

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Self-Determination and Community Inclusion Committee Meeting Summary
Wednesday, October 16, 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: Cherie Aduli, Brian Bennett, Michael Billings, Cheri Crane, Julie Foster Hagan, Jill Hano, Angela Harmon, Pasqueal Nguyen, Tory Rocca, Brooke Stewart, Lauren Womack

Members Absent: Patti Barovechio

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

Others Present: Kristie Curtis, Mylinda Elliott, Jamar Ennis, Nicole Flores, Kevin George, Christi Gonzales, April Hampton, Lynsey Hebert, Claudia Loston, Christina Martin, Ashley McReynolds, Kelly Monroe, Laura Nata, Jacki Pierce, Tony Piontek, Bambi Polotzola, Susan Riehn, Erick Taylor, Marilyn Thornton, Mimi Webb, Vivienne Webb, Garry Williams

Anglea Harmon called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM. A quorum was established.

MOTION PASSED Approval of the [July 2024 Meeting Summary](#) made by Lauren Womack, second by Michael Billings. Passed by a vote of 9 to 0 with no objections or abstentions.

Non-Contractual Activities

Julie Foster Hagan, on behalf of the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), provided various departmental updates of interest to the committee including:

- Update on the night rate increase in OCDD waivers which went into effect on October 1st. She also shared the policies would be amended to ensure workers are not sleeping on their shift.
- [Potential reductions](#) to the Louisiana Department of Health's (LDH) budget in FY26.
- Upcoming [OCDD Roadshows](#).
- Initiatives to address the Direct Support Worker (DSW) workforce crisis including community partnerships with colleges and a federal grant to identify strategies to address workforce challenges.
- Incontinence supplies in waivers. It was noted the department was aware of concerns around quality of supplies being provided and are actively working on a solution to ensure individuals get the supplies they need.

- Medicaid Access Rule Update. Ms. Hagan will solicit feedback on this in future meetings as updates are provided.

Ms. Hagan also provided an update on the department's rate methodology study. Milliman has been identified to complete the study for home- and community-based services. They have experience conducting rate methodologies in other states. They will be hosting a virtual information session on Monday, October 28th, from 2:30 – 3:30 PM. The rate study process will be shared. You can register for the meeting [here](#). The study should be completed by June.

Families Helping Families New Orleans

The committee received an update on Families Helping Families of New Orleans (FHF NOLA) from staff. Last year (FY24), FHF NOLA was placed on probationary status due to ongoing concerns noted in multiple audits. The Council decided in April to restore partial funding to the Center in FY25 with full restoration of funding dependent on a successful FY24 legislative audit.

Prior to processing FHF NOLA's FY25 contract, Council staff were informed of possible misappropriation and/or misuse of funds by leadership. The director abruptly resigned and it was also reported the Center was unable to pay its staff. All staff were either terminated, quit or laid off for an unspecified amount of time. This information was confirmed in a meeting between Council staff, the former FHF NOLA Interim Director and the former Board President.

Based on the information provided to Council staff, it was apparent the Center would be unable to fulfill any contractual requirements, and the Center was notified the Council will not be issuing a contract for FY25.

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](#).

An announcement was made regarding the January committee meeting. Members are tasked with coming up with concept ideas for the Council's next five year plan and ideas for activities for the FY26 annual plan. These ideas will be discussed at the January meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:49 PM.