

# DISABILITY RIGHTS ARE CIVIL RIGHTS

Where to go when you need disability advocacy, legal, or other enforcement-related assistance in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands.

*Between May 2016 and May 2021, the two highest referral organizations for the Northeast ADA Center were the Centers for Independent Living and the Protection and Advocacy agencies.*

*Advocacy and consumer involvement, that is, involvement of people with disabilities, users of center services, and beneficiaries of center advocacy, are the cornerstones of the independent living movement.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Kailes, J. I. (2014, August 30). *Channeling of anger on the part of the consumer into constructive organizing*. <https://peeractionalliance.com/2014/08/30/channeling-of-anger-on-the-part-of-the-consumer-into-constructive-organizing/>

## Advocacy and Independent Living Resources

The Northeast ADA Center's Technical Assistance specialists have strong expertise in various facets of the ADA (and other disability-related regulations) and respond to direct, on-demand requests from callers, connecting them with targeted resources, and providing them with referrals and information tailored to their individual questions and concerns on disability-related issues.

The Northeast ADA Center strives to educate and empower people, but our mission does not extend to assistance with advocacy or enforcement. Even so, we want our callers to receive the support they need, and we work to connect them with organizations that can help.

### Centers for Independent Living

- According to the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are community-based, cross-disability, non-profit organizations that are designed and operated by people with disabilities. CILs are unique in that they operate according to a strict philosophy of consumer control, wherein people with all types of disabilities directly govern and staff the organization.
- CILs provide peer support, information and referral, individual and systems advocacy, independent living skills training, and transition information.
- The United States is home to more than 400 CILs. Find your local CIL at [www.ilru.org/projects/cil-net/cil-center-and-association-directory](http://www.ilru.org/projects/cil-net/cil-center-and-association-directory)

### The National Disability Rights Network

- Based in Washington, DC, the National Disability Rights Network works on behalf of the Protection and Advocacy Systems (P&As) and Client Assistance Programs (CAPs), the nation's largest providers of legal advocacy services for people with disabilities.
- If you have a disability and are experiencing abuse, neglect, or discrimination, or if you are having a legal problem or difficulty obtaining disability services, you can contact your state/territory P&A for assistance. Find them at [www.ndrn.org/about/ndrn-member-agencies/](http://www.ndrn.org/about/ndrn-member-agencies/)