

OLMSTEAD MATTERS

The Right to Live in the Community

For nearly 50 years, Project Independence has championed the belief that people with developmental disabilities **belong in their communities.**



WHAT IS OLMSTEAD?

In 1999, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Olmstead v. L.C.* that unjustified segregation of people with disabilities can be discrimination under the ADA. The decision affirms the right of people with disabilities to receive services in community settings when appropriate.



It's about freedom, choice, dignity and the opportunity to live a full life.



WHAT HAS CHANGED?

On June 18, 2026, the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel issued a new opinion that challenges the long-standing federal interpretation of Olmstead.

The Supreme Court's *Olmstead* decision has **NOT** been overturned.

But this new interpretation raises serious concerns about how community integration protections will be enforced in the future.



WHY THIS MATTERS

Community living is about everyday life and the freedom to:



Have a home



Go to work



Shop in the community



Build relationships



Access needed supports



Learn and grow



Participate in activities



Make choices and live independently

THE IMPACT IN REAL LIFE

When people have access to community-based services and supports, *lives are enriched, potential is realized, and communities are stronger.*



OUR COMMITMENT HASN'T CHANGED

As Project Independence approaches its 50th anniversary, we remain steadfast in our mission to create opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to live, work, and thrive in the community.

Community inclusion is more than a program model.
It is a civil right.

