

Voting Rights of People with Developmental Disabilities

A Roundtable Conference
sponsored by the
Disability and Abuse Project

June 20, 2014 – 9:30 am to 12:30 pm
at the Olympic Collection in West Los Angeles

A Roundtable Conference will be held to focus on the policies and practices of the Limited Conservatorship System in Los Angeles County (and California) which frequently takes away the voting rights of adults with developmental disabilities who are declared to be conservatees.

Recent monitoring of the Limited Conservatorship System has revealed that proposed conservatees are having their voting rights removed: (1) without regard to federal laws that protect the voting rights of people with developmental disabilities; (2) without training of or advocacy by court appointed attorneys who are supposed to protect the legal rights of proposed conservatees; (3) without awareness by parents that their adult children generally should have the right to vote; (4) without apparent training of probate investigators of criteria for determining the capability of proposed conservatees to vote; (5) without assessment of voting capacities by Regional Centers which are left out of the process on this issue; (6) without close scrutiny by Probate judges and without evidentiary hearings that show clear and convincing evidence that proposed conservatees are unable, with assistance, to complete an affidavit of voter registration; (7) without involvement or monitoring of this problem by Area Boards of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities; (8) without involvement, monitoring, or advocacy by the Office of Client Rights of Disability Rights California which is under contract with the State Department of Developmental Disabilities to protect the rights of Regional Center clients; and (9) without the awareness of the Attorney General of California and the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

Agencies that should be protecting the voting rights of people with developmental disabilities will be invited to this Roundtable Conference on Voting Rights. Their attention will be called to this problem. Participants will discuss solutions to what appears to be the routine disenfranchisement of an entire class of voting-age California citizens. Strategies will be discussed for filing petitions with the court to reinstate voting rights for limited conservatees who have been improperly disqualified to vote due to mistake or neglect (by participants in the conservatorship system).

Representatives from these groups will be invited to the table: Association of Regional Center Agencies (2); Area Board 10 (1); State Council on Developmental Disabilities (2); Secretary of State (1); Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters (1); California Department of Justice (1); United States Department of Justice (1); City of Los Angeles ADA Compliance Office (1); Bet Tzedek Legal Services (1); Disability Rights California (2); State Department of Developmental Services (1); Los Angeles Superior Court Probate Investigator's Office (1); The Arc of California (1); TASH (1); ACLU (1); Los Angeles County Bar Association (1).

For more information, contact:

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