

# Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council

SELF-DETERMINATION ◆ INDEPENDENCE ◆ PRODUCTIVITY ◆ INTEGRATION ◆ INCLUSION

August 25, 2020

Ms. Sara Newell-Perez, Program Lead  
Office on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

**VIA EMAIL:** [Sara.Newell-Perez@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:Sara.Newell-Perez@acl.hhs.gov)

*RE: Louisiana DD Council Executive Director Hiring Concerns*

Dear Ms. Newell-Perez,

Thank you for your correspondence which indicated certain concerns held by the Administration on Disabilities (AoD) regarding the hiring of a new Executive Director for the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council (LA Council). Please allow this letter to serve as a response addressing the concerns expressed in the correspondence issued to the LA Council on August 11, 2020.

In an effort to ensure compliance with the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (DD Act), the LA Council Chairperson (in his rightful authority) has unappointed members of the Executive Director Search Committee that were not included in a motion passed by the full Council on October 17, 2019, which established the membership of this committee. This action includes the removal of voting capabilities and potential violations of perceived interference from non-Council members involved with the Administration of the Office of the Governor from the LA Council's Executive Director Search Committee.

To date, the LA Council's Executive Director Search Committee has discussed details of the Executive Director position and selected a search firm to assist with identifying potential candidates. The search firm has not yet been hired by the committee, and the selection of the search firm will be reevaluated by the committee. There have been no interviews conducted, nor any hiring decisions made by this committee. It is understood and intended that once appropriate candidates have been identified through procedures in accordance with federal and state regulations, only LA Council members will be included in the selection process of an Executive Director. Even though previous decisions made by the Executive Director Search Committee were done so in good faith, and all participants have conducted themselves in a supportive manner, it is the Council's intent to adhere to guidelines set forth by the DD Act and to operate with integrity and transparency moving forward.

The LA Council trusts that these efforts will be taken into consideration toward addressing the concerns presented by AoD. If further clarification is needed, please contact me at your earliest convenience. Also, written confirmation is being requested to indicate if this correspondence will satisfy and/or alleviate the concerns expressed by AoD, or if further actions are required by the LA Council to fully address their concerns. Thank you for your consideration and assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,



Courtney Ryland, MHA  
Interim Executive Director  
Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council  
Email: [Courtney.Ryland2@la.gov](mailto:Courtney.Ryland2@la.gov)

P.O. Box 3455 ◆ Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3455 ◆ 225-342-6804 or 1-800-450-8108 ◆ [www.laddc.org](http://www.laddc.org)