

DAP Facts:

Delivering Nearly 40 Years of Successful Legal Assistance to Disabled New Yorkers



Recognized as a model across the nation, New York State's **Disability Advocacy Program (DAP)** has provided legal assistance to low income disabled New Yorkers seeking Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability (SSD) since 1983, and returns millions of dollars to the State and local counties every year.

DAP is a WIN - WIN - WIN for New York's Economy

DAP serves New Yorkers who are unable to work due to their medical problems. By helping disabled New Yorkers get off of public assistance and onto SSI or SSD, DAP has historically returned between \$2-3 for each dollar invested - over \$1.3 billion since the program's inception in:

- **Retroactive benefits** paid to the claimant from the date of the original application for benefits.
- **Federal dollars paid back to the State** as Interim Assistance for the Safety Net benefits provided while an SSI application is pending.
- **Savings for local counties** as DAP moves disabled people from locally funded Safety Net benefits programs onto longer-termed, federally-funded assistance.

In the **past contract year (2020-2021):**

2,507 cases
opened

2,993 cases
closed

\$20,917,742
returned to NYS



DAP client achieves greater financial and housing stability



DAP client spends retroactive benefits in local economy



NYS/counties recover interim assistance, save with cost avoidance

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Advances the Rights of Disabled New Yorkers

DAP Clients Face Many Obstacles During COVID-19



One of the most challenging aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic for **DAP** clients is the **20+ month closure of Social Security offices**. Almost every function of the disability application process has slowed to a virtual crawl, while clients struggle with financial & logistical obstacles brought on or exacerbated by the pandemic.

**Difficulty
Obtaining
Evidence**

**No
Privacy for
Remote
Hearings**

**Technological
Glitches**

**No Money
for Phone
Data &
Minutes**

**Lack of
Access to
Technology**

**Long
Delays**

**Disruption
of Mail
Delivery**

**Few
Decisions
Being Issued**

**Vulnerable
to the
Virus**

**Almost No
In-Person
Services or
Hearings**

**Precariously
Housed or
Homeless**

Social Security Offices Set to Re-open January 2022 - & Deluge of Cases Will Follow

The closure of Social Security offices has also led to far fewer SSI/SSD cases being opened **or** closed, including **DAP** cases. The logjam at SSA led to the closure of 31% fewer **DAP** cases in the 2020-21, in comparison to the previous contract year. Outreach efforts to clients and potential clients by **DAP** providers were able to keep case openings closer to pre-closure numbers, only 16% down from the previous contract year.

The re-opening of SSA offices, currently planned for January, is expected to result soon thereafter in a deluge of new applications and movement on existing cases. **DAP** will be essential to making sure disabled New Yorkers make it successfully through the process.



The demand for services now also includes new claims based on the long-term effects of COVID-19, including lung scarring, heart damage, and neurological and mental health issues. **We are asking for the Legislature to continue its \$3 million add-on to DAP.** This, combined with \$10.52 million in Executive funding and county funds, will bring overall **DAP** funding to \$13.52 million and allow **DAP** to address the need for representation in these claims while also generating savings for New York State. Please continue to invest in **DAP!**

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