



## **DISABILITY RIGHTS LOUISIANA REPORT TO THE LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL JANUARY 2023**

### **Community Living Ombudsman Program (CLOP)**

In this program, trained advocates, known as ombudsmen, advocate for the people with developmental disabilities who live in the over 500 state-licensed, privately run group homes across the state to ensure their rights are protected and they are free from abuse or neglect.

Between 10/1/2022 and 1/15/2023, CLOP filed 5 complaints with HSS. They included allegations of neglect of health, lack of access to medical care, unexplained death, and lack of access to appropriate clothing. CLOP continues to work collaboratively with appropriate agencies to ensure accountability when conditions warrant.

A CLOP Ombudsman was notified that a longtime group home resident was being involuntarily discharged because she no longer was receiving extra care through hospice. Her hospice had ended because her health improved. Despite them trying to discharge the resident, she had nowhere else to go. DRLA appealed the involuntary discharge and had it thrown out. The group home then tried to involuntarily discharge the client again, and DRLA appealed it again. Finally, the group home reevaluated the client's situation, helped her receive improved medical services, and decided to allow her to remain in this group home where she has spent most of her life with the support of her CLOP Ombudsman.

### **Supported Independent Living Advocacy Program (SILAP)**

The Supported Independent Living Advocacy Program (SILAP) serves individuals with developmental disabilities who are receiving OCDD waiver services and supports in order to live in their homes in the community. SILAP provides free services to persons residing in supported independent living environments in the State of Louisiana Human Services Districts I, II, and X, which encompass the greater New Orleans and Baton Rouge areas.

The Mayor's Office of ADA affairs referred a waiver client who had multiple issues which needed to be addressed. SILAP has been able, through advocacy and by informing the client of his rights and providing information and referral, to guide the client to numerous successes.



The client was residing in an apartment with health and safety concerns, and while he was supposed to receive 12 hours every day of in-home services under his CPOC, he was often only receiving 2 hours per week. The client had a support coordinator who was unresponsive, and had never held proper quarterly or annual meetings. SILAP began by advising the client of his right to switch providers and support coordination agencies. He took the initiative and found a new provider agency, and began to receive the services to which he is entitled under the waiver. SILAP also informed the client of his right to file a complaint against the former provider. SILAP provided the contact information for Health Standards. The client chose to file a complaint against the provider, his complaint was validated and the provider was cited for Medicaid fraud.

The client then was offered a list of support coordination agencies by SILAP. He chose a new agency and was assigned a support coordinator who was immediately responsive. She is now proactively advocating, along with SILAP, with the client's housing provider to expedite a move to an apartment that does not have health code violations. Progress is quickly being made, and more successes are anticipated in the near future.