



Plain Language Explainer: *Texas v. Becerra* Section 504 Under Attack

What is a lawsuit? What does it mean to sue?

A lawsuit is a kind of court case. The person who starts the lawsuit asks the court to fix a problem they are having. To sue someone means to start a lawsuit against them.

State governments and the United States government can sue each other. When governments sue each other, they are usually trying to get the court to change a law or government rule.

What is *Texas v. Becerra*?

Texas v. Becerra is a court case in Texas. A group of [17 states have sued](#) the United States government. The states are asking the court to get rid of Section 504.

What is Section 504?

Section 504 is an important law that protects people with disabilities. Section 504 says you can't discriminate against disabled people if you get money from the United States government. To discriminate means to treat people badly because of who they are. Section 504 says you cannot treat people badly because of their disabilities.

Section 504 has rules that explain what disability discrimination is. The rules say that places like schools, hospitals, and doctors' offices have to include people with disabilities. The rules say what these places have to do to include people with disabilities. Anyone who gets money from the United States government to serve the public or do business has to follow the rules.

The United States government finished the first Section 504 rules in 1977. Many disabled people protested so that the government would make the rules strong.

The United States government updates the Section 504 rules over time. The government just finished updating the rules in 2024. Many disability advocates wrote to the government about what to put in the rules. The updated rules are stronger and have more examples about what disability discrimination is.

Why is Section 504 important?

Section 504 covers all parts of society that get money from the United States government. Section 504 and its rules are very important, especially in education and healthcare. Here are some ways that Section 504 and its rules help us. The rules in Section 504 say that:

- Schools must include students with disabilities and help them learn.
- Doctors and schools must have sign language interpreters for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing who sign. Videos must have captions.
- Doctors must give clear information to disabled people. This includes people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Websites for schools and hospitals must work for people who are blind or low-vision.
- Doctors and hospitals cannot stop helping someone because they have a disability.
- Doctors and hospitals must have tools and machines that work for wheelchair users. This includes machines that check for cancer.

What Do the 17 States Want?

17 states sued the United States government. They asked the court to get rid of Section 504. The states disagree with a few things in the updated Section 504 rules. But the lawsuit asks the court to get rid of all the updated rules – and to get rid of Section 504 itself, not just the rules they disagree with. The lawsuit says that Section 504 goes against the United States Constitution. The lawsuit says that no one should have to follow any part of Section 504. If the 17 states win, this would be a disaster for people with disabilities.

What Will Happen Next?

The judge set a schedule for the case. The 17 states and the United States government will give the court papers about how the court should rule on the case. They will give the papers from December 2024 to April 2025. Other states that support Section 504 may want to file their own papers with the court.

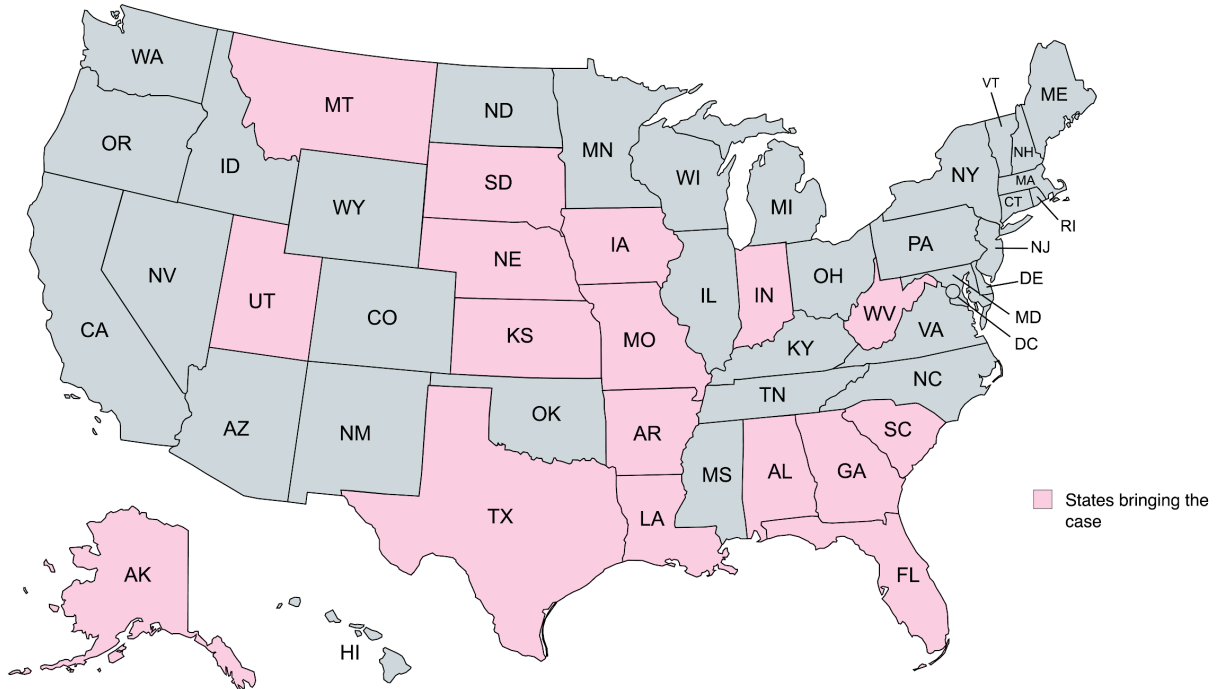
Disability groups may want to file amicus briefs. Amicus briefs are papers that people or groups can send to a court during a court case. The people or groups who send amicus briefs are not part of the court case. They are not the people suing or being sued. People and groups use amicus briefs to explain what decision they want the court to make, and why.

After the court has all the papers, it will make a decision about the case.

What Can I Do to Help?

Attend the Community Briefing. DREDF will hold a *Disability Community Briefing: What You Can Do to Stop the Attack on Section 504* on February 12, 2025 at 9:30 am PT / 12:30 pm ET. We will talk about the case, the next steps in the case, what the case means for us, and what you can do about it. [Register for the February 12 briefing.](#)

Tell your state attorney general to drop out of the case. You can do more if you live in one of the states that is bringing the case. You can ask your state Attorney General to drop out of the case. The pink states in the image and the ones bulleted below are the states bringing the case:



- Alaska
- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Florida
- Georgia
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Texas
- Utah
- West Virginia

Learn more about what you can do to help at dredf.org/protect-504.