WHAT IT IS:

Known as the **P&A/CAP network**, the federally-mandated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) System and Client Assistance Program (CAP) are collectively the largest provider of legally based advocacy services for people with disabilities in the United States.

WHO IT SERVES:

The **P&A/CAP network** is mandated under various Federal statutes to serve individuals with any kind of disability – including, but not limited to, those with intellectual, emotional, sensory, and physical disabilities.

WHAT IT DOES:

The **P&A/CAP network**:

- Pursues legal, administrative, and other appropriate remedies for persons with disabilities under applicable federal, state, and local laws.

- Investigates reports of abuse and neglect, and seeks systemic change to prevent further incidents; advocates for basic rights; and ensures accountability in health care, education, employment, housing, transportation, and within the juvenile and criminal justice systems for individuals with disabilities.

- Promotes full access to inclusive educational programs, financial entitlement programs (e.g., Medicaid and Social Security), health and mental-health care, accessible housing, and productive employment opportunities.

WHERE IT WORKS:

Pursuant to federal mandates, there is a P&A system and CAP program in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and U.S. territories (American Samoa; Guam; Northern Mariana Islands; and the U.S. Virgin Islands). There is also a federally mandated Native American P&A. A list of the 57 P&A systems and CAP programs is on the NDRN website: [www.NDRN.org](http://www.NDRN.org).

WHAT IS NDRN:

NDRN is the nonprofit membership organization for the P&A/CAP network. Its mission is to promote the integrity and capacity of the network, and to advocate for the enactment and vigorous enforcement of laws protecting civil and human rights of people with disabilities.
P&A Advocacy Activities

P&As have experience using a range of advocacy strategies to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and promote systemic reform, including but not limited to the following.

- **Monitoring conditions in facilities** to identify and correct dangerous practices.
- **Abuse and neglect investigations in facilities** of suicides, deaths, physical and sexual assaults, injuries during restraints, seclusion, self-harming, and other sentient incidents.
- **Training, consultation and guidance** for defense counsel, probation officers, other juvenile court personnel, facility discharge-planning staff, service providers, and others.
- **Special education advocacy** – including individual representation in IEP meetings and due process proceedings, and systemic advocacy in administrative hearings.
- **Outreach and rights training** for juveniles and their families, and service providers.
- **Short-term assistance** to assist individuals with disabilities in accessing benefits and entitlements (e.g., Social Security and Medicaid benefits; ADA and Section 504 accommodations; special education services; EPSDT), etc.
- **Individual and group legal representation** including discharge planning, individual justice planning, dispute resolution, discharge planning, and administrative and court proceedings.
- **Collaboration** with child-serving systems and advocacy groups including participation on task forces, legislative committees, and groups.
- **Promoting capacity building** through cross-system collaboration, policy and legislative advocacy, and reform litigation.
- **Legislative advocacy** – providing information to policy makers and legislative bodies.

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1. The P&A system is governed by 8 statutory programs that provide mandates to serve particular disability populations, and establish distinct formula grant programs for these services. The Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights (DD) Act, established the P&A system in 1975; as amended in 2000 (Public Law 106-402), it is codified at 42 U.S.C. 15001 et seq. The Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI) Act of 1986, 42 U.S.C. 10801 et seq., is modeled after the DD Act and extends similar protections to persons with mental illness. The Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) Program (29 U.S.C. 794e), established in 1978 under the Rehabilitation Act, provides nationwide authority to serve persons with disabilities who are cannot be served under the PADD and PAIMI programs. Persons eligible for PAIR services include those with head or spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, HIV infection and AIDS, cancer, heart disease, mobility impairments, etc. The Protection & Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT) program was created by the 1994 amendments to the Assistive Technology Act, 29 U.S.C. § 2201 et seq. It funds P&As to assist individuals with disabilities, their family members and advocates, in accessing assistive technology devices and services (e.g., motorized wheelchairs, "talking" computers, and adaptive computer software). The Protection & Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) program was established by the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 1320b-21. A Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury (PATBI) program was created by Title XIII of the Traumatic Brain Injury Act, as part of the Children's Health Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-310), 42 USC 201. The Client Assistance Program (CAP), established as a mandatory formula grant program by the 1984 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 732, mandates agencies to provide information and assistance to individuals seeking or receiving vocational rehabilitation services under the Rehabilitation Act, including assistance in pursuing administrative, legal and other remedies to ensure the protection of their rights. The Protection & Advocacy for Voting Access (PAVA) program was founded by the Help America Vote Act, 42 U.S.C. § 15461 et seq.