

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Self-Determination and Community Inclusion Committee Meeting Summary
Wednesday, January 28, 2026
12:45 PM – 2:30 PM

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

View meeting [transcript](#).

Members Present: Patti Barovechio, Brian Bennett, Mike Billings, Ayden Blunski, Alaina Chachere, Jill Hano, Angela Harmon, Cherie Kelly-Adulli, Tory Rocca, Robby Smith, Geary Williams, Karen Xu

Members Absent: Frank Macaluso, Pasqueal Nguyen, Brooke Stewart

Staff: Brenton Andrus, Rekeesha Branch, Lauren Brown, Stephanie Carmona, Ebony Haven

Others Present: Herman Bignar, AnnMarie Bihm, Bernard Brown (OCDD), Brenda Cosse, Amanda Daigre, Lillian DeJean, Mylinda Elliott, Nicole Flores, April Hampton, Lynsey Hebert (CC), Chanel Jackson, Christina Martin, Ashley McReynolds, Kelly Monroe, Jacki Pierce, Susan Riehn, Erick Taylor, Dr. Marilyn Thornton, Renoda Washington

Jill Hano called the meeting to order at 1:23 PM. A quorum was established.

MOTION PASSED Approval of the [October Meeting Summary](#) made by Tory Rocca, second by Alaina Chachere. Passed by a vote of 11 to 0 with no abstentions.

Non-Contractual Activities

Bernard Brown (OCDD), Brian Bennett (Medicaid), and Geary Williams (OAAS) shared multiple updates about their departments. Some of these updates can be found in their agency reports which are included in your Council meeting packet and on the Council's [meeting page](#).

For the Offices for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), Mr. Brown reported the following:

- Potential name change for OCDD. Recommendations are welcomed and a voting tool will be created
- Funding has been allocated to State and Regional Advisory committees to improve enrollment through outreach and communications.

- The rate study has not been released but, they are projecting the release of this information before the start of legislative session on March 9th.
 - If the study has not been released to the public by the council's next meeting, the committee discussed asking the LDH Secretary to attend and provide information on the delay and recommendations that were listed in the study.
- The OCDD summit was held on January 20, 2026. The summit provided a live streamed options for the individuals who cannot attend in person and was a great success.

Mr. Williams with the Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) provided an update on their Community Choice Waiver wait list contract which; will look at how to move the waiver toward a needs based direction. They also discussed the Community Options Waiver (COW) and developing cost saving services related to Home and Community Based Services (HCBS).

Medicaid representative, Brian Bennett, provided updates on Act 421 (TEFRA program). Mr. Bennett informed the committee, as a result of continuous growth in the TEFRA program approximately \$75,000 of administrative funds will now be applied to pay for level of care assessments for individuals and children who apply.

Contractual Activities

The committee was unable to discuss all contractual activities under Goals 1 and 2 in our plan, due to time constraints. The committee discussed the council's contract for their activity on Sexual Education and Women's Preventative Health has not been signed by LSU and they have not started any work on this initiative. LSU expressed concerns for the HIPPA language in the contract and requested a change. LDH legal informed council staff the language needed to remain in the contract. At this time, LaDDC's staff are waiting on LSU's legal team to make a decision on moving forward with the contract. 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](#).

FFY27 Planning Committee Recommendations

The committee discussed activities to recommend to the Planning Ad-Hoc Committee for inclusion in the Council's FY2027 Action Plan under Goals 1 and 2. This plan will begin October 2026.

A motion by Tory Rocca, second by Ayden Blunski was made for the Self-Determination and Community Inclusion Committee to recommend the full council offer to the Planning Ad Hoc committee the following activities for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2027 Action Plan for consideration:

- Increase in funding for Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) in the amount of \$15,000

- Training to focus on talking to kids and adults with I/DD on health and exercise. (ex. exercise, dietary recommendations, etc.)
- Create a resource guide by compiling emergency plans for parishes, especially as it relates to individuals with I/DD. Partner with other organizations to distribute the parish plans and work with families on how to create own plans.
- Create a curriculum on disability history to share with schools and families
- Continue funding for People First trainings

Meeting was adjourned at 2:56 PM.