

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Self-Determination and Community Inclusion Committee Meeting Summary
Wednesday, July 17, 2024
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

You can watch the meeting here: <https://www.youtube.com/user/LADDCouncil/videos>

View [meeting transcript](#).

Members Present: Patti Barovechio, Mike Billings, Cheri Crane, Julie Foster Hagan, Jill Hano, Angela Harmon, Pasqueal Nguyen, Tony Piontek, Tory Rocca, Lauren Womack

Members Absent: Rosalyn Hymel, Melinda Richard, Brooke Stewart

Staff: Brenton Andrus, Rekeesha Branch, Stephanie Carmona, Ebony Haven, Hannah Jenkins

Others Present: Cherie Aduli, Melissa Bayham, Brian Bennett, Crystal Benoit, Lillian DeJean, Nicole DeJean, Liam Doyle, Mylinda Elliott, Jamar Ennis, Nicole Flores, Christie Gonzales, April Hampton, Lynsey Hebert, Natalie Istre, Aisha Johnson, Christina Martin, Susan Riehn, Jacki Pierce, Bambi Polotzola, Erick Taylor, Renoda Washington, Mimi Webb, Vivienne Webb

Mike Billings called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM. A quorum was established.

MOTION PASSED Approval of the [April Meeting Summary](#) made by Tory Rocca, second by Jill Hano. Passed by a vote of 8 to 0 with no objections or abstentions.

Non-Contractual Activities

Julie Foster Hagan, on behalf of the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) and the Bureau of Health Services and Financing (Medicaid), provided a detailed synopsis of the new Medicaid Access Rule. The PowerPoint presentation can be viewed [here](#).

The Access Rule was finalized this past May and went into effect on July 9th. Changes in the rule include:

- Payment adequacy and transparency
- Critical incidents
- Timeliness of access
- Quality measure set
- Fee-for-Service grievance process
- Medicaid Advisory Committee (MAC) and Beneficiary Advisory Committee (BAC)

Ms. Hagan stated states were given a timeframe of 6 – 8 years, depending on the area, to come into compliance with the rule. Some states have expressed concern with this timeframe given the sweeping changes needed. These changes will also require increased funding. She also stated the department will be looking at hosting webinars and roadshows to present these changes to the public. Members of the committee expressed the desire to share feedback about the department’s progress toward compliance at quarterly committee meetings.

Due to technology issues, the committee recessed at 1:42 PM to give staff a chance to resolve sound issues. Meeting resumed at 1:48 PM and quorum was established.

Families Helping Families New Orleans

The committee received an update on Families Helping Families of New Orleans (FHF NOLA). FHF NOLA Executive Director Aisha Johnson attended to share updates on the Center. Her quarterly report can be found [here](#).

- Auditors have been engaged timely for the Fiscal Year 24 (FY24) audit of the Center.
- All deliverables for FY24 have been met.
- Center did end the year with a \$10,000 deficit, but they did see an increase in funding this year. The deficit was related to reduced funding in FY24. Ms. Johnson is confident the budget for FY25 recently passed by the Board will be balanced.
- Working toward increased outreaches, especially in rural areas such as Plaquemines Parish. Staff have been going out into the communities rather than waiting at the office for families to seek help.
- Noted concerns for the state Department of Education (DOE) contract in FY25. All Centers’ contracts are currently in limbo. Ms. Johnson affirmed a contingency budget is in place should this contract be cut or reduced to prevent the Center from having a deficit in FY25.
- Addressed concerns that layoffs were happening at the Center. Ms. Johnson stated this was a false rumor. There are no plans to lay off staff. The Assistant Director is planning to leave the Center and hours may be reduced for education staff should the DOE contract be reduced/cut.

Contractual Activities

The committee received multiple updates on contractual activities including Partners in Policymaking (PiP), LaCAN, Families Helping Families Resource Centers (FHF) and other initiatives of the Council that began with the Fiscal Year 2024 Action Plan. Additional information about these activities can be found in the Council’s quarterly [Status of Planned Activities Report](#) under goals one and two in addition to reports linked in the committee’s agenda.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM.