# legal/advocacy groups and resources

RESOURCES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

# LEGAL/ADVOCACY GROUPS AND RESOURCES

This document includes a non-exhaustive list of non-profit legal services and advocacy organizations in Virginia that provide no-cost legal or advocacy services, technical assistance, and/or referrals to the public. Other attorney or non-attorney services, including pro bono services and special education resources may be available in your community. The Virginia Lawyer Referral Service (VLRS), a program of the Virginia State Bar, provides a low-cost attorney referral and consultation service. For more information about this service, contact VLRS at (800) 552-7977 or [Virginia Lawyer Referral Service](https://vlrs.community.lawyer/). The VDOE provides this list for informational purposes only and makes no endorsement or representation regarding the scope or quality of any organizations or services.

### [**COUNCIL OF PARENTS, ATTORNEYS and ADVOCATES**](https://www.copaa.org/) **(COPAA)**

COPAA offers a list of members who can assist parents of children with disabilities. However, it does not provide direct services, individual advocacy or representation to children with disabilities.

### Contact Information:

* Address: P.O. Box 6767, Towson, Maryland 21285

Phone: (434) 451-5270

Email: [contact@copaa.org](mailto:contact@copaa.org)

## [disAbility LAW CENTER OF VIRGINIA](https://www.dlcv.org/) (dLCV)

dLCV assists with disability-related problems, such as abuse, neglect, and discrimination. dLCV helps people with disabilities obtain services and treatment. dLCV also provides advocacy services and/or legal representation for individuals, including students with disabilities.

* CONTACT INFORMATION:
* Address: 1512 Willow Lawn Drive, Richmond, Virginia 23230

Voice/TTY Relay: (800) 552-3962

Email: [info@dLCV.org](mailto:info@dLCV.org)

### [**ENDEPENDENCE CENTER, INC**](http://www.endependence.org/) (EC)

EC offers a referral service for parents who have children with disabilities and are in need of legal assistance. In addition, EC will advise parents in the filing of special education complaints and represent parents in special education hearings. EC has an advocate on staff.

* CONTACT INFORMATION:
* Address: 6000 E. Virginia Beach Blvd., Norfolk, Virginia 23502
* Phone: (757) 461-8007

Fax: (757) 455-8223

Email: [ecinorf@endependence.org](mailto:ecinorf@endependence.org)

## Family to Family NETWORK of VIRGINIA

The Family to Family Network of Virginia, or F2F Network, an initiative of the Center for Family Involvement at Virginia Commonwealth University’s Partnership for People with Disabilities, has grown from one statewide Family to Family Health Information and Education Center begun in 2005 to a six regional office Family to Family Network where family members of culturally and linguistically diverse children and adults with disabilities (of all ages) have people in their own communities to call upon in their efforts to identify and obtain needed information, services and community supports.

The Partnership, a university center for excellence in developmental disabilities, receives federal and state funding to implement the F2F Network using a replicable peer support model based on [Parent to Parent USA](https://www.p2pusa.org/about)evidenced-based practices in matching families one-to-one using trained, volunteer parents, grandparents, siblings, and self-advocates. The Family to Family Network is P2P USA’s recognized Virginia alliance member.

The local networks provide:

1. 1:1 emotional, informational and disability and community services and systems navigational support
2. Family-friendly information and resource referrals on topics such as special education and early intervention services, health care and related financing (such as private insurance, TriCare and Medicaid), home and community-based Medicaid Waiver long term care services, disability services, and other community resources
3. Expertise in military services for military families
4. Expertise in autism through partnerships with local autism groups
5. Expertise in Hearing Loss through collaboration with EHDI, DOE, and Hands and Voices
6. Expertise in mental and behavioral health through collaboration with NAMI
7. Leadership development to support families in advocating for and participating in the design of more family-friendly, effective service systems
8. Connections to cultural brokers from culturally & linguistically diverse communities FAMILY TO FAMILY NETWORK – Center For Family Involvement

* CONTACT INFORMATION:
* Address: Virginia Commonwealth University

Partnership for People with Disabilities

Center for Family Involvement

700 East Franklin Street

P.O. Box 843020

Richmond, Virginia 23284-3020

Helpline: (877) 567-1122  
Fax: (804) 828-0042  
TTY Relay: (800) 828-1120

EMAIL: [cfihelpline@vcu.edu](mailto:cfihelpline@vcu.edu)

F2F Network Director, Nickie Brandenburger: [tnbrandenburg@vcu.edu](mailto:tnbrandenburg@vcu.edu)

## legal aid justice center (LAJC)

## [Special Education Pro Bono Project](https://www.justice4all.org/special-education/)

In order to expand our capacity to provide individual legal assistance to income-eligible families in special education matters, LAJC operates a special education pro bono project. We train and partner with local attorneys to provide legal representation in the following special education areas:

a. Eligibility/Child Find

b. Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings

c. Independent Educational Evaluations (IEE)

d. State special education complaints

e. Mediation

f. Due process hearings

### Regional locations:

Legal Aid Justice Center

1000 Preston Avenue, Ste. A, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Phone: (434) 977-0553

Fax: (434) 977-0558

Legal Aid Justice Center

6066 Leesburg Pike, Ste. 520, Falls Church, Virginia 22041

Phone: (703) 778-3450

Fax: (703) 778-3454

Legal Aid Justice Center

237 N. Sycamore St. Suite A, Petersburg, Virginia 23803  
Phone: (804) 862-2205  
Fax: (804) 643-2059

Legal Aid Justice Center

626 East Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219

Phone: (804) 643-1086

Fax: (804) 643-2059

### [**LEGAL AID SOCIETY FOR EASTERN VIRGINIA**](https://www.laseva.org/) **(LASEV)**

Legal Aid Society for Eastern Virginia offers a referral service for parents who have children with disabilities and are in need of legal assistance. It serves Accomack County, Northampton County, James City County, York County, Williamsburg, Newport News, Hampton, Norfolk, Virginia Beach and Chesapeake.

* CONTACT INFORMATION:
* Address: 125 St. Paul’s Boulevard, Ste. 400 Norfolk, Virginia 23510

Phone: (757) 627-5423

Email:[info@laseva.org](mailto:info@laseva.org)

## [Legal services of northern virginia](http://www.lsnv.org/) (LSNV)

Legal Services of Northern Virginia, which offers eligible low-income families free consultation, advice and representation regarding special education issues including school discipline matters. Legal Services of Northern Virginia serves families in Northern Virginia.

* CONTACT INFORMATION:
* Address: 10700 Page Avenue, Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Phone: (703) 778-6800 or (866) 534-5243

Email: [help@lsnv.org](mailto:help@lsnv.org)

## [PARENT EDUCATIONAL ADVOCACY TRAINING CENTER](http://www.peatc.org/) (PEATC)

PEATC is a statewide non-profit that strives to empower families who have children with disabilities, and support the professionals who serve them, by providing tools and information needed to effectively advocate for their child when navigating special education and disability services in Virginia.

PEATC has offices throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia: Richmond, Hampton Roads, Northern Virginia, Shenandoah Valley, Blue Ridge, and Southwest Virginia.

All offices can be reached through their toll free phone number.

* CONTACT INFORMATION:
* Address: 403 Holiday Ct, Suite 104, Warrenton, Virginia 20186

Phone: (703) 923-0010

Toll Free: (800) 869-6782

TDD: (703) 536-3023

Fax: (800) 693-3514

Email: [partners@peatc.org](mailto:partners@peatc.org)

## [Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society](http://www.svlas.org/) (SVLAS)

SVLAS provides free, high quality civil legal services to low-income residents of 17 counties and four small cities in southwestern Virginia.

* CONTACT INFORMATION:
* Address: 227 W. Cherry Street, Marion, Virginia 24354

Phone: (276) 783-8300

(888) 201-2772 Toll free in Virginia

## Special Education Advocacy Law PELE Clinic

* Parents Engaged for Learning Equality (PELE) Clinic

The PELE accepts applications from Williamsburg, Newport News, and Hampton. Cases outside of the designated service areas will be accepted on a limited case-by-case basis.

#### The PELE Clinic provides Legal Advice and Representation in the following areas:

**Special Education:**

* Identification and eligibility for children with disabilities who need special education;
* Evaluation and testing of special needs children, including the parent’s right to an independent evaluation;
* IEP meetings concerning goals and services for children with special needs;
* Creation of appropriate Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans;
* Appropriate placement for children with special needs.
* Representation at administrative hearings, such as Due Process Hearings and Mediation hearings to resolve disputes with the school system regarding special education services;
* School discipline issues, including Manifestation Determination Reviews;

**Other Issues:**

* Out-of-Zone Transfer Requests and school enrollment for students with special needs.
* Transition Services Assistance and Advocacy for students with special needs.
* CONTACT INFORMATION:
* Address: William & Mary School of Law  
   Post Office Box 8795, Williamsburg, Virginia 23187-8795

Phone: (757) 221-5735

Fax: (757) 221-1855

Email:  [pele@wm.edu](mailto:pele@wm.edu)

## [virginia legal aid society, inc.](http://www.vlas.org/) (VLAS)

VLAS provides free legal services to eligible low- income residents in 20 counties and seven cities in central, south, and western Virginia. VLAS serves these communities by providing free information, advice and representation in areas that include special education. In addition, VLAS represents and provides legal advocacy to expelled or suspended students with disabilities on issues that include the provision of special education services.

* CONTACT INFORMATION:
* Address: Administrative Office

513 Church Street, Lynchburg, Virginia 24504

Administrative Office number: (434) 528-4721

(866) 534-5243 (Toll-free client access #)

Revised March 2021