



Criminal Justice for People with Disabilities



Federal and state grant funded programs:

- National Academy for Equal Justice for People with Developmental Disabilities
- Equal Justice for People with Mental Retardation
- End the Silence – Partners in Justice
- Equal Justice for People with Developmental Disabilities

In the field of Criminal Justice, the Institute on Disabilities provides the following on a national, state and local level:

- Training and technical assistance for law enforcement, the judiciary, victim service and disability service providers, family members, people with disabilities, educators, and medical professionals
- Research, conducting studies and disseminate findings, about people with disabilities as victims, witness and defendants.

Why this work needs to be done

- Crimes against adults with developmental and other disabilities are a problem similar to violence against women, child abuse, and elder abuse.
- Studies consistently show that the level of major crimes against adults with disabilities is 4-10 times higher than against people without disabilities.
- Children with any type of disability are 2 times more likely to be a victim of any type of child maltreatment than children without disabilities.
- Crimes against people with developmental and other disabilities are reported and prosecuted at a much lower rate than crimes against people without disabilities.
- Defendants with intellectual disabilities and other cognitive disabilities often unwittingly waive their rights and confess to crimes they do not commit.
- Defendants with intellectual disabilities and other cognitive disabilities are frequently given longer sentences than people without disabilities.

Despite these disturbing trends, this important issue remains largely invisible and unaddressed.