

Request Help

1-800-342-1660

Relay Calls Accepted

GetHelp@DisabilityRightsTN.org

Se habla español

www.DisabilityRightsTN.org

Making Employment Goals a REALITY

Disability Rights Tennessee (DRT) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the rights of Tennesseans with disabilities. DRT is the federally mandated Protection & Advocacy (P&A) agency for Tennessee.

DRT provides advocacy services to help people with disabilities address barriers to employment.

“Disability Rights Tennessee made sure I understood my rights and that I received the benefits I needed.”

DRT Client

Equality. Inclusion. Justice.



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Disability Rights Tennessee provides Employment Advocacy Services through the following programs:

Client Assistance Program (CAP)

CAP was created to assist all clients and applicants of Vocational Rehabilitation and Centers for Independent Living. Funding for CAP is administered by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, and the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Protection & Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)

This program was established under the Ticket to Work Improvement Act of 1999. The purpose of this project, which is funded by the Social Security Administration, is to protect the legal rights of Social Security Beneficiaries in their efforts to return to work. Social Security has reviewed this for technical accuracy only; this should not be considered an official Social Security document.

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Employment Advocacy Services

**Client Assistance Program for
Vocational Rehabilitation and
Independent Living**

**Protection & Advocacy
for Beneficiaries
of Social Security**



How DRT Can Help

DRT has *two* programs that provide employment advocacy services.

Client Assistance Program (CAP)

- CAP helps people understand and access Vocational Rehabilitation (VR or Voc Rehab) and independent living (IL) programs.
- CAP is not part of VR. CAP is a program of Disability Rights Tennessee.

How Can CAP Help You?

- Answer your questions about VR & IL programs
- Explain your rights & responsibilities
- Provide advocacy or legal assistance
- Resolve misunderstandings with VR & IL programs
- Common issues that CAP works on include communication issues with VR counselors, disagreements about job goals, obtaining assistive technology (AT), and helping with denials of services and the appeals process.



Protection & Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)

- PABSS helps beneficiaries of Social Security with disabilities who are facing barriers to work.
- PABSS helps beneficiaries of both Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

How Can PABSS Help You?

- PABSS can assist on a wide range of issues.
- Common issues that PABSS works on include reasonable accommodations in the workplace, employment discrimination, and accommodations at college or other postsecondary education programs.

What to Expect When You Call

- A member of DRT's Intake Team will discuss your concerns with you and provide initial information.
- Your issue will be sent to the Review Team to determine if you need the assistance of an advocate to help resolve your concerns.
- If DRT opens a case on your issue, you and your DRT advocate will work together to resolve your problem.
- Each issue is unique. In deciding whether direct services can be provided, DRT will consider several factors.

10 Steps to a Successful VR Experience

- **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:** Your VR counselor will give you a sheet of paper with your rights as a VR client. Read it!
- **KNOW WHAT YOU NEED:** As a client of VR, you are a full partner in developing your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Your VR counselor should assist you in choosing a career consistent with your unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, capabilities, and informed choice.
- **SPEAK UP:** Ask your VR counselor for the VR policy when you disagree with a decision. You can also request to speak with a supervisor.
- **GET INVOLVED:** This is your IPE. Do not wait for your VR counselor to take charge.
- **BE ON TIME:** Never miss an appointment with your VR counselor.
- **STAY IN TOUCH:** Always keep your VR counselor informed of changes in your address, phone number and work status. Answer all phone calls, emails, and letters immediately.
- **GET IT IN WRITING:** Read everything you are asked to sign and get a copy. Make sure everything you and your VR counselor agree on is included in your IPE. Ask for documents in alternative formats (braille, large print, etc.).
- **KNOW YOUR OPTIONS:** You can appeal any VR decision that affects your services. Your appeal must be filed within 30 days after the notice of the decision you do not like.
- **REMEMBER:** Your VR counselor is working with you to achieve your goals.
- **FOLLOW THROUGH WITH YOUR DREAMS!**