

REVIEWED

By Chris Tighe at 10:20 am, Aug 08, 2017

[Equip for Equality](#)

Advancing the Human & Civil Rights of People with Disabilities in Illinois

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Mission

Equip for Equality's mission is to advance the human and civil rights of children and adults with disabilities in Illinois.



We administer the federally mandated Protection & Advocacy System for Illinois

State Protection & Advocacy Systems serve as a legal advocate for people with disabilities and as an independent watchdog. To carry out our responsibilities under federal law, we are granted broad, federal statutory powers.

Established in 1985, Equip for Equality is a nationally recognized, private, not-for-profit organization that:

- **Promotes self-advocacy** and serves as **a legal advocate** for people with disabilities, and handles individual cases and systems-change litigation to achieve broad-based societal reforms
- **Independently monitors** public and private institutions and programs serving people with disabilities
- Serves as a **watchdog over the government, business and not-for-profit sectors**
- **Advocates through public policy and legislative activities** to give people greater choices in their lives and ensure their independence and inclusion in all aspects of community living
- Empowers people and their families through our **disability rights trainings**, so they can advocate for themselves or others
- Serves as the **federally mandated Protection & Advocacy System for the state of Illinois**

Remove barriers

Equip for Equality supports the rights of people to make their own decisions and seeks to remove barriers that prevent them from being productive, independent and successful in all aspects of their lives: school, college, employment, recreation, sports, independent living and civic involvement.

We want to break down barriers that hold back people with disabilities, preventing them from making their own decisions and leading their own lives. We tackle common problems that affect large numbers of people with disabilities in order to find solutions to help others avoid the same problems in the future. We pursue a sophisticated combination of strategies that include public policy and legislative reform; class action litigation; watchdog reports on troubled institutions; along with recommended action.

Level the playing field

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other reforms meant to level the playing field for people with disabilities have improved accessibility and achieved other important changes in society. Despite these advances, however, many people with disabilities are still routinely denied their rights in education, employment, housing, government programs and in other important ways. Others find their basic needs are neglected or that they are physically or emotionally abused in institutions and in their own homes. When this

occurs, **people can turn to Equip for Equality for help.**



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