

**Subpart A—Basic Requirements****§ 1326.1 General.**

All rules under this subpart are applicable to both the State Councils on Developmental Disabilities and the agency designated as the State Protection and Advocacy (P&As) System.

**§ 1326.2 Obligation of funds.**

(a) Funds which the Federal Government allots under this part during a Federal fiscal year are available for obligation by States for a two-year period beginning with the first day of the Federal fiscal year in which the grant is awarded.

(b)(1) A State incurs an obligation for acquisition of personal property or for the performance of work on the date it makes a binding, legally enforceable, written commitment, or when the State Council on Developmental Disabilities enters into an Interagency Agreement with an agency of State government for acquisition of personal property or for the performance of work.

(2) A State incurs an obligation for personal services, for services performed by public utilities, for travel or for rental of real or personal property on the date it receives the services, its personnel takes the travel, or it uses the rented property.

(c)(1) A Protection & Advocacy System may elect to treat entry of an appearance in judicial and administrative proceedings on behalf of an individual with a developmental disability as a basis for obligating funds for the litigation costs. The amount of the funds obligated must not exceed a reasonable estimate of the costs, and the way the estimate was calculated must be documented.

(2) For the purpose of this paragraph (c), *litigation costs* means expenses for court costs, depositions, expert witness fees, travel in connection with a case and similar costs, and costs resulting from litigation in which the agency has represented an individual with developmental disabilities (*e.g.*, monitoring court orders, consent decrees), but not for salaries of employees of the P&A. All funds made available for Federal assistance to State Councils on Developmental Disabilities and to the P&As

obligated under this paragraph (c) are subject to the requirement of paragraph (a) of this section. These funds, if reobligated, may be reobligated only within a two-year period beginning with the first day of the Federal fiscal year in which the funds were originally awarded.

**§ 1326.3 Liquidation of obligations.**

(a) All obligations incurred pursuant to a grant made under the Act for a specific Federal fiscal year, must be liquidated within two years of the close of the Federal fiscal year in which the grant was awarded.

(b) The Secretary, or his or her designee, may waive the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section when State law impedes implementation or the amount of obligated funds to be liquidated is in dispute.

(c) Funds attributable to obligations which are not liquidated in accordance with the provisions of this section revert to the Federal Government.

**§ 1326.4 [Reserved]****Subpart B—Protection and Advocacy for Individuals With Developmental Disabilities (PADD)****§ 1326.19 Definitions.**

As used in this subpart and subpart C of this part, the following definitions apply:

*Abuse.* The term “abuse” means any act or failure to act which was performed, or which was failed to be performed, knowingly, recklessly, or intentionally, and which caused, or may have caused, injury or death to an individual with developmental disabilities, and includes but is not limited to such acts as: Verbal, nonverbal, mental and emotional harassment; rape or sexual assault; striking; the use of excessive force when placing such an individual in bodily restraints; the use of bodily or chemical restraints which is not in compliance with Federal and State laws and regulations, or any other practice which is likely to cause immediate physical or psychological harm or result in long term harm if such practices continue. In addition, the P&A may determine, in its discretion that a

violation of an individual's legal rights amounts to abuse, such as if an individual is subject to significant financial exploitation.

*American Indian Consortium.* The term “American Indian Consortium” means any confederation of 2 or more recognized American Indian Tribes, created through the official resident population of 150,000 enrolled tribal members and a contiguous territory of Indian lands in two or more States.

*Complaint.* The term “complaint” includes, but is not limited to, any report or communication, whether formal or informal, written or oral, received by the P&A system, including media accounts, newspaper articles, electronic communications, telephone calls (including anonymous calls) from any source alleging abuse or neglect of an individual with a developmental disability.

*Designating official.* The term “designating official” means the Governor or other State official, who is empowered by the State legislature or Governor to designate the State official or public or private agency to be accountable for the proper use of funds by and conduct of the agency designated to administer the P&A system.

*Full investigation.* The term “full investigation” means access to service providers, individuals with developmental disabilities and records authorized under these regulations, that are necessary for a P&A system to make a determination about whether alleged or suspected instances of abuse and neglect are taking place or have taken place. Full investigations may be conducted independently or in cooperation with other agencies authorized to conduct similar investigations.

*Legal guardian, Conservator, and Legal representative.* The terms “legal guardian,” “conservator,” and “legal representative” all mean a parent of a minor, unless the State has appointed another legal guardian under applicable State law, or an individual appointed and regularly reviewed by a State court or agency empowered under State law to appoint and review such officers, and having authority to make all decisions on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities. It does not include persons acting only as

a representative payee, persons acting only to handle financial payments, executors and administrators of estates, attorneys or other persons acting on behalf of an individual with developmental disabilities only in individual legal matters, or officials or their designees responsible for the provision of services, supports, and other assistance to an individual with developmental disabilities.

*Neglect.* The term “neglect” means a negligent act or omission by an individual responsible for providing services, supports or other assistance which caused or may have caused injury or death to an individual with a developmental disability(ies) or which placed an individual with developmental disability(ies) at risk of injury or death, and includes acts or omissions such as failure to: establish or carry out an appropriate individual program plan or treatment plan (including a discharge plan); provide adequate nutrition, clothing, or health care to an individual with developmental disabilities; or provide a safe environment which also includes failure to maintain adequate numbers of trained staff or failure to take appropriate steps to prevent self-abuse, harassment, or assault by a peer.

*Probable cause.* The term “probable cause” means a reasonable ground for belief that an individual with developmental disability(ies) has been, or may be, subject to abuse or neglect, or that the health or safety of the individual is in serious and immediate jeopardy. The individual making such determination may base the decision on reasonable inferences drawn from his or her experience or training regarding similar incidents, conditions or problems that are usually associated with abuse or neglect.

*State Protection and Advocacy System.* The term “State Protection and Advocacy System” is synonymous with the term “P&A” used elsewhere in this regulation, and the terms “System” and “Protection and Advocacy System” used in this part and in subpart C of this part.

**§ 1326.20 Agency designated as the State Protection and Advocacy System.**

(a) The designating official must designate the State official or public or private agency to be accountable for proper use of funds and conduct of the Protection and Advocacy System.

(b) An agency of the State or private agency providing direct services, including guardianship services, may not be designated as the agency to administer the Protection and Advocacy System.

(c) In the event that an entity outside of the State government is designated to carry out the program, the designating official or entity must assign a responsible State official to receive, on behalf of the State, notices of disallowances and compliance actions as the State is accountable for the proper and appropriate expenditure of Federal funds.

(d)(1) Prior to any redesignation of the agency which administers and operates the State Protection and Advocacy System, the designating official must give written notice of the intention to make the redesignation to the agency currently administering and operating the State Protection and Advocacy System by registered or certified mail. The notice must indicate that the proposed redesignation is being made for good cause. The designating official also must publish a public notice of the proposed action. The agency and the public shall have a reasonable period of time, but not less than 45 days, to respond to the notice.

(2) The public notice must include:

(i) The Federal requirements for the State Protection and Advocacy System for individuals with developmental disabilities (section 143 of the Act); and where applicable, the requirements of other Federal advocacy programs administered by the State Protection and Advocacy System;

(ii) The goals and function of the State's Protection and Advocacy System including the current Statement of Goals and Priorities;

(iii) The name and address of the agency currently designated to administer and operate the State Protection and Advocacy System, and an indica-

tion of whether the agency also operates other Federal advocacy programs;

(iv) A description of the current agency operating and administering the Protection and Advocacy System including, as applicable, descriptions of other Federal advocacy programs it operates;

(v) A clear and detailed explanation of the good cause for the proposed redesignation;

(vi) A statement suggesting that interested persons may wish to write the current agency operating and administering the State Protection and Advocacy System at the address provided in paragraph (d)(2)(iii) of this section to obtain a copy of its response to the notice required by paragraph (d)(1) of this section. Copies must be in a format accessible to individuals with disabilities (including plain language), and language assistance services will be provided to individuals with limited English proficiency, such as translated materials or interpretation, upon request;

(vii) The name of the new agency proposed to administer and operate the State Protection and Advocacy System under the Developmental Disabilities Program. This agency will be eligible to administer other Federal advocacy programs;

(viii) A description of the system which the new agency would administer and operate, including a description of all other Federal advocacy programs the agency would operate;

(ix) The timetable for assumption of operations by the new agency and the estimated costs of any transfer and start-up operations; and

(x) A statement of assurance that the proposed new designated State Protection and Advocacy System will continue to serve existing clients and cases of the current P&A system or refer them to other sources of legal advocacy as appropriate, without disruption.

(3) The public notice as required by paragraph (d)(1) of this section, must be in a format accessible to individuals with disabilities, and language assistance services will be provided to individuals with limited English proficiency, such as translated materials

or interpretation, upon request to individuals with developmental disabilities or their representatives. The designating official must provide for publication of the notice of the proposed redesignation using the State register, statewide newspapers, public service announcements on radio and television, or any other legally equivalent process. Copies of the notice must be made generally available to individuals with developmental disabilities and mental illness who live in residential facilities through posting or some other means.

(4) After the expiration of the public comment period required in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, the designating official must conduct a public hearing on the redesignation proposal. After consideration of all public and agency comments, the designating official must give notice of the final decision to the currently designated agency and the public through the same means used under paragraph (d)(3) of this section. This notice must include a clear and detailed explanation of the good cause finding. If the notice to the currently designated agency states that the redesignation will take place, it also must inform the agency of its right to appeal this decision to the Secretary, or his or her designee, the authority to hear appeals by the Secretary, or his or her designee, and provide a summary of the public comments received in regard to the notice of intent to redesignate and the results of the public hearing and its responses to those comments. The redesignation shall not be effective until 10 working days after notifying the current agency that administers and operates the State Protection and Advocacy System or, if the agency appeals, until the Secretary, or his or her designee, has considered the appeal.

(e)(1) Following notification as indicated in paragraph (d)(4) of this section, the agency that administers and operates the State Protection and Advocacy System which is the subject of such action, may appeal the redesignation to the Secretary, or his or her designee. To do so, the agency that administers and operates the State Protection and Advocacy System must submit an appeal in writing to the Sec-

retary, or his or her designee, within 20 days of receiving official notification under paragraph (d)(4) of this section, with a separate copy sent by registered or certified mail to the designating official who made the decision concerning redesignation.

(2) In the event that the agency subject to redesignation does exercise its right to appeal under paragraph (e)(1) of this section, the designating official must give public notice of the Secretary's, or his or her designated person's, final decision regarding the appeal through the same means utilized under paragraph (d)(3) of this section within 10 working days of receipt of the Secretary's, or his or her designee's, final decision under paragraph (e)(6) of this section.

(3) The designating official within 10 working days from the receipt of a copy of the appeal must provide written comments to the Secretary, or his or her designee, (with a copy sent by registered or certified mail to the Protection and Advocacy agency appealing under paragraph (e)(1) of this section), or withdraw the redesignation. The comments must include a summary of the public comments received in regard to the notice of intent to redesignate and the results of the public hearing and its responses to those comments.

(4) In the event that the designating official withdraws the redesignation while under appeal pursuant to paragraph (e)(1) of this section, the designating official must notify the Secretary, or his or her designee, and the current agency, and must give public notice of his or her decision through the same means utilized under paragraph (d)(3) of this section.

(5) As part of their submission under paragraph (e)(1) or (3) of this section, either party may request, and the Secretary, or his or her designee, may grant an opportunity for a meeting with the Secretary, or his or her designee, at which representatives of both parties will present their views on the issues in the appeal. The meeting will be held within 20 working days of the submission of written comments by the designating official under paragraph (e)(2) of this section. The Secretary, or

his or her designee, will promptly notify the parties of the date and place of the meeting.

(6) Within 30 days of the informal meeting under paragraph (e)(5) of this section, or, if there is no informal meeting under paragraph (e)(5) of this section, within 30 days of the submission under paragraph (e)(3) of this section, the Secretary, or his or her designee, will issue to the parties a final written decision on whether the redesignation was for good cause as defined in paragraph (d)(1) of this section. The Secretary, or his or her designee, will receive comments on the record from agencies administering the Federal advocacy programs that will be directly affected by the proposed redesignation. The P&A and the designating official will have an opportunity to comment on the submissions of the Federal advocacy programs. The Secretary, or his or her designee, shall consider the comments of the Federal programs, the P&A and the designating official in making his final decision on the appeal.

(f)(1) Within 30 days after the redesignation becomes effective under paragraph (d)(4) of this section, the designating official must submit an assurance to the Secretary, or his or her designee, that the newly designated agency that will administer and operate the State Protection and Advocacy System meets the requirements of the statute and the regulations.

(2) In the event that the agency administering and operating the State Protection and Advocacy System subject to redesignation does not exercise its rights to appeal within the period provided under paragraph (e)(1) of this section, the designating official must provide to the Secretary, or his or her designee, documentation that the agency was redesignated for good cause. Such documentation must clearly demonstrate that the Protection and Advocacy agency subject to redesignation was not redesignated for any actions or activities which were carried out under section 143 of the Act, this regulation or any other Federal advocacy program's legislation or regulations.

**§ 1326.21 Requirements and authority of the State Protection and Advocacy System.**

(a) In order for a State to receive Federal funding for Protection and Advocacy activities under this subpart, as well as for the State Council on Developmental Disabilities activities (subpart D of this part), the Protection and Advocacy System must meet the requirements of section 143 and 144 of the Act (42 U.S.C. 15043 and 15044) and that system must be operational.

(b) Allotments must be used to supplement and not to supplant the level of non-Federal funds available in the State for activities under the Act, which shall include activities on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities to remedy abuse, neglect, and violations of rights as well as information and referral activities.

(c) A P&A shall not implement a policy or practice restricting the remedies that may be sought on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities or compromising the authority of the P&A to pursue such remedies through litigation, legal action or other forms of advocacy. Under this requirement, States may not establish a policy or practice, which requires the P&A to: Obtain the State's review or approval of the P&A's plans to undertake a particular advocacy initiative, including specific litigation (or to pursue litigation rather than some other remedy or approach); refrain from representing individuals with particular types of concerns or legal claims, or refrain from otherwise pursuing a particular course of action designed to remedy a violation of rights, such as educating policymakers about the need for modification or adoption of laws or policies affecting the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities; restrict the manner of the P&A's investigation in a way that is inconsistent with the System's required authority under the DD Act; or similarly interfere with the P&A's exercise of such authority. The requirements of this paragraph (c) shall not prevent P&As, including those functioning as agencies within State governments, from developing case or client acceptance criteria as part of the annual priorities identified by the P&A as described in § 1326.23(c).

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Clients must be informed at the time they apply for services of such criteria.

(d) A Protection and Advocacy System shall be free from hiring freezes, reductions in force, prohibitions on staff travel, or other policies, imposed by the State, to the extent that such policies would impact system program staff or functions funded with Federal funds, and would prevent the system from carrying out its mandates under the Act.

(e) A Protection and Advocacy System shall have sufficient staff, qualified by training and experience, to carry out the responsibilities of the system in accordance with the priorities of the system and requirements of the Act. These responsibilities include the investigation of allegations of abuse, neglect and representations of individuals with developmental disabilities regarding rights violations.

(f) A Protection and Advocacy System may exercise its authority under State law where the State authority exceeds the authority required by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000. However, State law must not diminish the required authority of the Protection and Advocacy System as set by the Act.

(g) Each Protection and Advocacy System that is a public system without a multimember governing or advisory board must establish an advisory council in order to provide a voice for individuals with developmental disabilities. The Advisory Council shall advise the Protection and Advocacy System on program policies and priorities. The Advisory Council and Governing Board shall be comprised of a majority of individuals with disabilities who are eligible for services, have received or are receiving services, parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives of such individuals.

(h) Prior to any Federal review of the State program, a 30-day notice and an opportunity for public comment must be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER. Reasonable effort shall be made by AIDD to seek comments through notification to major disability advocacy groups, the State Bar, disability law resources, the State Councils on Developmental Disabilities, and the Univer-

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sity Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service, for example, through newsletters and publication of those organizations. The findings of public comments may be consolidated if sufficiently similar issues are raised and they shall be included in the report of the onsite visit.

(i) Before the Protection and Advocacy System releases information to individuals not otherwise authorized to receive it, the Protection and Advocacy System must obtain written consent from the client requesting assistance or his or her guardian.

(j) *Contracts for program operations.* (1) An eligible P&A system may contract for the operation of part of its program with another public or private non-profit organization with demonstrated experience working with individuals with developmental disabilities, provided that:

(i) The eligible P&A system institutes oversight and monitoring procedures which ensure that any and all subcontractors will be able to meet all applicable terms, conditions and obligations of the Federal grant, including but not limited to the ability to pursue all forms of litigation under the DD Act;

(ii) The P&A exercises appropriate oversight to ensure that the contracting organization meets all applicable responsibilities and standards which apply to P&As, including but not limited to, the confidentiality provisions in the DD Act and regulations, ethical responsibilities, program accountability and quality controls;

(2) Any eligible P&A system should work cooperatively with existing advocacy agencies and groups and, where appropriate, consider entering into contracts for protection and advocacy services with organizations already working on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities.

[80 FR 44807, July 27, 2015, as amended at 81 FR 35647, June 3, 2016]

### § 1326.22 Periodic reports: State Protection and Advocacy System.

(a) By January 1 of each year, each State Protection and Advocacy System shall submit to AIDD, an Annual Program Performance Report. In order to

be accepted, the Report must meet the requirements of section 144(e) of the Act (42 U.S.C. 15044), the applicable regulation and include information on the System's program necessary for the Secretary, or his or her designee, to comply with section 105(1), (2), and (3) of the Act (42 U.S.C. 15005). The Report shall describe the activities, accomplishments, and expenditures of the system during the preceding fiscal year. Reports shall include a description of the system's goals and the extent to which the goals were achieved, barriers to their achievement; the process used to obtain public input, the nature of such input, and how such input was used; the extent to which unserved or underserved individuals or groups, particularly from ethnic or racial groups or geographic regions (*e.g.*, rural or urban areas) were the target of assistance or service; and other such information on the Protection and Advocacy System's activities requested by AIDD.

(b) Financial status reports (standard form 425) must be submitted by the agency administering and operating the State Protection and Advocacy System semiannually.

(c) By January 1 of each year, the State Protection and Advocacy System shall submit to AIDD, an Annual Statement of Goals and Priorities, (SGP), for the coming fiscal year as required under section 143(a)(2)(C) of the Act (42 U.S.C. 15043). In order to be accepted by AIDD, an SGP must meet the requirements of section 143 of the Act.

(1) The SGP is a description and explanation of the system's goals and priorities for its activities, selection criteria for its individual advocacy and training activities, and the outcomes it strives to accomplish. The SGP is developed through data driven strategic planning. If changes are made to the goals or the indicators of progress established for a year, the SGP must be amended to reflect those changes. The SGP must include a description of how the Protection and Advocacy System operates, and where applicable, how it coordinates the State Protection and Advocacy program for individuals with developmental disabilities with other Protection and Advocacy programs administered by the State Protection and

Advocacy System. This description must include the System's processes for intake, internal and external referrals, and streamlining of advocacy services. If the System will be requesting or requiring fees or donations from clients as part of the intake process, the SGP must state that the system will be doing so. The description also must address collaboration, the reduction of duplication and overlap of services, the sharing of information on service needs, and the development of statements of goals and priorities for the various advocacy programs.

(2) Priorities as established through the SGP serve as the basis for the Protection and Advocacy System to determine which cases are selected in a given fiscal year. Protection and Advocacy Systems have the authority to turn down a request for assistance when it is outside the scope of the SGP, but they must inform individuals when this is the basis for turning them down.

(d) Each fiscal year, the Protection and Advocacy System shall:

(1) Obtain formal public input on its Statement of Goals and Priorities;

(2) At a minimum, provide for a broad distribution of the proposed Statement of Goals and Priorities for the next fiscal year in a manner accessible to individuals with developmental disabilities and their representatives, allowing at least 45 days from the date of distribution for comment;

(3) Provide to the State Councils on Developmental Disabilities and the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service a copy of the proposed Statement of Goals and Priorities for comment concurrently with the public notice;

(4) Incorporate or address any comments received through public input and any input received from the State Councils on Developmental Disabilities and the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service in the final Statement submitted; and

(5) Address how the Protection and Advocacy System, State Councils on

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Developmental Disabilities, and University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education Research and Service will collaborate with each other and with other public and private entities.

### § 1326.23 Non-allowable costs for the State Protection and Advocacy System.

(a) Federal financial participation is not allowable for:

(1) Costs incurred for activities on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities to solve problems not directly related to their disabilities and which are faced by the general populace. Such activities include but are not limited to: Preparation of wills, divorce decrees, and real estate proceedings. Allowable costs in such cases would include the Protection and Advocacy System providing disability-related technical assistance information and referral to appropriate programs and services; and

(2) Costs not allowed under other applicable statutes, Departmental regulations and issuances of the Office of Management and Budget.

(b) Attorneys' fees are considered program income pursuant to 45 CFR part 75 and must be added to the funds committed to the program and used to further the objectives of the program. This requirement shall apply to all attorneys' fees, including those earned by contractors and those received after the project period in which they were earned.

### § 1326.24 Allowable litigation costs.

Allotments may be used to pay the otherwise allowable costs incurred by a Protection and Advocacy System in bringing lawsuits in its own right to redress incidents of abuse or neglect, discrimination and other rights violations impacting the ability of individuals with developmental disabilities to obtain access to records and when it appears on behalf of named plaintiffs or a class of plaintiff for such purposes.

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### Subpart C—Access to Records, Service Providers, and Individuals With Developmental Disabilities

#### § 1326.25 Access to records.

(a) Pursuant to sections 143(a)(2), (A)(i), (B), (I), and (J) of the Act, and subject to the provisions of this section, a Protection and Advocacy (P&A) System, and all of its authorized agents, shall have access to the records of individuals with developmental disabilities under the following circumstances:

(1) If authorized by an individual who is a client of the system, or who has requested assistance from the system, or by such individual's legal guardian, conservator or other legal representative.

(2) In the case of an individual to whom all of the following conditions apply:

(i) The individual, due to his or her mental or physical condition, is unable to authorize the system to have access;

(ii) The individual does not have a legal guardian, conservator or other legal representative, or the individual's guardian is the State (or one of its political subdivisions); and

(iii) The individual has been the subject of a complaint to the P&A system, or the P&A system has probable cause (which can be the result of monitoring or other activities including media reports and newspaper articles) to believe that such individual has been subject to abuse and neglect.

(3) In the case of an individual, who has a legal guardian, conservator, or other legal representative, about whom a complaint has been received by the system or, as a result of monitoring or other activities, the system has determined that there is probable cause to believe that the individual with developmental disability has been subject to abuse or neglect, whenever the following conditions exist:

(i) The P&A system has made a good faith effort to contact the legal guardian, conservator, or other legal representative upon prompt receipt (within the timelines set forth in paragraph (c) of this section) of the contact information (which is required to include