



# State of Connecticut Council on Developmental Services

# DDS

## Minutes of the October 15, 2020 Meeting

**Location:** Meeting Held Virtually via Microsoft Teams

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

**Absent:** Dr. Neil Stein; Arlene Reith

**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 2:03 PM

### Moment of Silence

### Public Participation

none

### Topics of Discussion

- **Review and Approval of previous council meeting minutes – 5 minutes** o July 16, 2020, and September 17 meeting minutes - motion to approve made by Deb and seconded by Rick R, passed unanimously.

- **Commissioner Report - 25 minutes** o COVID – positivity rates had stayed steady for the agency until recently where we are now experiencing an uptick in individuals we serve and staff. The uptick follows the same trend that the state is seeing with positivity rates.

- o Reviewed trends and figures about COVID positivity among staff and individuals. These figures are posted daily on the DDS website. <https://portal.ct.gov/DDS/General/COVID19/DDS-COVID-19-Figures-and-Trends>

- o DDS is discussing the potential delay of phase 3 of reopening employment and day services. Once this decision is made, a communication will be sent to all DDS providers and posted on the DDS website.

- o Discussed budget mitigation and what DDS can do to save money within current allotments. Commissioner provided an update that DDS is working with the Governor's Office and OPM to find what savings can be made.

- o DDS is currently facilitating ongoing meetings to improve collaboration between DCF and DMHAS.

- o DDS Staff Town Halls have begun and will be happening for the next month. These meetings are intended to allow the Commissioner to hear directly from staff and listen to ideas, concerns, and thoughts on agency-related items.

- o Commissioner reviewed survey results from DDS Staff and Provider COVID-19 Response After Action Survey

- o Christine - complimenting DDS' ability to provide information regarding annual reviews. Could the IP and DSS program renewals coincide to try to get the process accomplished in one fell swoop?

- Commissioner will bring back to Wayne

- Deb said her experience was not as smooth

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- Adrienne filled out DSS redetermination in July, and just received more paperwork very recently with a very near due date.

- o Kevin Zingler - brought up Ken Cabral's departure from DDS to begin another professional opportunity. ▪ Commissioner: Several changes in Central Office staff have created opportunities for reimagining roles for greater impact and efficiency.

- o Kevin Zingler - excited to see ABLE accounts announcement from State Treasurer Wooden with the help of DDS and ADS to ensure the success of this important project.

- o Motion: to charge three folks to draft a statement on behalf of the DS Council in support of the workgroup that will be sent via email and will be approved by the council later. Adrienne, Karen, and Lisa are to comprise this group. Moved by Karen, seconded by Rick Lenz. Passed unanimously

Topics for Future Council Meetings

Joint meeting with RACs via teams (Joe and Krista to follow up w/ RAC)

- o Motion to Adjourn - made by Karen Hlavac and seconded by Joe Duffy, passed unanimously

**Meeting adjourned at 2:31 pm.**