



## Alabama's last residential home for the mentally disabled closes

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**AP** By **The Associated Press**

TUSCALOOSA, Alabama — The Alabama Department of Mental Health has closed its last residential institution for persons with intellectual disabilities.

W.D. Partlow Developmental Center in Tuscaloosa closed its doors today when the facility's last resident was transported to a new home.

Department of Mental Health officials announced in March that they would close the almost 90-year-old Partlow and transfer the approximately 150 residents into community-based facilities.



Demonstrators representing the group People First gather on the steps of the Alabama Statehouse in Montgomery, Ala., Tuesday, March 22, 2011. The group held a rally calling for the closure of the the W.D. Partlow Developmental Center in Tuscaloosa, a state residential facility for people with intellectual disabilities. (AP Photo/Dave Martin) Dave Martin)

Mental health officials said Alabama is one of 13 states to close all of its residential institutions for persons with intellectual disabilities and the only state to reach that milestone in the Southeast.

Jeff Ridgeway, president of the advocacy organization People First of Alabama, praised the state for closing institutions like Partlow and integrating residents into society rather than segregating them in institutions.

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