
Cape Organization for Rights of the Disabled

NEWS UPDATE
February 2011

PCA Services Under Attack.... Again!

On April 12 CORD staff and consumers joined nearly 200 PCA's, PCA users and advocates at the State House in Boston to successfully protest Governor Patrick's proposed cuts to the PCA program. Governor Patrick proposed to deny PCA services to people who are currently receiving less than 14 hours of services per week as a means to balance the state budget.

After a rally outside of the House lobby, CORD's crew visited local legislators to explain the benefits of the PCA program and the devastating impact of taking these services away. They explained that while 14 hours may seem like a small amount, losing those 14 hours can destroy the lives of those who need them. Jobs can be lost if PCA users no longer have a PCA to help them get ready for work. People who are unable to clean their homes may end up living in unsanitary conditions, eventually getting evicted and becoming homeless. Fourteen hours of PCA services can mean the difference between living at home in your community among family and friends with choices of how to live your life and being locked away in an institution.

For the moment, cuts to the PCA program are off the table, but our work is not done yet. Call your legislators and tell them what the PCA program means to you and that it must be spared from cuts. Let them know that the budget cannot be balanced on the backs of people with disabilities! Call CORD to find out what you can do to fight for the PCA program.



Photos above: CORD members joined other disability rights activists at the State House to protest proposed cuts to the Personal Care Attendant program.

HELP WANTED

Independent Living Advocate: Full-time (37.50 hours per week) in CORD's Independent Living program. Will provide skills training, peer support, individual and systemic advocacy, and information & referral to people with disabilities. Must be committed to civil rights and able to learn about a wide range of services, benefits, and laws for people with disabilities. Salary is \$12 per hour plus benefits.

Community and Systems Advocate: Full-time (37.50 hours per week). Will perform presentations on the Cape and Islands regarding CORD's services as well as assistive technology and disability laws and regulations. Will also perform advocacy on a systemic level on behalf of the organization. Travel to Boston and across Massachusetts is required. Must be committed to civil rights and be able to communicate effectively in writing and on the phone and be comfortable speaking to large groups. Salary is \$12 per hour plus benefits.

Please send your letter of interest and resume for either position to CORD, ATTN: Donna Verrette, Office Manager, 106 Bassett Lane, Hyannis, MA 02601. No phone calls, please.

People with disabilities and minorities are encouraged to apply.

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Kristen Jung, IL Advocate/Community First
Danielle Clements, IL-VR Advocate
June Barrett, DHILS Advocate
Nanette Jerige, I&R Specialist
Elaine (Penne) Dupuis, Receptionist/Clerical Assistant
Vanessa Hattersley, Receptionist/Clerical Assistant

Cape Organization for Rights of the Disabled
106 Bassett Lane, Hyannis, MA 02601
(508) 775-8300/1-800-541-0282 (both #'s V/TTY)
Fax (508) 775-7022
www.cilcapecod.org

Upcoming Events

Special Education Workshop: Measuring Student Progress: Goals and Benchmarks -

Wednesday, 3/9/11 (snow date 3/10/11). Learning to formulate goals and benchmarks with the team gives the parents the tools to make sure the child's program is effective. **Please RSVP and request reasonable accommodations by Wednesday, 3/2/11.**

SILC Education Day at State House, Boston - Monday, 3/14/11. **Please RSVP by Monday, 3/7/11.**

Pizza and Game Night - Tuesday, 3/29/11, 5-8 p.m. at CORD. Play cards and board games and get to know other CORD members and people with disabilities. Pizza and soda will be provided so your RSVP is required, please! **Please RSVP and request reasonable accommodations by Tuesday, 3/22/11.** Suggested (but not required) donation = \$3.

Transition Resource Fair - Thursday, 4/7/11, 3-7 p.m. at the EOHHS Building, 181 North Street, Hyannis. Presented by the Cape and Islands Transition Team. Learn about services for adults with disabilities on the Cape. This is a resource fair for professionals, parents, students and anyone who is looking for information about transition services on Cape Cod.

Easter Egg Coloring - Thursday, 4/21/11, 1-3 p.m. at CORD. **Please RSVP and request reasonable accommodations by Thursday, 4/14/11.** Suggested (but not required) donation = \$2.

To RSVP and request reasonable accommodations, please call CORD at 508-775-8300 or 1-800-541-0282 (both numbers V/TTY).

CORD attempts to maintain a scent-free environment that is safe and comfortable for all. Please do not wear perfume, cologne, or other scented products to these events.

Do You Need CORD's Help But You're Not a CORD Consumer?

Are you not a CORD consumer but still need some help? Call CORD at 508-775-8300 or 1-800-541-0282 (both numbers V/TTY) and speak with CORD's Information & Referral (I&R) Specialist Nan Jerige. In addition to answering your questions, Nan can also send PCA lists, housing and benefits applications, information on your rights and more.

You can also meet with CORD's Advocate of the Day (AoD). The AoD program is designed to assist people who don't have appointments but need to see an advocate. To make the most of your AoD meeting it is best to call CORD's I&R Specialist and have as much information sent to you ahead of time and to fill out applications as much as possible at home. Please understand that time spent with the AoD may be limited in order to accommodate the number of people needing to speak with the AoD or due to the complexity of why you have come to CORD. If your issue can't be resolved during the meeting, you will be given the opportunity to make an appointment with the AoD for another day.

Individual Services from CORD

CORD's Independent Living (IL) and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living (DHILS) programs aim to empower the consumer. Services, which are consumer-controlled, include:

- **Information & Referral:** CORD provides information about disability-related issues, resources, and benefits;
- **Independent Living Skills Training:** CORD helps consumers attain the skills needed to achieve their maximum independence level;
- **Peer Support:** CORD provides support and assistance with problem-solving and goal-setting among people with disabilities;
- **Advocacy:** CORD provides individual and systemic advocacy to assist and better equip people to confront barriers such as discrimination, lack of access, and unresponsive service systems.

The DHILS program is a subcontract of DEAF, Inc. and is especially designed to serve people who are D/deaf and hard of hearing. Staff provide information on assistive technology, emergency preparedness, health insurance, governmental benefits, communication access, and making your home safe and accessible.

CORD's Transition to Adulthood Program (TAP) works with students aged 14-22 who are transitioning from Special Education to the community.

Call CORD at 508-775-8300 (V/TTY) for more information on consumer services.

CORD Needs You!

CORD invites you to become a dues-paying member. For over 25 years, CORD has been a leader in battles for fair housing, the ADA, communication access, expanded bus service for the Cape, accessible ferries, affordable health care, attendant services, and many other issues that enhance independent living.

Yes, I want to pay my annual \$20 dues Yes, I want to make an additional donation

I would like to become a CORD member and this is what I am able to give \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Send to: CORD, 106 Bassett Lane, Hyannis, MA 02601

It's Tax Time!

While tax time might not be everybody's favorite time of the year, the U.S. Justice Department made things a bit easier for people who are D/deaf or hard of hearing. On January 31, 2011 the Justice Department announced a settlement agreement under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with H&R Block to ensure effective communication with people who are D/deaf and hard of hearing who want to use H&R Block to do their taxes or who want to take the H&R Block tax courses.

Under the agreement, which resolves an ADA complaint filed by a person who is deaf, H&R Block must provide auxiliary aids and services, including *qualified* sign language interpreters; adopt *and* enforce a policy on effective communication for all its offices nationwide; post the policy on its websites and in employee manuals; establish and maintain a list of sign language interpreters; post a notice in a conspicuous location in all H&R Block office reception areas informing people who are D/deaf and hard of hearing of their right to communication access; provide staff training on effective communication; and monitor the compliance of franchisees. H&R Block is also paying a \$20,000 civil penalty and \$5,000 in damages to the person who filed the ADA complaint.

If you feel that H&R Block or any other business has violated your rights under the ADA, call CORD at 508-775-8300 or 1-800-541-0282 (both numbers V/TTY) and learn what you can do to fight back.

CORD Receives Large Donation

CORD was honored recently to receive a donation of \$15,000 from Berkshire Healthcare Systems, Inc., parent company of Bourne Manor and Windsor Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. "Over the past several years we have observed the good work that the Cape Organization for [the] Rights of the Disabled has done for those in need in this community. Your organization provides invaluable support to many of the individuals we have served within our facilities, and has assisted in achieving successful transitions to independent living in the community," said William C. Jones, Executive Vice President, in his letter to CORD.

"This is the largest donation we have received in my 16 years with CORD," said CORD's executive director Coreen Brinckerhoff. "I'm extremely pleased that they see the value of the work CORD does in transitioning people with disabilities from nursing facilities back into the community." If you or a family member are in a nursing facility and would like to move back to the community, please call CORD at 508-775-8300 or 1-800-541-0282 (both numbers V/TTY).

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to CORD, you may do so online with a credit card at www.cilcapecod.org or by sending a check to CORD, 106 Bassett Lane, Hyannis, MA 02601. Your support is greatly appreciated.

**Cape Organization for
Rights of the Disabled (CORD)**
106 Bassett Lane
Hyannis, MA 02601

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

District Consumer Advisory Council

The District Consumer Advisory Council (DCAC) is located in four regions throughout Massachusetts and is made up of consumers who are receiving or have received services from the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), MRC staff, and staff from Massachusetts Independent Living Centers (ILC's). The purpose of the Council is not only to educate but to work with the Consumer Involvement (CI) program to ensure the rights of people with disabilities regarding employment, housing, transportation, Social Security benefits, home care assistance services, personal care assistance, community resource sharing, and other programs. The DCAC meets quarterly and is currently accepting nominations for their CI division. If you or someone you know is interested in being a part of the DCAC, please contact Danielle Clements at CORD at 508-775-8300 or 1-800-541-0282 (both numbers V/TTY) or cordinfo@cilcapecod.org for a nomination form. You may also contact Lisa Weber, the CI program coordinator, at 617-204-3665.