

Advocacy Tools

Internet Resources

As most of you have already discovered the internet is a wonderful resource for advocates. The main problem is figuring out what is useful and what isn't. Below is a list of sites that we have found to be useful. If you have other sites you have discovered please e-mail to us, and we will share them in an updated version of the Empowerment Resources.

Empowerment Resources # 5; Updated October 2008

- **NOTE TO WEB SURFERS**

These links have all been checked for accuracy, but addresses often change. If you view this document on-line, you can either copy and paste the addresses into your browser or use Control + Click to follow the link. If you have problems getting into a site, try navigating from the main address, or Home Page. If you still have trouble, please call the Central Office of Patients' Rights for assistance.

- **ADOBE ACROBAT READER**

Many of the forms on the internet are in "pdf" format. In order to read and print these forms you will need an Adobe Acrobat Reader, which can be downloaded free of charge at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html>.

PORTAL SITES

- **CALIFORNIA HOME PAGE**

<http://www.ca.gov>

California's portal page, including a directory of state agencies.

- **FINDLAW**

<http://www.findlaw.com>

Among the best entry points for finding or searching statutes, regulations federal appellate and Supreme Court cases, legal topical areas, government agency websites, directories of experts, legal practice information, etc.

- **USA.gov**

<http://www.usa.gov>

The U.S. government's official web portal. Provides a means to access official information and services from the federal government. Includes access to disability-related information at <http://www.disabilityinfo.gov>.

STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

Federal

- **UNITED STATES CODE**

<http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode>

This site allows you to pull up a specific statutory section or to search Titles of the U.S. Code.

- **CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, FEDERAL REGISTER**

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>

The *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) is a codification of the general and permanent rules published in the *Federal Register* by the Executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government. An example of this is the Health Care Financing Administration's (HCFA) new regulations for seclusion and restraint that must be followed as a condition for participation in Medi-aid or Medi-care.

State

- **CALIFORNIA WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE**

www.leginfo.ca.gov/html/wic_table_of_contents.html

This code contains patients' rights statutes.

California Legislative Counsel (Leginfo)

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov>

All state statutes (codes) may be accessed here. After entering this site, click the "California Law" button. Check the box next to the code you want (e.g., Probate, Penal, etc.) and click the search button to bring up the table of contents for that code. It also allows word searches of one or more codes simultaneously.

The site is also good place to get copies of pending bills and bills from earlier legislative sessions. (Select "Bill Information.") You can click on "Subscribe" to get e-mail updates (amendments, hearings) on individual pending bills.

- **CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS**

<http://www.calregs.com>

This California Code of Regulations (CCR) website contains the text of the regulations that have been formally adopted by state agencies, reviewed and approved by the Office of Administrative Law, and filed with the Secretary of State. The CCR consists of 28 titles and contains the regulations of approximately 200 regulatory agencies. Note that Title 6 (Governor's Regulations) presently contains no regulations, and Title 24 (California Building Standards) is published separately and not part of this CCR website (see FAQs for further information). Click on "How to use this Website" for detailed instructions you can print out.

- **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
STATUTES/REGULATIONS/MANUAL OF PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES**

<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/PG71.htm>

- **CALIFORNIA MENTAL HEALTH LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

http://www.dmh.ca.gov/Laws_and_Regulations/Statutes.asp

All mental health laws and regulations in one place.

DISABILITY LEGAL AND ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

- **BAZELON CENTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH LAW**

<http://www.bazelon.org>

An excellent Web site with information and alerts on disability issues and legislation, publications, case summaries, and links to other useful sites on mental health law and general disability issues.

- **CALIFORNIA ADVOCATES FOR NURSING HOME REFORM (CANHR)**

<http://www.canhr.org>

This Web site has information about nursing facilities (including IMDs), lists of nursing facility citations, publication lists, recent articles from CANHR newsletters, and legislative updates. This organization is a lawyer referral service for abuse, neglect, estate planning and trust cases--1-800-474-1116.

- **CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF MENTAL HEALTH PATIENTS' RIGHTS ADVOCATES (CAMHPRA)**

<http://www.camhpra.org/home>

This is the Web site for CAMHPRA, which is the professional organization for Patients' Rights Advocates. It is a membership organization working to promote public policy furthering the rights and wellbeing of mental health consumers. This site contains membership information and links to information that is of interest to Patients' Rights Advocates along with general legal resources, statutes and regulations, government agencies, diagnosis and treatment, and consumer concerns and associations.

- **CALIFORNIA FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS (CFILC)**

<http://www.cfilc.org/site/?c=ghKRI0PDloE&b=695113>

The California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, based in Sacramento, is a statewide, non-profit trade organization made up of 25 Independent Living Centers. Through unified action, CFILC envisions civil rights for all people with disabilities. CFILC's mission is to support independent living centers in their local communities through advocating for systems change and promoting access and integration for people with disabilities.

- **CALIFORNIA NETWORK OF MENTAL HEALTH CLIENTS (CNMHC)**

<http://www.californiaclients.org>

The CNMHC—the first statewide, client-run organization in the country—was formed in 1983 as an organization for, by and of persons who have received or are receiving mental health services. The primary goals of the CNMHC are to empower

clients through the development of self-help groups and networking throughout the state; to confront discriminating attitudes about mental health clients; to provide a strong voice of, by and for mental health clients; and to promote and instill the rights of clients in and out of treatment situations, with special attention to the right to freedom of choice. Their Web site contains information on current news, programs, and resources.

- **DISABILITY RIGHTS CALIFORNIA (FORMERLY PROTECTION & ADVOCACY, INC. (PAI))**

<http://disabilityrightsca.org>

There is a list of publications relating to mental health advocacy and services under http://disabilityrightsca.org/issues/mentalhealth_pubs.html. Recently added to this site is the publication, "The Right to Refuse Psychotropic Medication for Forensic Mental Health Clients."

- **NAMI CALIFORNIA**

<http://www.namicalifornia.org>

This is a statewide advocacy group of families, friends, recovering persons with mental illness and professionals who are dedicated to improving the care, treatment, rehabilitation and status of people with mental illness - and the pursuit of cures through research. Links to other mental health resources. Affiliated with NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) at www.NAMI.org.

- **NATIONAL DISABILITY RIGHTS NETWORK (NDRN)**

<http://www.ndrn.org>

Website for the nonprofit membership organization for the protection and advocacy systems. Includes P&A news and links to other state protection and advocacy agencies and CAP programs, disability organizations, government agencies and departments, publications, policy updates, and resources for people with disabilities.

- **OFFICE OF CLIENTS' RIGHTS ADVOCACY**

<http://disabilityrightsca.org/about/OCRA.htm>

The Office of Clients Rights Advocacy (OCRA) is a statewide office run by Disability Rights California, through a contract with the California Department of

Developmental Services. OCRA employs a Clients' Rights Advocate (CRA) at each regional center. The CRA is a person trained to help protect the rights of people with developmental disabilities.

- **CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF PATIENTS' RIGHTS**

<http://disabilityrightsca.org/about/OPR.htm>

The California Office of Patients' Rights (COPR) is a unit within Disability Rights California. It is contracted through the Department of Mental Health. It has statutorily mandated duties that include:

- Ensuring that the mental health laws, regulations, and policies on the rights of recipients of mental health services are observed and protected in state hospitals and in licensed health and community care facilities;
- Providing training support and technical assistance to county and state hospital patient rights' advocates;
- Serving as a liaison between county patients' rights advocates and the Department of Mental Health;
- Responding to patients' rights complaints referred by local mental health directors or DMH;
- Analyzing and making recommendations regarding legislation on patients' rights; and,
- Developing quality assurance service goals and measurable outcomes to improve the quality of California patients' rights program.

COPR also provides direct advocacy services on-site to the five state hospitals, Atascadero, Coalinga, Metropolitan, Napa and Patton.

OTHER USEFUL LEGAL AND ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

- **CALIFORNIA HOUSING LAW PROJECT**

<http://www.housingadvocates.org>

The California Housing Law Project is an advocacy organization that lobbies in the California State Legislature for affordable housing and tenants rights for low income people, the disabled, elderly, homeless and farmworkers. The California Housing Law Project provides free updates via e-mail on housing policy issues and actions to which you can subscribe. It also contains information on current housing legislation and other housing-related links.

- **CALIFORNIA STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**
<http://www.scdd.ca.gov>

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) is established by state and federal law as an independent state agency to ensure that people with developmental disabilities and their families receive the services and supports they need.

- **LEGAL SERVICES OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA**
<http://www.lsnec.net>

Includes both California and national legal resources; state and federal courts, decisions, and rules; state and federal laws and legislative resources; state and local government web sites; law school web sites; public policy web sites; and other resources. Also features All County Letters from the Department of Social Services which explain the welfare changes and how to administer CalWORKS.

- **NATIONAL COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS**
<http://www.nationalhomeless.org>

Directories of national, state and local homeless organizations; events calendars; fact sheets; online library resources and links to other Internet resources related to homelessness.

AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS – CALIFORNIA

- **CALIFORNIA COUNTIES**
<http://www.counties.org>

Lists of (and links to) county web sites.

- **CALIFORNIA COURTS**
<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov>

This is the California Judicial Council's home page. It has valuable links to Web sites for each county's superior and municipal courts, state and local court rules and forms, California Supreme Court and appellate court slip opinions (not the published version) from the last 60 days, etc. Specifically, check out <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/forms/allforms.htm>. You will find copies of any court

form you may need, including the Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus. It also includes a very useful Self-Help Center: <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp>

- **CALIFORNIA AGENCY DIRECTORY**

<http://www.ca.gov/About/Government/agencyindex.html>

Directory to all state agencies, including those selected agencies listed below.

- **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov>

- **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES**

<http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

The former Department of Health Services was re-organized into the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and the Department of Public Health (DPH). Medi-Cal and Mental Health Managed Care services are under DHCS.

- **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH**

<http://www.dmh.cahwnet.gov>

This is the home page for the California Department of Mental Health. It includes descriptions of mental health programs, information for county administrators and providers, and links to press releases and publications. In addition, it contains IT Web Services, a collection of newly developed web applications that allow DMH business partners to access information over the Internet. To view the confidential system information contained on this site, an enrollment form must be filled out and faxed to DMH for approval. You will need an Adobe Acrobat Reader to access lists of state and national resources.

- **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

<http://ww2.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

The former Department of Health Services was re-organized into the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and the Department of Public Health (DPH). DPH is responsible for various public health, disease prevention, and environmental safety issues.

- **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (CDSS)**
<http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/default.htm>

CDSS is responsible for numerous programs, including IHSS, CalWORKs, foster care, and licensing of community care facilities.

- **CDSS CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**
<http://www.childsworld.ca.gov>

- **LICENSING COMPLAINTS (DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS)**
<http://www.dca.ca.gov>

Included on this web site is information on how to file a complaint against a licensee. If you are not sure where to register a complaint, check out the "Complaint Referral Table"

<http://www.dca.ca.gov/publications/guide/comptable/index.shtml>.

- **LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM**
<http://www.aging.ca.gov/programs/ombudsman.asp>

The California State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program investigates and attempts to resolve complaints made by, or on behalf of, individual residents in long-term care facilities which include nursing homes, residential care facilities for the elderly, and assisted living facilities. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program investigates elder abuse complaints in long-term care facilities and in the adult residential care facilities and adult day health care facilities. The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman (OSLTCO) develops policy and provides oversight to the local Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs. OSLTCO staff confer with state licensing agencies regarding difficult cases, meet with the California Department of Aging staff counsel(s) to clarify laws, develop legislation to define program roles and provide ongoing statewide Ombudsman training. Also at this address is a link to 35 contacts by county.

- **MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA**
<http://www.medbd.ca.gov>

The Medical Board of California is the State agency that licenses **medical** doctors, investigates complaints, disciplines those who violate the law. This is their official site. Under "Services for Consumers" you will find complaint information,

forms and publications, information on patient access to medical records, and physician licensee information. If you click on “Forms & Publications” and then “Consumer Forms & Materials,” you will find the brochure for how complaints are handled and the consumer complaint form which were included in your basic advocacy training binders. Through this site you can verify the license of any person licensed by the Medical Board of California.

<http://www.medbd.ca.gov/lookup.html>.

- **THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA**

http://www.calbar.ca.gov/state/calbar/calbar_home.jsp

This Web site contains information on the State Bar activities and organizations and includes names and addresses of all attorneys admitted to practice in California. It also has information on any record of public discipline.

AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS – FEDERAL/NATIONAL

- **CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS)**

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov>

CMS, formerly HCFA, is the federal agency that administers Medicare, Medicaid (Medi-Cal) and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

- **THE JOINT COMMISSION (FORMERLY THE JOINT COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION OF HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS (JCAHO))**

<http://www.jointcommission.org>

The Joint Commission evaluates and accredits nearly 19,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States. An independent, not-for-profit organization, the Joint Commission is the nation’s predominant standards-setting and accrediting body in health care. Since 1951, the Joint Commission has developed state-of-the-art, professionally based standards and evaluated the compliance of health care organizations against these benchmarks.

MISCELLANEOUS REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- **DISABILITY ETIQUETTE HANDBOOK**

http://www.sanantonio.gov/ada/handbook_Front.asp

Published by the City of San Antonio Disability Access Office, this site contains a section on “Dos and Don’ts” (<http://www.sanantonio.gov/ada/handbook15.asp>) and a “Glossary of Acceptable Terms”: <http://www.sanantonio.gov/ada/handbook17.asp>

- **GOOGLE SEARCH ENGINE**

<http://www.google.com>

This is a very straight forward and simple search engine which yields relevant hits. Use Advanced Search to do more sophisticated searches.

- **HEALTHFINDER**

<http://www.healthfinder.gov>

This is a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services site that is searchable by subject and has links to information from government health agencies, public health groups, professional groups, universities, support groups, and medical journals.

- **LAW.COM LEGAL DICTIONARY**

<http://dictionary.law.com>

- **MEDLINEPLUS**

<http://medlineplus.gov>

Useful for research on medical or clinical information on particular disabilities, treatment modalities, drug information, medical ethics, etc. A medical dictionary is available on the site: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/mplusdictionary.html>.

- **PHYSICIANS DESK REFERENCE (PDR.NET)**

<http://www.pdr.net/home/pdrHome.aspx>

This is a site that provides the user with a variety of medical information including access to drug information and another medical dictionary. It requires that you register to use it, but most information is provided free.