

DRNM Chief Executive Officer

Job Description

August 2026

Reports to: DRNM Board of Directors, through the Board President

Location: Albuquerque, New Mexico (James Jackson Center for Disability Rights)

Organization: Disability Rights New Mexico (DRNM) is the federally designated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) system for the State of New Mexico and a member of the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN). For nearly 50 years, DRNM (formerly the New Mexico Protection and Advocacy System) has provided information and referral, individual case advocacy, systemic advocacy, self-advocacy assistance, technical assistance and training to advance the rights of New Mexicans with disabilities.

Position Summary

The CEO is DRNM's highest-ranking employee and serves as the organization's primary internal and external leader. The CEO is accountable to the Board of Directors for overseeing, managing and implementing all program services consistent with Board-approved policy, and for ensuring DRNM's continued achievement of its mission, goals and financial sustainability.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic & Systems Advocacy Leadership

- Serve as DRNM's primary spokesperson and public face across New Mexico's disability community, media, government officials and partner organizations.
- Manage systemic and individual advocacy priorities, ensuring DRNM fully exercises its federal P&A authority to investigate abuse/neglect and pursue legal, administrative and other remedies.
- Develop and present annual goals, priorities and strategic objectives for Board approval, consistent with the organization's federally mandated mission areas (Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI), Protection and Advocacy for Developmentally Disabled (PADD) and related programs).
- Ensure that DRNM is effective in pursuing Board-approved goals and objectives to achieve improvements in service systems and rights protection for affected persons with disabilities.
- Preserve and expand the capacity of DRNM to meet its overall mission, assuring quality of services.
- Focus resources on implementation of program objectives and monitor their performance.

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- Ensure that agency services are effective and accountable, that management information systems capture all data needed for quarterly and annual reporting, and that all required reports are completed and submitted.

Board Governance & Relations

- Maintain regular, transparent communication with the Board President and full Board; support Board committees and governance processes.
- Report on organizational performance, legal/systemic advocacy outcomes, financial status and compliance to the Board on a regular cadence.
- Ensure that Board decisions or directives are appropriately carried out.

Financial & Organizational Management

- Develop, propose and manage the annual operating budget; oversee all fiscal operations, grant/contract compliance and reporting to federal funders.
- Ensure completion and timely submission of all federally required reports and site-visit preparations.
- Explore and diversify funding streams, including grants, foundation support and individual contributions.
- Ensures that agency operations comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Staff Leadership & Human Resources

- Recruit, supervise and develop a diverse, qualified staff of attorneys, advocates and administrative personnel; foster an inclusive, mission-driven workplace culture.
- Develops, monitors, presents for board approval, and implements policies and procedures appropriate to the operations of the agency.
- Ensure organizational personnel policies and procedures comply with all applicable state and federal employment laws and regulations, and ensure staff compliance with policies and procedures.
- Serves as the final authority for employee relations and personnel matters; has ultimate authority for all hire/fire decisions, compensation and disciplinary actions.

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External Relations & Policy

- Build and steward relationships with state agencies, legislators, disability community organizations, self-advocates and coalition partners, providing training and technical assistance as needed.
- Represent DRNM before legislative committees, regulatory bodies and public forums on disability policy issues affecting New Mexicans.
- Collaborate with NDRN and other state P&A agencies to share best practices and coordinate cross-state initiatives.
- Develop and maintain a positive agency image and positive relations between agency and key patrons, vendors and partners.

Minimum Qualifications

- Demonstrated commitment to disability rights values: self-determination, community integration and equal access.
- Minimum 5 years of senior executive/leadership experience in a nonprofit, legal services, or disability advocacy organization; P&A/civil rights law experience strongly preferred.
- Experience working with persons with disabilities and from multicultural communities,
- Demonstrated financial management experience, including budgets of \$2.5M+ and grant/contract compliance oversight.
- Juris Doctor or legal background a plus but not required if paired with strong nonprofit executive experience and a strong understanding of disability law, civil rights law and/or public policy processes;
- Demonstrated understanding of legislative and executive-level public policy issues and procedures;
- Successful track record supervising multidisciplinary staff (such as at DRNM, attorneys, advocates, administrative personnel).
- Excellent written/verbal communication and public representation skills; comfortable as the public face of an advocacy organization.

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- Experience working effectively with multiple organizations and individuals with diverse perspectives, the public, elected and appointed officials and consumers of services.
- Ability to pass required background/security clearances per federal grantor requirements.
- Willingness to travel throughout New Mexico, including rural and tribal communities.

Desirable Qualifications

- Advanced degree (JD, MPA, MNA, or related field).
- Bilingual proficiency in Spanish; familiarity with New Mexico's tribal and rural disability service systems.
- Experience with federal P&A/NDRN grant structures and reporting requirements.
- Prior fundraising or revenue diversification experience.