



State of Connecticut
Independent Office of the Ombudsperson for Developmental Services
460 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06017

March 2022 Monthly Report to the Council on Developmental Services

Assistance to Individuals and Families

In relation to my duties as Ombudsperson I communicated with individuals, families, advocates, DDS and outside agencies on numerous issues including:

1. Assisting family on urgent waiting list to access residential supports through self-direction.
2. Family members who are not guardians having access to information, obtaining information, and visitation with individuals supported by DDS.
3. Addressing a DDS data breach with families and guardians of impacted individuals.
4. Working with a private school to connect a student with autism with adult supports.
5. Supporting an individual & family who received a 30-day notice from residential provider.
6. Supporting individuals with IDD and mental illness work through issues with residential programs.
7. Assisting the mother of an individual who lost his job, understand how to support her son in navigating next steps and support options.
8. Assisting sibling/guardian explore support options for an individual who was denied DDS supports.
9. Assisting an attorney explore support options for an individual with autism facing homelessness.
10. Supported parent/guardian with addressing changes to residential program that conflicted with person centered supports.
11. Providing information and connecting with resources on ADA, traumatic brain injuries, supports for seniors, and community housing supports.

To address these concerns, I connected families with resources and information inside and outside of DDS, and maintained regular contact with the following people and entities within DDS:

- Commissioner Scheff,
- Deputy Commissioner Mason,
- Regional Directors & Assistant Regional Directors,
- Case Manager Supervisors & Case Managers
- Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Self Determination Directors
- Health Management Director
- Legal Director
- Director of Case Management

Interaction with DDS, other state agencies and community organizations

- Attended State Employee Leadership Network (SELN) Strategic Planning Steering Committee and co-chaired the SELN Interagency Collaboration Subcommittee.
- Attended regular state-wide and regional meetings including incident command calls, forensic meetings, waiver team meetings, provider leadership meetings and others.
- Attended a West Region Regional Advisory Council meeting.
- Participated in discussions on Supported Decision Making.
- Met with several private providers to discuss types supports offered.
- Met with Council on Developmental Disabilities and DDS Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion to discuss outreach to underserved communities.

- Participated in DDS Diversity Committee meeting.
- Attended DDS Case Management Supervisors meeting.
- Attended DDS Provider Leadership meeting.
- DDS approved Support Broker

Areas of Concern

- Impact of staffing crisis on ability to access supports, person centered planning, advocacy, provider flexibility and morale.
- Impact of loss of staff and experience, particularly at STS and Regional Centers due state employee retirements.
- Maintaining active family involvement, advocacy and support for individuals who receive supports outside of the family home.
- Supporting and protecting family advocacy.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Shannon Jacovino
Ombudsperson
March 17, 2022**