

Nevada's Protection and Advocacy System for Individuals with Disabilities



**NEVADA DISABILITY
ADVOCACY & LAW CENTER**



2021

Fiscal Year 2021 – COVID Continues

October through December 2020 - As with all of Nevada, our Agency continued **intensive pandemic protocol arrangements** that included closed offices to the walk-in public, mandatory staff masking within the offices, 6-foot separations, and bacterial cleaning practices.

Staff continued to work behind their individual, closed office doors onsite, and handled client inquiries and cases by phone or virtual meeting options. Client meetings, staff trainings, and community educational sessions continued in the 'new normal' of the expanded options available through virtual, meeting platforms. The holiday season came and went in the surreal ambiguity of fear and the COVID-19 reality.



Facility monitoring continued to be completed virtually, as it was done in the previous fiscal year at Dini Townsend in the North, and Rawson Neal in the South, with expansion into other hospitals.



and HIGHLIGHTS from Fiscal Year 2021

October and November 2020 – our Rights Attorneys met with a Staff Attorney at the Nevada Division of Aging and Disability Services (ADSD) to provide input for potential legislation related to **obtaining protective orders for vulnerable adults**; inclusive of adults with Developmental Disabilities (DD) or Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBIs).

The **Voting Access booklet and flyer**, under our PAVA grant, was updated as a result of special legislative sessions in 2020 that revised Nevada voting laws. Staff also completed **Polling Place monitoring** in northern, rural areas, and a voting access **presentation** was given by NDALC staff members along with members of the Clark County Election staff to UNLV students with ID/DD who were participating in their FOCUS program.

In February 2021 NDALC became aware that the **United States Department of Justice (DOJ) and NDOC settlement agreement was expanded to incorporate NDALC's 2019 complaints of discrimination**. NDALC met with DOJ attorneys and discussed how referrals of inmates claiming discrimination to the DOJ should be made pursuant to the terms of the settlement agreement. Additionally, NDALC worked with the ACLU of Nevada regarding communication access concerns for an individual who is deaf and in the Clark County Detention Center in Las Vegas.

December 2020 – our Executive Director signed on to an editorial appearing in the Las Vegas Review Journal regarding **special education rights during the pandemic for students with disabilities**. The editorial was co-authored by the ACLU of Nevada and Nevada PEP, Nevada's Parent Training and Information Center.



In **January 2021**, NDALC, along with the DD Council and other community advocates, signed on to a letter to the Governor addressing Nevada’s projected, COVID-19 vaccination plan – the **Nevada Vaccination Playbook**. Specific references in the letter highlighted the need to include individuals with developmental disabilities, and to identify barriers as well as the respective plans for corrective actions.

At the end of **January**, we were officially notified that our complaint submitted to the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice in July 2020 was being investigated to determine whether the State of Nevada unnecessarily institutionalizes children with behavioral health conditions, in violation of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq., and the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, 527 U.S. 581 (1999).

NDALC issued a press release in **February** and distributed an informational flyer notifying the public that the Agency’s complaint alleges the State is violating the rights of Nevada’s children/adolescents with behavioral health conditions by failing to provide appropriate mental health services, resulting in them being unnecessarily institutionalized; many in out-of-state, residential treatment facilities. NDALC met with the attorneys of the DOJ and continues to provide them with relevant information to the investigation. The DOJ also refers families directly to our Agency for individual advocacy.



February – A much valued service professional and loved member of our extended NDALC family was lost.
Be at peace Butters.



April – Our Executive Director was invited by **the University of Nevada – Reno** to tour the University’s football stadium and view the final modifications completed that now bring the facility into **full compliance with the ADA**.

The Agency was awarded a 22-month **grant** specific to **Access to COVID-19 Vaccine**. In part, the funding is to be used to disseminate information and address questions and provide additional resources to individuals in need. Funding may also be used to identify transportation options, provide technical assistance to local health departments and other entities on vaccine accessibility, provide peer support, and reminders on subsequent vaccine appointments.





April 2021 – NDALC’s rural, northern office in Elko changed locations effective April 1st; moving from a 155 sq. ft. office space to a 750 sq. ft. space that opened opportunities for individual client and expanded, group meeting space.

557 W. Silver Street, Suite 203, Elko, NV 89801



Fiscal Year 2021 - continued

Psychiatric Residential Treatment Centers (PRTCs)

and their ability to address the needs of Nevada youth have been an ongoing problem. In any given month, hundreds of our youth are sent to out-of-state facilities in Indiana, Michigan, Colorado, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Missouri. In **April 2021** we contacted the P&A agencies within these states to determine if they were aware of any concerns with the facilities serving our Nevada youth. Disability Rights Michigan (DRM) invited us to join them in a virtual monitoring of the Detroit Behavioral Institute. In **June 2021**, we completed a joint, virtual monitoring with DRM and the Kentucky P&A. The monitoring lasted over 3 hours and included questions and discussions with staff about policies and procedures, a virtual walk through of the entire facility, and interviews with several youth regarding their experience in the facility.

As to **Nevada PRTCs** – Nevada Medicaid revised its service manual to require completion of Serious Incident Reports (SIRs) by PRTC providers and then submission to NDALC under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State and NDALC. We began receiving this information in **June 2021** and we use the information to review and analyze for any patterns or practices that indicate abuse and neglect of the patients within the treatment facilities.

June 2021 – The State’s COVID-19 **original protocols were lifted** and we re-opened office doors to the public and slowly began to integrate face-to-face meetings with clients and in-person monitoring sessions, while maintaining updated standards for pandemic, safety protocols.

The Agency also **completed a 6-year grant commitment** under the Social Security Administration’s **WIPA (Work Incentives Planning and Assistance) program**.

September 2021 – we had the most successful opportunities for **onsite monitoring** at the end of the fiscal year as **Community Based Living Arrangement (CBLA) facilities** had also adjusted their pandemic protocols to allow access to their facilities. CBLAs provide residential supports and services to individuals with significant mental illness.

NDALC completed 51, onsite monitorings – 11 in Northern Nevada, and 40 in Southern Nevada; serving a total of 234 individuals with mental health illness.

Fiscal Year 2021 – Operational and General Information – During pandemic limitations on travel and face to face interactions with the public, NDALC took the opportunity to update the Agency’s **communications systems, online security, and expand our internal options for virtual interaction.**



The Agency finalized transition on **all computer systems** throughout the three offices to Windows 10, **upgraded security support** to SentinelOne Active EDR with Ransomware Crypto Lockers’ protection and **replaced outdated and/or borrowed hardware** from our IT contractor. Firewalls and licensing were upgraded under a 3-year option, we doubled the capacity on a new switch and replaced obsolete, peripheral equipment such as WiFi and router units from 2015/2016.

New phones (replacing those from 2008) with a different, and statewide support provider also corrected and/or offered better call quality, expanded options, consolidated and offered more economical provider services.

The new phone system’s capabilities also provided virtual meeting options, both individualized, or for group meetings, that replaced our ‘ailing’ and limited videoconference system, also from 2008.

Legislative sessions started in February and ran through the beginning of June.

Representative items of the sessions covered Legislative Bills such as suicide prevention information to be posted on ID cards issued to students, mental health parity, a statewide mental health consortium for children, revisions for protection against high-risk behavior, provisions to revise/establish procedures for placing a person on and/or releasing from a mental health crisis hold, (in certain circumstances) revisions relating to mental health services for children requiring certain psychiatric facilities to consult with the treating psychiatrist of a child who is living outside their home, and the establishment of a statewide suicide prevention/mental health crisis hotline using 9-8-8.

We also added a **website accessibility option** using Recite Me software that provides an **assistive technology toolbar** installed on our website. Those with sight loss, cognitive impairments, learning difficulties, attention disorders, literacy issues, and varying linguistic needs can access our website in a way best suited to their individual requirements. Options (in part):

- Personalize font size, type, and color options making each web page easier to read.
- Download content as an audio file as an alternative to reading.
- Access text to speak functions in 35 different languages.
- Have text read aloud at varying speeds.
- Convert text into over 100 different on-screen languages.
- Utilize a screen mask and ruler for better focus.
- Make use of the toolbar’s built-in dictionary and thesaurus.
- Switch to “text-only” mode to strip away graphics and page clutter.

October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021

Outreach and Educational Sessions –

Again, the pandemic severely impacted our ability to do extensive sessions for either need.

However, there were some very positive, in-person opportunities starting in July such as ...

- an **educational session on ABLE Accounts** presented by a Rights Advocate from the Las Vegas office to a community partner group that was recorded and posted on their site and has received over 250 views as of this writing.
- The Agency co-hosted an **on-site Self-Advocacy Conference** with other community partners (the Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities, and the Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities), with our presentation covering Social Security benefits and returning to work.
- **Rural outreach** started up again in the northern area of the State in areas such as the Disability Resource Center of the Great Basin College and a high school in Winnemucca
- The Las Vegas office also re-started **outreach meetings within the Hispanic communities** inclusive of youth centers, Churches, the Mexican Consulate, and recreational centers (*not an all-inclusive listing*).
- Northern Staff members **participated in the ADA 30+ celebration** in Reno providing information on all services provided by the Agency.

Specific to Community Collaboration –

A Rights Advocate serves as a **member of the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)** and provides ongoing input into the independent living services in Nevada.

Resulting efforts from that group participation indicate:

- (1) the State’s Independent Living Centers are developing programs to utilize the CARES Act funds dispersed to Nevada from the Federal Government,
- (2) recommendations were made to the National Governors’ Association for addressing employment for people with disabilities through Statewide coordination,
- (3) a website was developed and launched that provides independent living information and resources, and
- (4) a sub-council, the Nevada Youth Action Council, was established to address the needs of transitioning youth in Nevada and the group is in the process of accepting youth applications to serve on the council as of this writing.



A Rights Advocate also serves as a **member of the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)** providing input for early intervention services. During this reporting period the ICC group focused on the following efforts:

- (1) The limited availability of Developmental Specialists to meet the needs of infants and toddlers receiving services as in-person staffing was curtailed due to the pandemic, causing delays for services. The ICC is working with the State’s early intervention program to develop a strategy for hiring direct staff throughout the ensuing year.
- (2) The ICC is also continuing its efforts in developing a standardized licensing protocol for Developmental Specialist staff. The State’s program has reported difficulty in hiring and maintaining developmental service staff due to the difficulty of the licensing test, the licensing fees, and the low wage levels for staff in Nevada.

Fiscal Year 2021 PRIORITIES

Abuse and Neglect

Client Assistance Program

Individual Rights

Developmental Disability Partners

Representative Payee Project

Education

Assistive Technology

Voting Access

Community Integration

Health Care

Disability Discrimination

Employment

Work Incentives Planning and Assistance program

Promotion of Racial and Social Justice Outreach and Advocacy

NDALC will understand the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression in the lives of individuals with disabilities, and the agency will promote racial and social justice in all its outreach and advocacy services.



NDALC provides protection, advocacy, information and referral, and legal services under funding provided by our FEDERAL PARTNERS:

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

PAIMI – serves individuals with mental illness

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living (ACL)

PADD – serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities

PAVA – serves individuals with disabilities regarding their voting rights and access

PAAT – serves individuals with disabilities who need assistive technology devices or services

PATBI – serves individuals with traumatic brain injuries

VAX – one-time funding for partial fiscal year into the next fiscal year to support Expanding Access to COVID-19 vaccines.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS)

PAIR – serves individuals with disabilities not covered under other P&A programs

CAP – serves individuals with disabilities applying for or receiving services under the federal Rehabilitation Act

Funding by Yearly Award Allotment - FY21

PAIMI	\$428,000.00	23%
PADD	\$415,169.00	23%
PAVA	\$112,313.00	6%
PAAT	\$50,000.00	3%
PATBI	\$50,000.00	3%
PAIR	\$176,454.00	10%
CAP	\$131,917.00	7%
PABSS	\$100,000.00	5%
WIPA	\$120,500.00	7%
PABRP	\$197,347.00	11%
VAX	\$39,713.00	2%
	\$1,821,413.00	100%

Social Security Administration, Office of Acquisition and Grants (OAG)

PABSS – serves beneficiaries of Social Security Income (SSI), or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) under the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act (TWWIIA) and offers assistance with the removal of barriers preventing them from returning to work.

WIPA – (final 9 months of grant term) serves beneficiaries of Social Security and offers work incentives and planning assistance under the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act (TWWIIA)

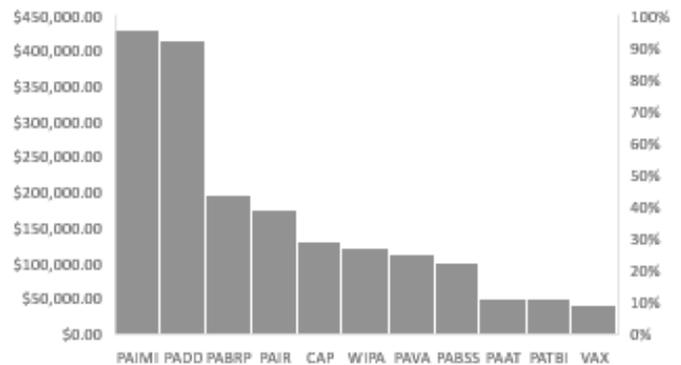
PABRP – reviews are conducted of representative payees under Social Security Administration programs to confirm responsibilities are appropriately carried out on behalf of the beneficiary.



Grants Awarded - FY21

PAIMI	\$428,000.00	23%
PADD	\$415,169.00	23%
PAVA	\$112,313.00	6%
PAAT	\$50,000.00	3%
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PAIR	\$176,454.00	10%
CAP	\$131,917.00	7%
PABSS	\$100,000.00	5%
WIPA	\$120,500.00	7%
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VAX	\$39,713.00	2%
Total	\$1,821,413.00	100%

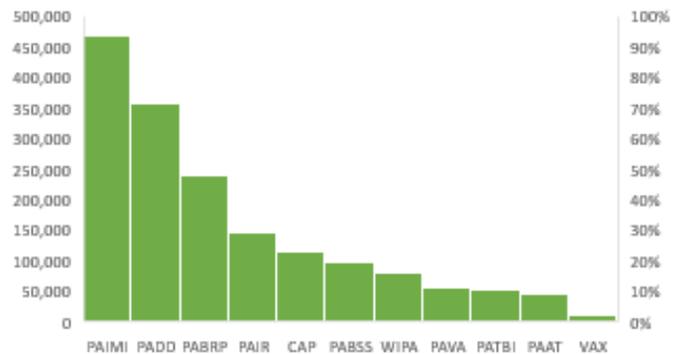
Grants Awarded - Fiscal Year 2021



Funding - Actual Draws - FY21

PAIMI	468,173	28%
PADD	356,714	21%
PAVA	56,382	3%
PAAT	45,745	3%
PATBI	53,634	3%
PAIR	146,446	9%
CAP	115,482	7%
PABSS	96,819	6%
WIPA	79,023	5%
PABRP	241,476	14%
VAX	9,559	1%
Total	1,669,453	100%

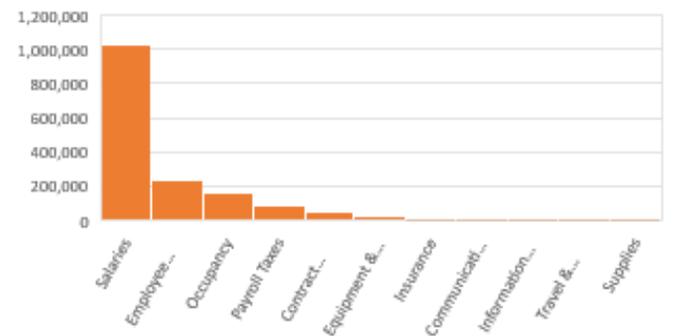
Funding - Actual Draws - Fiscal Year 2021



Expenses by Fiscal Year - FY21

Salaries	1,024,873	61%
Payroll Taxes	86,065	5%
Employee Benefits	231,641	14%
Travel & Training	16,853	1%
Occupancy	163,823	10%
Insurance	19,562	1%
Communications	19,281	1%
Supplies	7,049	0%
Information Services	17,474	1%
Contract Services	55,603	3%
Equipment & Maintenance	27,806	2%
Total	1,670,031	100%

Expenses for Fiscal Year 2021



TOTAL CLIENTS**974****TOTAL SERVICE REQUESTS****1133****CLIENTS - P&A Programs****938****SERVICE REQUESTS - P&A Programs****994***Clients Self-Identify for Ethnicity & Disability*

GENDER	%	Clients	S/R	PRIMARY DISABILITY	%	Clients	S/R
Male	51%	476	511	Absence of Extremities	0.4%	4	5
Female	49%	462	483	ADD/ADHD	0.7%	7	7
		938	994	AIDS/HIV	0.3%	3	3
AGE	%	Clients	S/R	Arthritis	0.2%	2	2
0-5	4%	34	34	Autism Spectrum Disorder	8.2%	77	81
6-11	3%	31	32	Autoimmune Disease	1.0%	9	9
12-18	7%	67	72	Blindness (both eyes)	1.0%	9	9
19-25	7%	65	69	Cancer	1.1%	10	10
26-35	12%	117	126	Cerebral Palsy	1.7%	16	17
36-45	16%	153	166	Deaf-Blind	0.1%	1	1
46-55	17%	162	172	Deafness	1.4%	13	13
56-65	16%	153	164	Diabetes	0.7%	7	7
66-75	6%	55	57	Digestive Disorders	0.5%	5	5
76+	4%	36	36	Epilepsy	0.7%	7	7
Unknown	7%	65	66	Genitourinary Conditions	0.4%	4	4
		938	994	Hard of Hearing (not deaf)	1.3%	12	14
ETHNICITY		Clients	S/R	Heart & Other Circulatory Conditions	1.3%	12	12
American Indian / Alaskan Native	1%	9	11	Intellectual Disabilities	6.3%	59	65
Asian	2%	23	24	Learning Disabilities	0.3%	3	3
Asian (H/L)*	0%	0	0	Mental Illness	37.8%	355	385
Black	15%	144	152	Multiple Sclerosis	0.9%	8	8
Black (H/L)*	1%	7	7	Muscular Dystrophy	0.2%	2	2
Two or More Races	4%	38	39	Muscular/Skeletal Impairment	0.7%	7	7
Two or More Races (H/L)*	6%	59	62	Neurological Disorders	5.2%	49	49
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	1%	7	7	Orthopedic/Physical Impairments	14.0%	131	136
Not Stated	0%	4	4	Other Emotional/Behavioral	0.3%	3	4
Unknown	6%	57	58	Respiratory Disorders	1.6%	15	15
White	56%	523	558	Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)	1.0%	9	10
White (H/L)*	7%	67	72	Speech Impairments	0.4%	4	4
		938	994	Spina Bifida	0.1%	1	1
				Substance Abuse	0.1%	1	1
				Tourettes	0.2%	2	2
				Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI)	3.6%	34	37
				Visual Impairment (Not Blind)	1.8%	17	18
REGION	%	Clients	S/R	None	0.4%	4	4
Northern	25%	230	250	Not Stated/Unknown	3.8%	36	37
Southern	67%	629	662		100%	938	994
Rural	8%	79	82				
		938	994				


**NEVADA DISABILITY
ADVOCACY & LAW CENTER**
Northern Counties: Carson City, Douglas, Lyon, Storey, Washoe

Southern Counties: Clark, Lincoln, Nye

Rural Counties: Churchill, Elko, Esmeralda, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Mineral, Out of State, Pershing, White Pine
CLIENTS - WIPA (9 months) **36****SERVICE REQUESTS - WIPA****139**
WIPA is the Work Incentives Planning Program that has different process and criteria than the above P&A programs.

RepPayee (PABRP) is NOT included in any of the above numbers - completely different structure and service provision.

SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY

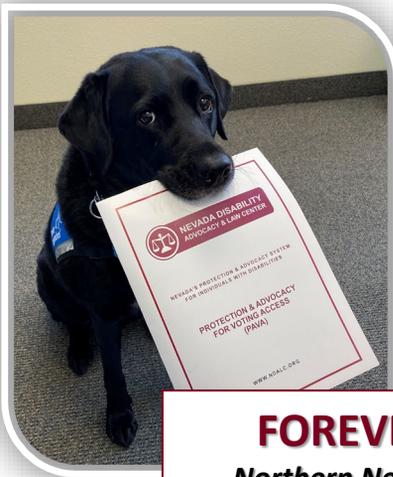
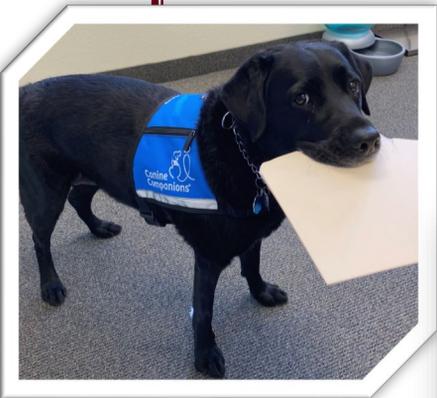
Systemic Advocacy is often completed through participation on Boards, Commissions, Committees, or through Special Projects.

NDALC staff are members of multiple and diverse groups:

- Ad Hoc Nevada Transportation Committee
- AIDD Partners
- National Disability Rights Network
- Brain Injury Association of America
- Federation for the Blind
- Elko Transportation Committee
- Medicaid Managed Care & Home & Community Based Services
- Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)
- Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities – Community Advisory Committee
- Nevada Special Education Advisory Committee
- Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC)
- Nevada Vaccine Equity Collaborative
- Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Coalition
- Southern Nevada Injury Prevention Committee
- Southern Nevada Trauma Advisory Board
- Transportation Security Administration – Disability and Medical Condition Coalition
- Reno Access Advisory Committee
- State Independent Living Council (SILC)
- Comstock Chapter of Canine Companions for Independence



CAROLINA
Southern Nevada



FOREVER
Northern Nevada



Our Service 'Fur' - Fessionals



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Locations

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News +++ Information +++ News +++ Information +++ News +++ Information +++ News

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