



## DISABILITY RIGHTS LOUISIANA

Protect. Advocate. Empower.

# Rights of Persons with Mental Illness in Institutions

Disability Rights Louisiana (DRLA) is a statewide non-profit agency providing FREE legal services, advocacy, and other supports to people with disabilities of all ages.

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If you are a person with mental illness who is admitted to a treatment facility (e.g. public or private hospital, community facility for individuals with mental illness, halfway house, nursing home, or substance abuse facility), you have the following rights provided under Louisiana Law (R.S. 28:171).

- The right to an attorney and the right to communicate with your attorney in a private place at all times
- The right to a copy of your rights in a language you understand
- The right to communicate privately with persons that you choose by mail, telephone, and visits
- The right to talk on the telephone and have visitors each day
- The right to wear your own clothes and keep personal things
- The right to spend a reasonable amount of money on small items, snacks, and soft drinks
- The right to have a private space for your personal things
- The right to be disciplined in a way that is appropriate; restraint and seclusion cannot be used to punish or discipline you
- The right to receive appropriate medicine as ordered by your doctor
- The right to a treatment plan that is set up to meet your individual needs
- The right to receive treatment in a place that allows you to have the most freedom possible
- The right to leave the facility when your condition improves enough so that you can receive treatment in the community
- The right to have a private doctor examine you at your own expense

Involuntary hospitalization or judicial commitment does not mean loss of your rights to make decisions about your life. You retain that right unless a court has declared you incompetent (interdicted) and has appointed a curator to be legally responsible for you.

**If you believe that your rights have been violated or you need more information, call Disability Rights Louisiana: **1-800-960-7705****

**Leave your name, the name of the facility and your patient ID number. An Intake Specialist will call you back within 3-5 business days.**

\*Advocates from Disability Rights Louisiana (DRLA), the Protection and Advocacy system for the state of Louisiana visit and monitor this facility. During these visits, DRLA advocates may speak to residents about rights and services available from DRLA.