



# State of Connecticut Council on Developmental Services

# DDS

Minutes of the May 21, 2020 Meeting  
Location: Virtually, via Microsoft Teams

## In attendance:

Adrienne Benjamin; Pamela DonAroma; Christine Hainsworth-Straus; Karen Hlavac, Vice Chair; Rick Lenz; Dawn Oduor; Rick Rothstein, Secretary; Deborah Ullman; Lisa Weisinger-Roland; Kevin Zingler, Chair; Joseph Duffy; Diana Mennone; Arlene Reith

Absent: Dr. Neil Stein;

DDS Staff: Commissioner Jordan Scheff; Krista Ostaszewski, Director of Legislation, Regulations and Communications; and Joseph Carvalho, Executive Secretary

## Introductions

Kevin Zingler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. He asked if anyone from the public wished to speak and seeing none, the Chair proceeded to the next agenda item

## Moment of silence

## Public Participation

Fay Lenz – thank you to DDS and frontline staff.  
Shannon Jacovino and Patti Silva introduced themselves

## Topics of Discussion

### ▪ Approval of Minutes

Approval of the minutes of the Feb 20, 2020 Council meeting were Tabled until the following – motion to table by Rick Rothstein, seconded by Adrienne Benjamin.

### ▪ Commissioner's Update

Commissioner updated the Council on the count of people who, at the time of this meeting, had tested positive from COVID-19. To review updated figures please visit

<https://portal.ct.gov/DDS/General/COVID19/DDS-COVID-19-Figures-and-Trends>

Question: why aren't we testing more?

Commissioner indicated there is testing continues to increase. There was a walkthrough of Hartford Regional Center to begin testing all staff, on a voluntary basis, today. All the area group home staff are invited for testing as well. Letter went out day before DS Council meeting regarding testing at Newington. The Commissioner continues to engage with the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Services to explore strategies and exchange ideas with counterparts throughout the country regarding COVID-19 mitigation efforts and safety measures.

Hospital guidelines – DDS continues to work with DPH and the Governor's office on additional guidance regarding a support person accompanying and individual with a disability to a hospital admission. A formal complaint on the issue was also made the federal Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Because of this OCR is now involved in creating and reviewing additional guidance. Anticipated release of further guidance is the end of the week.

Question asked regarding a parent or guardian accompanying a loved one to a doctors visits that are not routine. Commissioner Scheff responded that we continue to try and find creative solutions to this question including virtual options if direct participation is not appropriate. Commissioner recommended the team reach out to the doctor to identify preferences or protocols and work from there.

Krista Ostaszewski acknowledged that there was no legislative update as the Connecticut General Assembly has not yet scheduled a special session.

Adriene – voiced appreciation for Jordan’s remark’s

Joe Duffy – voiced support for the Commissioner and DDS

Motion to adjourn – Rick Lenz

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 PM

The next meeting will be held June 18th at 3 PM