



## Legal Rights

People with developmental disabilities have the same basic rights and responsibilities as all other legal residents of the United States and the State of California. In addition, California law gives people with developmental disabilities the following special rights:

A right to treatment and habilitation services and supports in the least restrictive environment. These services and supports should foster the developmental potential of the person and be directed toward the achievement of the most independent, productive, normal life possible. Such services shall protect the personal liberty of the individual, and shall be provided with the least restrictive conditions necessary;

A right to dignity, privacy and humane care. To the maximum extent possible, treatment, services and supports shall be provided in natural community settings;

A right to participate in an appropriate program of publicly-supported education, regardless of degree of disability;

A right to prompt medical care and treatment;

A right to religious freedom and practice;

A right to social interaction and participation in community activities;

A right to physical exercise and recreational opportunities;

A right to be free from harm, including unnecessary physical restraint or isolation, excessive medication, abuse or neglect;

A right to be free from hazardous procedures;

A right to make choices in their own lives including, but not limited to: where and with whom they live; their relationships with people in their community; the way they spend their time; including education, employment and leisure; the pursuit of their personal future; and program planning and implementation;

A right to have relationships, marry, be part of a family, and to parent if they so choose.

People with developmental disabilities who reside in a residential facility possess these additional rights:



- To wear their own clothes
- To keep and use their own personal possessions, including toilet articles
- To keep and be allowed to spend a reasonable sum of their own money for personal expenses and small purchases
- To have access to individual storage space for private use
- To see visitors each day
- To have reasonable access to telephones, both to make and receive confidential calls
- To have ready access to letter writing materials, including stamps, and to mail and receive unopened correspondence
- To refuse electroconvulsive therapy
- To refuse behavior modification techniques which cause pain or trauma
- To refuse psychosurgery
- To make choices in areas including, but not limited to: daily living routines, choice of companions, leisure and social activities, and program planning and implementation.