

Governor's Office of Disability Affairs

Report to the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council

July 2020

[Click here for Governor's Office of Disability Affairs Monthly Newsletters](#) or find newsletters located on the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs webpage.

Recap of the 2021 Legislative Session

The 2021 Legislative Session officially closed on June 10th, 2021. For this year's session, GODA created a spreadsheet to track disability-related legislation. It is still being updated weekly as bills are signed into law (or vetoed). You can find the spreadsheet [here](#). Below you will find updates on legislative instruments that were particularly relevant to the disability community.

HB446 by Representative Butler: Creates and provides for the office of the state Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator within the division of administration. *Now Act 452. Effective 8/1/21.*

HB172 by Representative Butler: Provides Medicaid coverage for dental care for adults with developmental disabilities. Passed the legislature and signed by the Governor. *Now Act 450. Effective 8/1/21.*

HB253 by Representative McKnight: Provides relative to the governance and funding of the Special School District, which provides special education services through its schools and programs. Passed the legislature and signed by Governor. *Now Act 468. Effective 7/1/21.*

HB594 by Representative Miller: Prohibits insurance companies from placing a cap on the amount they will pay for noninvasive ventilator treatments. Passed the legislature and signed by the Governor. *Now Act 379. Effective 8/1/21.*

SB86 by Senator Foil: Requires the governing authority of each public school to develop and adopt policies for the installation and operation of video cameras in certain classrooms. Passed the legislature and signed by the Governor. *Now Act 456. Effective 6/23/21.*

Annual GODA Conference will be Virtual: Register Now!

GODA will be hosting its annual conference on July 26-29. As usual, the conference will take place in tandem with the anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26th). This year's conference will feature sessions pertaining to accessibility, education, employment, healthcare, voting, emergency preparedness, self-determination, leadership, advocacy, interactions with law enforcement, transportation and other issues important to the disability community. The GODA Conference is presented free of charge and is open to the public.

[Click here to register!](#) Click [here](#) for the conference schedule.

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Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA)

The Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs held its quarterly meetings on June 15th and 16th. The next round of meetings will take place in September. Applications are now being accepted for membership on the Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA). [Click here to apply.](#) GACDA meets quarterly in March, June, September, and December.

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) elected the following individuals to serve on its Executive Board for the 2021-2022 term:

Jamie Duplechine- Chairperson
Anita Pattan- Vice Chair
Jarrod Bottley- Secretary
Daryn Broussard- Treasurer
Erick Taylor- Member at Large

Additionally, SILC hosted its quarterly meetings via Zoom on May 6th and 7th. The next quarterly SILC meetings will take place on August 5th and 6th. Jessica Lewis, executive director, has accepted a new career opportunity. We wish her the best. Jamar Ennis will assume the role of executive director. SILC is in the process of becoming an independent entity outside of the Governor's Office. The transition will be completed by the end of the year. This is a major accomplishment for SILC and the support of this has been a priority of the Governor's Office.

State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) for EarlySteps

SICC hosted its quarterly meetings via Zoom on July 8th. The next quarterly meeting will take place on October 14th.

State As a Model Employer (SAME) Taskforce

The SAME Taskforce with the assistance of XP Synergy Companies is in the process of producing videos including the Governor, Lt. Governor, some state agency secretaries, and some employees to promote participation in the annual SAME Survey as well as promoting the values of SAME. The SAME Survey will be administered during August. The agency reports and plans will be completed by October 31.

Dr. Melanie Washington Earns Doctoral Degree!

On May 15, 2021 Melanie Washington, the Director of the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) for EarlySteps, received her Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Dr. Washington is a valued member of the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs. We recognize and appreciate Dr. Washington's passion and commitment, and would like to congratulate her on her monumental accomplishment!