

CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS AND DISABILITY LEGISLATION

1964--Civil Rights Act: prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, and creed; later, gender was added as a protected class.

1968--Architectural Barriers Act: prohibits architectural barriers in all federally owned or leased buildings.

1970--Urban Mass Transit Act: requires that all new mass transit vehicles be equipped with wheelchair lifts. As mentioned earlier, it was twenty years, primarily because of machinations of the American Public Transit Association (APTA), before the part of the law requiring wheelchair lifts was implemented.

1973--Rehabilitation Act: particularly Title V, Sections 501, 503, and 504, prohibits discrimination in federal programs and services and all other programs or services receiving federal funding.

1975--Developmental Disabilities Bill of Rights Act: among other things, establishes Protection and Advocacy services (P & A).

1975--Education of All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142): requires free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment possible for children with disabilities. This law is now called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

1978--Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act: provides for consumer-controlled centers for independent living.

1983--Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act: provides for the Client Assistance Program (CAP), an advocacy program for consumers of rehabilitation and independent living services.

1985--Mental Illness Bill of Rights Act: requires protection and advocacy services (P & A) for people with mental illness.

1988--Civil Rights Restoration Act: counteracts bad case law by clarifying Congress' original intention that under the Rehabilitation Act, discrimination in ANY program or service that is a part of an entity receiving federal funding--not just the part which actually and directly receives the funding--is illegal.

1988--Air Carrier Access Act: prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in air travel and provides for equal access to air transportation services.

1988--Fair Housing Amendments Act: prohibits discrimination in housing against people with disabilities and families with children. Also provides for architectural accessibility of certain new housing units, renovation of existing units, and accessibility modifications at the renter's expense.

1988 -- The Technical-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act (the "Tech-Act"): authorized federal funds to states to plan and develop consumer-responsive assistance for individuals with functional deficits or disabilities.

1990--Americans with Disabilities Act: provides comprehensive civil rights protection for people with disabilities; closely modeled after the Civil Rights Act and the Section 504 of Title V of the Rehabilitation Act and its regulations.

1990--The Television Decoder Circuitry Act requires closed caption decoders to be part of all televisions with screens 13 inches and larger.

1992--Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act: provides for greater consumer control through the development of Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs). Title I presumption of eligibility and 60-day eligibility determination period.

1993--National Voter Registration Act: Also known as the "Motor Voter Act" One of the basic purposes of the act is to increase the historically low registration rates of people with disabilities that have resulted from discrimination. The act requires all offices of state-funded programs that are primarily engaged in providing services to people with disabilities to provide all program applicants with voter registration forms, to assist them in completing the forms, and to transmit completed forms to the appropriate state official.

1997--Reauthorization of IDEA: To strengthen and improve education programs and services for children with disabilities.

1997—Civil Rights Of Institutionalized Persons Act (CRIPA): Authorizes the U.S. Attorney General to investigate conditions of confinement at state and local government institutions such as prisons, jails, pretrial detention centers, juvenile correctional facilities, publicly operated nursing homes, and institutions for people with psychiatric or developmental disabilities

1998-- Workforce Investment Act / Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act: The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) passed combining all previous labor training and education acts, such as JPTA into one Act. The act established "one-stop" shop to assist displaced workers in finding employment. The Rehabilitation Act was included in full as Title IV of WIA.

1999--Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvement Act: Removes barriers that have required people with disabilities to choose between health care coverage and work. The law also increases consumer choice in obtaining rehabilitation and vocational services through the establishment of a Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program.

1999 – Olmstead Act: Required states to place qualified individuals with disabilities in community settings rather than institutions.

1999--Telecommunications Act: An amendment to the Communications Act of 1934 requiring manufacturers of telecommunications equipment and providers of telecommunications services to ensure equipments and services are accessible for people with disabilities. This includes television shows to have close caption and cell phones compatible with hearing aids.

2002—Help America Vote Act: States must meet new federal requirements, including provisional ballots, statewide computerized voter lists, "second chance" voting, and disability access. States will receive federal funds for these purposes and to improve the administration of elections.

2002-- Farm Security and Investment Act: The new law authorizes the AgrAbility program until 2007. This is a program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help farmers with disabilities remain in farming