



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

**November 2022 Monthly Report to the Council on Developmental Services**

**Assistance to Individuals and Families**

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

1. Ongoing weekly support to family of individual transitioning from a CRS to self-direction.
2. Guardians rights and responsibilities for individuals who reside in group homes.
3. Issues between family members/guardians and private providers.
4. Mediation between family member/guardian & DDS Regional Center.
5. Support and information for siblings of adult individual with suspected ID who never applied for DDS.
6. Consultation with DDS Case Managers regarding family/guardian issues and complaints.
7. Information, referral, and outreach on behalf of individuals with autism and other disabilities who are not eligible for DDS funding & supports.
8. Issues between families and CCH providers.
9. Follow-up with DDS for individual in BSP seeking residential placement.
10. Family complaint about provider and DDS handling of individual who was removed from group for health & safety reasons.
11. Families seeking follow-up on hearing requests.
12. Collaboration with DDS and monitoring ongoing health and safety concerns due to unexplained injuries and multiple active investigations involving individual in a private group home.
13. Calls from legislators on constituent issues.
14. Issues around healthcare decisions/issues between provider and guardians.
15. Support for family in exploring residential support options.
16. Transportation issues.

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,
- Regional Directors & Assistant Regional Directors,
- Case Manager Supervisors & Case Managers
- Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Self Determination Directors
- Health Management Director
- DDS Legal Department
- Director of Case Management
- Self Determination Directors
- DDS Abuse & Investigation Division.

## **Interaction with DDS, other state agencies and community organizations**

- Member of DDS Diversity Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Committee and DEI Strategic Planning Committee.
- Member of State Employee Leadership Network (SELN) Strategic Planning Steering Committee and SELN Leadership Subcommittee.
- Member of Council on Developmental Disabilities.
- Co-chair of ARPA Individual & Family Engagement Committee.
- Member of ARPA Advisory Committee.
- Completed Life Course Ambassador training.
- Attended regular state-wide and regional meetings including incident command calls, forensic meetings, waiver team meetings, provider leadership meetings and others.
- Monthly meeting with Commissioner Scheff.
- Monthly meeting with Deputy Commissioner Velardo.
- Monthly meeting with DDS Health Management Administrator.
- Bimonthly meeting with DDS Director of Case Management.
- Regular meeting with DDS Employment & Day Services Division.
- Met with CT South Central Region Long Term Care Ombudsman.
- Consulted with NJ & MA Ombudsmen.
- Met with The Arc Connecticut.
- Met with DDS legal department to gain a better understanding of DDS eligibility appeal process.
- Consulted with AID Director on development of an informational document for individuals and families on DDS abuse and neglect investigation process.
- Sat on DDS interview committee for Legislative and Regulations Specialist.
- Met with DDS Independent Support Broker and The Arc Connecticut.
- Met with Futures Inc, to discuss microbusinesses and social enterprise.
- Met with Deloitte re: ARPA provider transformation.
- Met with Council on Developmental Services subcommittee on DDS Abuse & Neglect process.

## **Areas of Concern**

- Impact of staffing crisis on access supports, person centered planning, advocacy, provider flexibility and quality of supports.
- Rights of families/guardians to provide advocacy and support for individuals who receive residential supports outside of the family home through DDS or private providers.
- Supporting, protecting and encouraging individual and family advocacy.
- Provider accountability.
- The lack of support options for individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities who are not eligible for DDS funding.
- Guardianship statistics in CT as compared to other states/ lack of information on alternatives to guardianship in Connecticut.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Shannon Jacovino**

**Ombudsperson**

**November 14, 2022**