

Disability Rights History Timeline

The following is a select list of national and international milestones highlighting people, events and legislation that effect disability rights.

1817 - The American School for the Deaf is founded in Hartford, Connecticut. This is the first school for disabled children anywhere in the Western Hemisphere.

1848 - The Perkins Institution, founded by Samuel Gridley Howe in Boston, Massachusetts, was the first residential institution for people with mental retardation. Over the next century, hundreds of thousands of developmentally disabled children and adults were institutionalized, many for the rest of their lives.

1883 - Eugenics is a term that was coined by Sir Francis Galton in his book *Essays in Eugenics*. Americans embraced the eugenics movement by passing laws to prevent people with disabilities from moving to the U.S., marrying or having children. Eugenics laws led to the institutionalization and forced sterilization of disabled adults and children.

1912- *The Kallikak Family* by Henry H. Goddard was a best-selling book. It proposed that disability was linked to immorality and alleged that both were tied to genetics. It advanced the agenda of the eugenics movement.

- *The Threat of the Feeble Minded* (pamphlet) created a climate of hysteria allowing for massive human rights abuses of people with disabilities, including institutionalization and forced sterilization.

1918 - The Smith-Sears Veterans Rehabilitation Act provided for the promotion of vocational rehabilitation and return to civil employment of disabled persons discharged from U.S. military.

1924 - The Commonwealth of Virginia passed a state law that allowed for sterilization (without consent) of individuals found to be “feeble-minded, insane, depressed, mentally handicapped, epileptic and other.” Alcoholics, criminals and drug addicts were also sterilized.

1927- *The Buck v. Bell* Supreme Court decision ruled that forced sterilization of people with disabilities was not a violation of their constitutional rights. This decision removed all restraints for eugenicists. By the 1970s, over 60,000 disabled people were sterilized without their consent.

- The U.S. Supreme Court upheld Commonwealth of Virginia eugenic laws as constitutional. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes equated sterilization to vaccination. Nationally, twenty-seven states began wholesale sterilization of “undesirables.”

1935 - The Social Security Act was passed. This established federally funded old-age benefits and funds to states for assistance to blind individuals and disabled children. The Act extended existing vocational rehabilitation programs.

1939 - World War II began. Hitler ordered widespread mercy killing of the sick and disabled. The Nazi euthanasia program (code name Aktion T-4) was instituted to eliminate “life unworthy of life.”

1940-42

The National Federation of the Blind was formed in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania by Jacobus Broek and others. They advocated for white cane laws, input by blind people for programs for blind clients and other reforms.

The American Federation of the Physically Handicapped, founded by Paul Strachan, was the first cross-disability national political organization to urge an end to job discrimination, lobby for passage of legislation, call for a National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week and other initiatives.

Henry Viscardi, an American Red Cross volunteer, trained hundreds of disabled soldiers to use their prosthetic limbs. His work at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. drew the attention of Howard Rusk and Eleanor Roosevelt, who protested when Viscardi’s program was terminated by the Red Cross and the military.

1943 - The LaFollette-Barden Vocational Rehabilitation Act added physical rehabilitation to the goals of federally funded vocational rehabilitation programs and provided funding for certain health care services.

1944 - Rehabilitation medicine became a new medical specialty.

1946 - The National Mental Health Foundation was founded by World War II conscientious objectors who served as attendants at state mental institutions rather than in the war. The Foundation exposed the abusive conditions at these facilities and became an impetus toward deinstitutionalization.

1947 - The President’s Committee on National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week was held in Washington, D.C. Publicity campaigns, coordinated by state and local committees, emphasized the competence of people with disabilities and used movie trailers, billboards, radio and television ads to convince the public that it was good business to hire the handicapped.

1948 -

The National Paraplegia Foundation, founded by members of the Paralyzed Veterans of America as the civilian arm of their growing movement, took a leading role in advocating for disability rights.

We Are Not Alone (WANA), a mental patients’ self-help group, was organized at the Rockland State Hospital in New York City.

-----1950's through 1960's-----

U.S. Civil Rights Movement

Self-Help Movement

Deinstitutionalization Movement

Demedicalization Movement

Consumerism Movement

1950 - Mary Switzer was appointed the Director of the U.S. Office of Vocational Rehabilitation where she emphasized independent living as a quality of life issue.

Social Security Amendments established a federal-state program to aid permanently and totally disabled persons.

1952 - The President's Committee on National Employment of the Physically Handicapped became the President's Committee on Employment of the Physically Handicapped, a permanent organization reporting to the President and Congress.

1953 - Los Angeles County provided at-home attendant care to adults with polio as a cost-saving alternative to hospitalization.

1954 - The U.S. Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* ruled that separate schools for black and white children are unequal and unconstitutional. This pivotal decision became a catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement.

1956 - Social Security Amendments of 1956 created the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program for disabled workers aged 50 to 64.

1960 - Social Security Amendments of 1960 eliminated the restriction that disabled workers receiving Social Security Disability Insurance benefits must be 50 or older.

1962 - The President's Committee on Employment of the Physically Handicapped was renamed the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped reflecting increased interest in employment issues affecting people with cognitive disabilities and mental illness.

1963 - President Kennedy called for a reduction "over a number of years and by hundreds of thousands, (in the number) of persons confined" to residential institutions and asks that methods be found "to retain in and return to the community the mentally ill and mentally retarded, and thereto restore and revitalize their lives through better health programs and strengthened educational and rehabilitation services." This resulted in deinstitutionalization and increased community services.

The Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Health Centers Construction Act authorized federal grants for the construction of public and private nonprofit community mental health centers.

1964 - The Civil Rights Act, signed by President Johnson, prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, national origin and creed (gender was added later). This Act outlawed discrimination on the basis of race in public accommodations and employment as well as in federally assisted programs.

1965 - Medicare and Medicaid were established through passage of the Social Security Amendments of 1965, providing federally subsidized health care to disabled and elderly Americans covered by the Social Security program. These amendments changed the definition of disability under Social Security Disability Insurance program from “of long continued and indefinite duration” to “expected to last for not less than 12 months.”

Early 1970s - The Physically Disabled Students Program (PDSP) was founded by Ed Roberts, John Hessler, Hale Zukas and others at UC Berkeley. With its focus on community living, political advocacy and personal assistance services, it became the nucleus for the first Center for Independent Living, founded in 1972.

1971 - The National Center for Law and the Handicapped was founded at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana. It became the first legal advocacy center for people with disabilities in the U. S.

The U.S. District Court, Middle District of Alabama decided in *Wyatt v. Stickney* that people in residential state schools and institutions have a constitutional right “to receive such individual treatment as (would) give them a realistic opportunity to be cured or to improve his or her mental condition.” ***Disabled people were no longer to be locked away in custodial institutions without treatment or education.***

The Mental Patients’ Liberation Project was initiated in New York City.

1972 –

The Berkeley Center for Independent Living was founded by Ed Roberts and associates with funds from the Rehabilitation Administration. It is recognized as the first center for independent living.

The Rehabilitation Act was passed by Congress and vetoed by Richard Nixon.

The U.S. District Court, District of Columbia ruled in *Mills v. Board of Education* that the District of Columbia ***could not exclude disabled children from the public schools.***

The U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania, in *PARC v. Pennsylvania* struck down various state laws used to exclude disabled children from the public schools. Advocates cited these decisions during public hearings that led to the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975.

Social Security Amendments of 1972 created the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. The law relieved families of the financial responsibility of caring for their adult disabled children.

The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, founded in Washington, D.C. provided legal representation and advocated for the rights of people with mental illness.

The Legal Action Center (Washington, D.C. and New York City) was founded to advocate for the interests of people with alcohol or drug dependencies and for people with HIV/AIDS.

The Network Against Psychiatric Assault was organized in San Francisco.

In New York ARC v. Rockefeller, parents of residents at the Willow Brook State School in Staten Island, New York filed suit to end the appalling conditions at that institution. A television broadcast from the facility outraged the general public. Eventually, thousands of people were moved into community-based living.

Disabled in Action demonstrated in New York City, protesting Nixon's veto of the Rehabilitation Act. Led by Judy Heumann, eighty activists staged a sit-in on Madison Avenue, stopping traffic. A flood of letters and protest calls were made.

The Commonwealth of Virginia ceased its sterilization program. 8300 individuals never received justice regarding their sterilizations.

1973 –

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was passed. Sections 501, 503 and 504 prohibited discrimination in federal programs and services and all other programs or services receiving federal funds. Key language in the Rehabilitation Act, found in Section 504, states "No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States, shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Handicap parking stickers were introduced in Washington, D.C.

The first Conference on Human Rights and Psychiatric Oppression was held at the University of Detroit.

The Federal-Aid Highway Act authorized federal funds for construction of curb cuts.

The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board established under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 enforced the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968.

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities advocated for passage of what became the Developmentally Disabled Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 1975 and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975.

1974 -

Atlantis Community, Denver, Colorado was founded by Wade Blank who relocated adults with severe disabilities from nursing homes to apartments.

The Boston Center for Independent Living was established.

Halderman v. Pennhurst, filed in Pennsylvania on behalf of the residents of the Pennhurst State School and Hospital highlighted conditions at state schools for people with mental retardation. It became a precedent in the battle for deinstitutionalization, establishing a right to community services for people with developmental disabilities.

The first Client Assistant Project (CAP) was established to advocate for clients of state vocational rehabilitation agencies.

North Carolina passed a statewide building code with stringent access requirements. Drafted by access advocate Ronald Mace, the code became a model for effective architectural access legislation in other states.

Barrier Free Environments, founded by Ronald Mace, advocated for accessibility in buildings and products.

1975 –

The Education of All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142) required free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive setting. This Act was later renamed The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The Developmental Disability Bill of Rights Act established protection and advocacy (P & A) services.

The Developmentally Disabled Assistance and Bill of Rights Act provided federal funds to programs serving people with developmental disabilities and outlined a series of rights for those who are institutionalized.

The American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities was founded. It became the leading national cross-disability rights organization of the 1970s.

The Association of Persons with Severe Handicaps (TASH) was founded by special education professionals in response to *PARC v. Pennsylvania* (1972) and other right-to-education cases. This organization called for the end of aversive behavior modification and the closing of all residential institutions for people with disabilities.

U.S. Supreme Court ruled in O'Connor v. Donaldson that people cannot be institutionalized in a psychiatric hospital against their will unless they are determined to be a threat to themselves or to others.

Parent and Training Information Centers were developed to help parents of disabled children exercise their rights under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975.

1976 –

Federal Communications Commission authorized reserving Line 21 on tvs for closed captions.

Higher Education Act of 1972 amendment provided services to physically disabled students entering college.

Disabled in Action of Pennsylvania, Inc. v. Coleman was known as the Transbus lawsuit. Disabled in Action of Pennsylvania, the American Coalition of Cerebral Palsy Associations and others were represented by the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia. They filed suit to require that all buses purchased by public transit authorities receiving federal funds meet Transbus specifications (*making them wheelchair accessible*).

Disabled in Action, New York City picketed the United Cerebral Palsy telethon calling telethons “demeaning and paternalistic shows which celebrate and encourage pity.”

The Disability Rights Center was founded in Washington, D.C. Sponsored by Ralph Nader’s Center for the Study of Responsive Law, it specialized in consumer protection for people with disabilities.

1977 –

Joseph Califano, U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, refused to sign meaningful regulations for Section 504. After an ultimatum and deadline, demonstrations took place in ten U.S. cities on April 5th. The sit-in at the San Francisco Office of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare lasted until May 1st. More than 150 demonstrators refused to disband. *This action became the longest sit-in at a federal building to date.*

Section 504 regulations were issued.

Max Cleland was appointed head of the U.S. Veterans Administration. He was the first severely disabled and youngest person to fill that position.

The White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals drew 3,000 disabled people to discuss federal policy toward people with disabilities. It resulted in numerous recommendations and acted as a catalyst for grassroots disability rights organizing.

Legal Services Corporation Act Amendments added financially needy people with disabilities to the list of those eligible for publicly funded legal services.

In Lloyd v. Regional Transportation Authority, the U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit ruled that individuals have a right to sue under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and that public transit authorities must provide accessible service.

The U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit, in *Snowden v. Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority* undermined this decision by ruling that authorities need to provide access only to “handicapped persons other than those confined to wheelchairs.”

1978 –

The Adaptive Environments Center was founded in Boston.

Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1978 established the first federal funding for consumer-controlled independent living centers and created the National Council of the Handicapped under the U.S. Department of Education.

On Our Own: Patient Controlled Alternatives to the Mental Health System by Judi Chamberlin became the standard text of the psychiatric survivor movement.

Handicapping America by Frank Bowe was a comprehensive review of the policies and attitudes denying equal citizenship to people with disabilities. It became a standard text of the general disability rights movement.

1979 –

Part B funds created ten new centers for independent living across the U.S.

Vermont Center for Independent Living, the first statewide independent living center in the U.S., was founded by representatives of Vermont disability groups.

In *Southeastern Community College v. Davis*, the Supreme Court ruled that under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, programs receiving federal funds must make “reasonable modifications” to enable the participation of otherwise qualified disabled individuals. This decision was the Court’s first ruling on Section 504 ***establishing reasonable modification as an important principle in disability rights law.***

1980 -

Social Security Amendments, Section 1619 was passed. Designed to address work disincentives within the Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs, other provisions mandated a review of Social Security recipients. This led to the termination of benefits of hundreds of thousands of people with disabilities.

The Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act authorized the U.S. Justice Department to file civil suits on behalf of residents of institutions whose rights were being violated.

1981-84 -

The Reagan Administration threatened to amend or revoke regulations implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of

1975. Disability rights advocates Patrisha Wright (DREDF) and Evan Kemp, Jr. (Disability Rights Center) led an intense lobbying and grassroots campaign that generated more than 40,000 cards and letters. After three years, the Reagan Administration abandoned its attempts to revoke or amend the regulations.

The Reagan Administration terminated the Social Security benefits of hundreds of thousands of disabled recipients. Distressed by this action, several disabled people committed suicide. A variety of groups including the Alliance of Social Security Disability Recipients and the Ad Hoc Committee on Social Security Disability fought these terminations.

1981 -

The International Year of Disabled Persons began. During the year, governments were encouraged to sponsor programs bringing people with disabilities into the mainstream of their societies.

The parents of “Baby Doe” in Bloomington, Indiana were advised by their doctors to decline surgery to unblock their newborn’s esophagus because the baby had Down's syndrome. Although disability rights activists tried to intervene, “Baby Doe” starved to death before legal action was taken.

The Telecommunications for the Disabled Act mandated telephone access for deaf and hard-of-hearing people at public places like hospitals and police stations. All coin-operated telephones had to be hearing aid-compatible by January 1985. The Act called for state subsidies for production and distribution of TDD’s.

1983 -

The National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) was founded by Max Starkloff, Charlie Carr and Marca Bristo.

The National Council on the Handicapped called for Congress to include persons with disabilities in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other civil and voting rights legislation and regulations.

The United Nations expanded the International Year of Disabled Persons to the International Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992).

Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act provided for the Client Assistance Program (CAP), an advocacy program for consumers of rehabilitation and independent living services.

1984 –

Ted Kennedy, Jr., spoke from the platform of the Democratic National Convention on disability rights.

The “Baby Jane Doe” case involved an infant being denied needed medical care because of her disability. The litigation argued before the U.S. Supreme Court in *Bowen v. American Hospital Association* resulted in the passage of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendments of 1984.

The U.S. Supreme Court, *Irving Independent School District v. Tatro* ruled that school districts are required under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 to provide intermittent catheterization performed by the school nurse or a nurse’s aide as a “related service” to a disabled student. School districts can no longer refuse to educate a disabled child because they might need such service.

The National Council of the Handicapped became an independent federal agency.

The Social Security Disability Reform Act was passed in response to the complaints of hundreds of thousands of people whose social security disability benefits were terminated. The law required that payment of benefits and health insurance coverage continue for terminated recipients until they exhausted their appeals.

The Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act mandated that polling places be accessible.

1985 -

The Mental Illness Bill of Rights Act required states to provide protection and advocacy services for people with psychological disabilities.

Final legal hearings on eugenics were held in the Commonwealth of Virginia. No financial settlement was granted.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Burlington School Committee v. Department of Education* that schools must pay the expenses of disabled children enrolled in private programs during litigation under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, if the courts ruled that such placement is needed to provide the child with an ***appropriate education in the least restrictive environment.***

The National Association of Psychiatric Survivors was founded.

1986 -

Toward Independence, a report of the National Council on the Handicapped, outlined the legal status of Americans with disabilities and documented the existence of discrimination. It cited the need for federal civil rights legislation (***eventually passed as the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.***)

The Employment Opportunities for Disabled Americans Act was passed allowing recipients of Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance to retain benefits, particularly medical coverage, after they obtain work.

The Protection and Advocacy for Mentally Ill Individuals Act was passed setting up protection and advocacy (P & A) agencies for people who are in-patients or residents of mental health facilities.

Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 defined supported employment as a “legitimate rehabilitation outcome.”

1987 -

Justin Dart, Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, was forced to resign after he testified to Congress that “an inflexible federal system, like the society it represents, still contains a significant portion of individuals who have not yet overcome obsolete, paternalistic attitudes toward disability...”

1988 –

The Air Carrier Access Act was passed prohibiting airlines from refusing to serve people simply because they are disabled and from charging people with disabilities more for airfare than non-disabled travelers.

The Civil Rights Restoration Act counteracted bad case law by clarifying Congress’ original intention. Under the Rehabilitation Act, discrimination in any program or service that receives federal funding – not just the part which actually and directly receives the funding – is illegal.

The ***Fair Housing Act*** amendments prohibited housing discrimination against people with disabilities and families with children. It also provided for architectural accessibility of certain new housing units, renovation of existing units and accessibility modifications at the renter’s expense.

The Technology-Related Assistance Act for Individuals with Disabilities was passed authorizing federal funding to state projects designed to facilitate access to assistive technology.

The Congressional Task Force on the Rights and Empowerment of Americans with Disabilities was created by Rep. Major R. Owens, with Justin Dart and Elizabeth Boggs, co-chairs. The Task Force began building grassroots support for passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Congress overturned Ronald Reagan’s veto of the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987.

In *Honig v. Doe*, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the stay-put rule established under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975. School authorities cannot expel or suspend or otherwise move disabled children from the setting agreed upon in the child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) without a due process hearing.

1989 -

The original version of the American with Disabilities Act was introduced in 1988. It was redrafted and reintroduced in Congress. Disability organizations across the country advocated on its behalf (Patrisha Wright, Marilyn Golden, Liz Savage, Justin Dart Jr., and Elizabeth Boggs, among others).

The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped was renamed the *President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities*.

1990 -

The Americans with Disabilities Act was signed by George W. Bush. The Act provided comprehensive civil rights protection for people with disabilities. Closely modeled after the Civil Rights Act and Section 504, the law was the most sweeping disability rights legislation in history. It mandated that local, state and federal governments and programs be accessible, that businesses with more than 15 employees make "reasonable accommodations" for disabled workers and that public accommodations such as restaurants and stores make "reasonable modifications" to ensure access for disabled members of the public. The act also mandated access in public transportation, communication, and in other areas of public life.

Sam Skinner, U.S. Secretary of Transportation, issued regulations mandating lifts on buses.

The Committee of Ten Thousand was founded to advocate for people with hemophilia who were infected with HIV/AIDS through tainted blood products..

American Disabled for Accessible Public Transit (ADAPT) changed its focus to advocating for personal assistance services, changing its name to American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today (ADAPT).

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act was amended and renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

1992 -

Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act were infused with the philosophy of independent living.

1993 -

The American Indian Disability Legislation Project was established to collect data on Native American disability rights laws and regulations.

A legal case of four men convicted of sexual assault and conspiracy for raping a 17-year old mentally disabled woman in Glen Ridge, New Jersey, highlighted the widespread sexual abuse of people with developmental disabilities.

Holland v. Sacramento City Unified School District affirmed the right of disabled children to attend public school classes with non-disabled children. *The ruling was a major victory in the ongoing effort to ensure enforcement of IDEA.*

1995 -

Justice for All was organized by Justin Dart and others in Washington, D.C.

The U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit in *Helen L. v. Snider* ruled that continued institutionalization of a disabled Pennsylvania woman, when not medically necessary and where there is the option of home care, was a violation of her rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Disability rights advocates perceived this ruling as a landmark decision regarding the rights of people in nursing homes to personal assistance services.

Sandra Jensen, a member of People First, was denied a heart-lung transplant by the Stanford University School of Medicine because she has Down's syndrome. After pressure from disability rights activists, Stanford U School of Medicine administrators reversed their decision. In 1996, Jensen became the first person with Down's syndrome to receive a heart-lung transplant.

1996 -

Congress passed legislation eliminating more than 150,000 disabled children from Social Security rolls along with persons with alcohol and drug dependencies.

Not Dead Yet, formed by disabled advocates to oppose those who support assisted suicide for people with disabilities, focused on the idea of rationing health care to people with severe disabilities and imposition of "do not resuscitate" (DNR) orders for disabled people in hospitals, schools, and nursing homes.

In *Vacco v. Quill* and *Washington v. Glucksberg*, the Supreme Court validated the state prohibition on physician-assisted suicide, deciding that the issue is within the jurisdiction of the states.

1998 -

In *Bragdon v. Abbott*, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the definition of disability includes asymptomatic HIV.

1999 -

In *Carolyn C. Cleveland v. Policy Management Systems Corporation, et. al.*, the Supreme Court decided that people receiving Social Security disability benefits are protected against discrimination under the Americans with Disabilities Act if and when they are able to return to work.

*****In *Olmstead v. L.C. and E.W.*, the Supreme Court decided that individuals with disabilities must be offered services in the most integrated setting.*****

In three employment cases (*Sutton et. al. v. United Air Lines, Inc.*, *Murphy v. United Parcel Service, Inc.* and *Albertsons, Inc. v. Kirkingburg*) the Supreme Court decided that individuals whose conditions do not substantially limit any life activity and are easily correctable are not disabled under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Works Incentives Improvement Act (Ticket to Work) became law, allowing those who require health care benefits to work.

2001 -

The Commonwealth of Virginia House of Delegates approved a resolution expressing regret for its eugenics practices between 1924 and 1979.

2002 -

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) became law in the U.S., and it required voting "systems" to be accessible for all those with disabilities, including special assistance for blind or otherwise visually impaired voters.

2003 -

The U.S. Supreme Court decision *Sell v. United States* imposed stringent limits on the right of a lower court to order the forcible administration of antipsychotic medication to a criminal defendant who had been determined to be incompetent to stand trial for the sole purpose of making them competent and able to be tried.

2005 -

Peggy S. Salters, from South Carolina, became the first survivor of electroshock treatment to win a jury verdict and a large money judgment (\$635,177) in compensation for extensive permanent amnesia and cognitive disability caused by the procedure.

2006 –

In *United States v. Georgia*, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that the protection of the Americans with Disabilities Act extends to persons held in a state prison and protects prison inmates from discrimination on the basis of disability by prison personnel. Specifically, the court held that Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12131–12165., was a proper use of Congressional power under the Fourteenth Amendment, Section 5, making it applicable to prison system officials.

2007 -

Simone D., a psychiatric patient in the Creedmoor Psychiatric Center in New York, won a court ruling which set aside a two-year-old court order to give her electroshock treatment against her will.

2008 –

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act of 2008 became law, and it broadened the scope of who is considered disabled under the law, and when considering whether a person is disabled, the law required that people ignore the beneficial effects of any mitigating measures (except ordinary eyeglasses and contact lenses) the person uses; furthermore, when considering whether a person is substantially limited in a major life activity, which would make them disabled under the law, the law required the consideration of bodily functions as well as other major life activities, and having one major life activity substantially limited is enough; when considering whether a person whose condition is episodic or in remission is substantially limited in a major life activity, the law required the consideration of the person's limitations as they are when the condition is in an active state; furthermore, determining someone is disabled under the law does not require individuals to meet the substantially-limited-in-a-major-life-activity standard, but does not include impairments that are transitory and minor.

2009 –

The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act became law in the U.S., and it expanded the definition of federal hate crime to include those violent crimes in which the victim is selected due to their actual or perceived disability; previously federal hate crimes were defined as only those violent crimes where the victim is selected due to their race, color, religion, or national origin.

2010 -

The 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act, known as CVAA, was signed into law. It requires that unedited, full-length programs shown on TV with captions must also be captioned when they are made available online, with more requirements to be phased in at later dates.

2011 –

On March 15, 2011, new Americans with Disabilities Act rules came into effect. These rules expanded accessibility requirements for recreational facilities such as swimming pools, golf courses, exercise clubs, and boating facilities. They also set standards for the use of wheelchairs and other mobility devices like Segways in public spaces, and changed the standards for things such as selling tickets to events and reserving accessible hotel rooms. The new rules also clearly defined “*service animal*” as “...any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.” This portion of the law also states that the services the

service animal provides must be “directly related to the handler’s disability” and dogs that provide only emotional support or crime deterrence cannot be defined as service animals.

Facilities licensed by the DDS (Department of Developmental Services) in Massachusetts, including but not limited to the *Judge Rotenberg Center*, were banned from subjecting new admissions to severe behavioral interventions including electric shock, long-term restraint, or aversives that pose risk for psychological harm.

2012 –

It was announced that Netflix will offer closed captions on all TV and movie content from September 2014 as part of a settlement with a deaf viewer from Massachusetts (Lee Nettles) who sued the company.[93] In 2012, a federal judge in Springfield, Massachusetts ruled in that lawsuit that Netflix and other online providers that serve the public are subject to the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, the first ruling in the country to recognize that Internet-based businesses are covered by the act.

2013 –

The U.S. Justice Department said in a settlement with Lesley University in Massachusetts that severe food allergies can be considered disabilities under federal law.

The U.S. First Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston, Massachusetts found that insurance companies can be required to pay long-term disability benefits to a recovering drug addict if the person would face a significant risk of relapse by returning to work. This is believed to be the first time a circuit court said that a risk of relapse into substance abuse can constitute a disability, entitling an employee to long-term benefits, according to the attorney for the plaintiff

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