Of the millions of Texans with disabilities who are eligible to vote, many are unable due to inaccessible polling places and other barriers. We recently received special funding allowing us to expand our nonpartisan voting access work in four southeast Texas counties. We reached millions of people in these regions through in-person training and digital messaging on voting rights, ways to vote, and places to vote.

Pushing Back on a School District Pushing Students Out

DRTx received complaints that a South Texas school district targeted students with disabilities by denying accommodations and pushing them out through the truancy process. So we joined with three other nonprofits to file a complaint with the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

After widespread news coverage, more families shared similar experiences. TEA investigated and confirmed the allegations. The district is now implementing a corrective action plan.

***Read more stories about the people we've helped
on our [Client Success Stories page](#).***

Funding

Expense Allocation

- Program Costs: \$20,160,037 (92.12%)
- Administrative Costs: \$1,706,525 (7.8%)
- Fundraising Costs: \$7,089 (0.08%)

Funding Sources

- Federal: \$14,966,892 (68%)
- Other/Non-Federal: \$3,301,520 (15%)
- Texas Access to Justice Foundation: \$2,861,318 (13%)
- In-Kind Donated Services: \$880,405 (4%)

For more details on our federal grants, visit the [Funding page](#) on our website.

Non-Federal Funding Overview

- Harris County Juvenile Probation Department: Education advocacy for justice-involved youth.
- Impact Fund Grant: Financial support of long-term litigation costs.
- Texas Access to Justice Foundation: Basic civil legal services for low-income Texans with disabilities.
- Texas Appleseed: Monitoring of facilities housing foster care children.
- Houston Endowment Foundation: Promoting civic engagement in Houston area counties

Donor Recognition

Our sincerest gratitude goes out to all of you who supported us in 2024. Your donations make a difference in the lives of millions of Texans with disabilities.

Lone Star Champions of Access

In our recurring giving program, the amount given isn't what matters here — it's your continued support at any level that makes you a true champion.

Silver Spur Circle – 3 years of continuous recurring giving

- Brandon Duke
- Laurel Goodroe
- Karen Hale

Trailblazer Circle – 2 years of continuous recurring giving

- Carl Gustafson
- Edie Surtees

Live Oak Circle – 1 year of continuous recurring giving

- Jennifer Covington
- Desiree Evans
- Laura Márquez
- Jeffrey Schagren

Bluebonnet Circle – 6 months of continuous recurring giving

- Emily Vinson

2024 Annual Donor Hall of Fame

Legacy Circle – \$5,000+

- David Lee Cox
- Kirkland & Ellis Foundation
- Miller-Shedd Family Charitable Fund
- Winston & Strawn

Patrons - \$2,500 - \$4,999

- Lorraine Keed

Supporters - \$100 – \$999

- Charles G Acquah
- Ginnie Archer
- Paul Bell
- Brigette Breaux
- Lauren Byers
- Billy Covington
- Jennifer Covington
- Alan Crede
- Hannah Cruz
- Brian East
- Desiree Evans
- Marta Foster
- Aamir Ghanchi
- Laurel Goodroe
- Lisa Gore
- Ruth Ellen Grant
- Carl Gustafson
- Karen Hale
- Christina Hendrickson
- Sean Jackson
- Joan Lambert
- Richard Lavallo
- Joyce Lebombard
- Mitzi Mahoney
- Michela Marinelli

- Laura Márquez
- David McCaffrey
- Robert Mihara
- Barry and Sherry Millien
- Gerardo Mireles
- Jim Niezgoda
- Mary and David Pickett
- Amy Pierce
- Lizdelia Pinon
- Angel Ponce
- Josh Ryf
- Jeffrey Schagren
- Emily Shafron
- Stephen Short
- Joanne Sprague
- Amanda Storer
- Edie Surtees
- Kim Torres
- Jessica Toste
- Emily Vinson
- Debbi Voss
- Allison Walker
- Chava White
- Kelley Wiginton

Pro Bono Law Firm Support

Private law firms and company legal departments donated thousands of pro bono hours worth more than \$1.4 million in 2024. Thank you to the following for their commitment to protecting the rights of Texans with disabilities.

- AT&T Legal Department
- Ahmad, Zavitsanos & Mensing PLLC
- Baker McKenzie
- Bank of America Legal Department
- Dell Legal Department
- Dentons
- DLA Piper
- Dykema
- Eversheds Sutherland
- Jones Day
- JPMorgan Chase
- Kirkland & Ellis
- McDermott Will & Emery
- McGuireWoods
- Perkins Coie
- Reed Smith
- Shell Oil Legal Department
- Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton
- Sidley Austin
- Susman Godfrey
- TDECU Legal Department
- The Buzbee Law Firm
- TOTAL Energies Inc Legal Department
- Verrill Dana LLP
- Vinson & Elkins
- Winston & Strawn
- Wright Close & Barger
- Yetter Coleman