

Disabilities and rights: What everyone should know

People with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else. These include the right to be treated with **dignity and respect**, the right to **make choices** about their own lives, the right to **access services and supports**, and the right to **participate fully in their communities**.

These rights are protected by state and federal laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and, in California, the Lanterman Act. These laws affirm that disability does not limit a person's right to:

- ⦿ Live where and with whom they choose
- ⦿ Make decisions about their daily lives
- ⦿ Receive support in the least restrictive setting
- ⦿ Be free from abuse, neglect, and discrimination
- ⦿ Have access to education, employment, and community life

As a Direct Support Professional (DSP), your role includes understanding these rights, helping people recognize them, and ensuring they are honored in everyday actions.



Reflections

What does *respect* look like in your everyday life?

How do you *feel* when someone honors your choices or asks for your input?