Press Release

June 26, 2019

Disability Rights Vermont (DRVT) announces the release of an Investigative into the Death of Jordan Machia on December 5, 2017 while under the care of Lamoille County Mental Health.

This report identifies individual and systemic problems that may have contributed to Mr. Machia’s death. Of greatest concern is the lack of capacity in Vermont to obtain and retain highly trained and professional home care staff to provide consistent and safe care to people with disabilities able to live in the community with appropriate supports and staffing. The report provides specific recommendations for changes in how designated agencies and the Department of Disability, Aging and Independent Living train, monitor and supervise staff who provide care for vulnerable adults in community/home settings. The recommendations in this report should be implemented immediately to prevent similar tragedies in the future.

Disability Rights Vermont (DRVT) is the federally authorized disability protection and advocacy system in Vermont pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 10801 et seq., as well as being the Mental Health Care Ombudsman for the State of Vermont pursuant to 18 V.S. A. §7259. Under these mandates, DRVT investigated Mr. Machia’s death and reached conclusions regarding errors and policy violations that occurred that may have contributed to Mr. Machia’s death. DRVT expects that providing this report to the public will draw attention to the problems facing people with disabilities placed in supported, community settings without appropriately trained or supervised staff. We release this report to you with the consent of the administrator of Mr. Machia’s estate and after input from Lamoille County Mental Health.

DRVT is available to answer questions regarding the issues raised by the report. For further information, please call Ed Paquin or A.J. Ruben at 1-800-834-7890. The investigative report can be found attached, and on:
http://www.disabilityrightsvt.org/pressroom/investigative_reports.html

Thank you for your consideration of this information.