

**ID**

Course: **101:**  
**Self-Advocacy**  
**Basics**  
Session: **5a**

**Time**

**45 minutes**

**Key words/concepts**

- disability rights
- disability laws
- discrimination
- ADA
- IDEA
- Section 504



**Title**

# Three Laws

**Description**

Learn about the three major disability rights laws, and tell/show how these laws affect your community.

**Objectives**

- Participants learn about disability laws.
- Participants tell/show how these laws impact their lives.



**Materials provided**

Law Posters (three separate)

**Skills**

- I can tell others about the three major disability laws

**Directions**

**0. Review/Preview.** We just spent four sessions on Building Personal Power. Who remembers what we've done so far? Take a few responses.

**1. Introduce.** Starting today, we're going to spend the next four sessions on our rights. So let's see what we already know. Ask, "What rights do you have if you have a disability?" Take ideas. Today, we'll talk about the three rights laws. Self-advocates have rights based on laws. It's important to know these laws. Anyone know why? (When you know your rights, you have power. Your coworkers will listen to you. Your legislator will take you more seriously.)

**2. Three Laws.** Show the posters. Here are three basic laws we're going to learn about today: Section 504, IDEA, and the ADA. First, I'm just going to quickly tell you about these, then we'll get into small groups, and you can study one of these together with your group.

**3. Facilitator tell** about the rights very briefly:

Section 504: This US law (1973) says you cannot discriminate based on disability. This law applies ONLY to programs that get federal money.

ADA: This more recent US law (1990) also says you cannot discriminate based on disability. Its very similar to 504, but it applies to more situations: most jobs, public services, and accommodations.

IDEA: This US law (1983) is about education: it sends money to schools that serve students with disabilities.

*more*

**Reflective questions**

Who can you tell about these rights laws?

Are there some rights you think people should have, but don't?

What do you think our country was like before we had these laws protecting disability rights?

**Directions/continued**

**4. Discuss the Laws.** Divide into three groups. Give each group one law poster (see margin). Ask them to consider that law. Talk and decide two places in your community where this law applies. Talk about what it does not mean, too (e.g. the ADA does not mean that you'll always get a good paying job.).

**5. Reconvene with large group.** Each group report on your law, and what it means. Read it aloud, in short phrases, and have everyone repeat it aloud. Then tell other things you talked about.

**6. If you have time,** give each person a paper and markers, and ask them to draw a picture showing what this right looks like in the community. Allow time, then have each person show.

**7. Conclude** with key message. Laws protect our rights. When we know the laws, we are stronger.

**Take-aways**

- I have rights that are supported by laws.

