

Government, Law

Four Families Sue Over State's IQ Cutoff for Disability Services

— Daniel Tepfer, 8.31.2026



HARTFORD — The families of four residents with intellectual disabilities are challenging the state's use of a strict intelligence quotient, or IQ, cutoff to determine who qualifies for critical services.

In the lawsuit filed in state Superior Court, the families say all four individuals have been diagnosed with an intellectual disability and require significant support to live safely and independently as possible. That

support can include help with daily tasks, transportation, employment and participating in community life.

But according to the lawsuit, the Department of Developmental Services denied the plaintiffs eligibility because at least one IQ test score exceeded the state's numerical threshold.

"Connecticut has failed to administer this system fairly, relying on a rigid IQ cutoff that has denied critical support and caused lasting harm," their lawyer, Luke Reynolds of the Bridgeport law firm Koskoff Koskoff & Bieder, told CT Examiner. "This lawsuit seeks to hold the state accountable, force necessary change and put an end to an arbitrary and unconstitutional system."

The plaintiffs seek a ruling that the statutory IQ requirement is unconstitutional and unenforceable, an injunction preventing the department from denying services on that basis, reversal of the plaintiffs' eligibility denials and a determination that each plaintiff qualifies for state services.

Attorney General William Tong's office declined to comment.

Connecticut is one of only three states that relies exclusively on an IQ threshold to determine eligibility for intellectual-disability services. The majority of states instead treat IQ as one factor among several, consistent with the approach frequently used by clinicians and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

"When the state denies a young person the support they need, the entire family carries the burden," said Jennifer Wheeler, of the Center for Children's Advocacy. "This case is about ensuring that young people with disabilities are not shut out of the services that help them live safely and participate fully in their communities. These families know their children best, and their voices and the full reality of their children's needs must be recognized."

Andrew Feinstein, legislative co-chair of the national Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates and legislative chair of Special Education Equity

for Kids in Connecticut, said the state's system reflects a larger problem with funding for disability services.

"Connecticut's services for adults with disabilities are grossly underfunded," Feinstein said. "To hold down the caseload, the state has adopted a primitive and irrational test to reduce the number of individuals eligible for services. A civil society requires that we take care of our fellow citizens with needs. Connecticut has failed to meet its responsibility."

The plaintiffs in the case are Andrew Baylis, 23, of Darien; Daynasha Bohannon, 19, of Bridgeport; Carriella Borchetta, 23, of Trumbull; Alexander Capuano, 19, of Fairfield.

"We all want our kids to be able to live their fullest lives," said Kelly Capuano, Alexander's mother. "Alex wants to work and loves bowling, but he needs practical support with things like employment and transportation. We are not asking for the sun and the moon, just a few concrete services that will help him live safely and build as much independence as possible."

According to the lawsuit, Baylis depends on his parents for most daily tasks and requires constant supervision; Bohannon cannot be left home alone or travel independently and is cared for by her 83-year-old adoptive mother and sister; Borchetta is unable to live independently and requires help with basic tasks like preparing food; and Capuano cannot safely travel alone, while his mother, his primary caregiver, has suffered a stroke and can no longer drive.



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