

Connecticut Fatherhood Initiative (CFI) Council Meeting

**December 15, 2025
Meeting Summary**



Members in Attendance:

Commissioner Nancy Navarretta, Co-Chair, Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services
Astrand Ferron-Poole (for Commissioner Andrea Barton Reeves, Chair) Dept. of Social Services
Dr. Kari Adamsons, University of Connecticut, Human Development & Family Sciences
Tanya Barrett, United Way of CT
Michael Bartley, Department of Labor
Deputy Commissioner John Carragher, Department of Veterans Affairs
Diana DiTunno, Dept. of Social Services (DSS) Office of Organizational & Skill Development
Joseph DiTunno, Judicial Court Support Services Division (D4 Committee Co-Chair)
Anthony Gay, Department of Children and Families (D2 Committee Chair)
Commissioner Susan Hamilton, Department of Children and Families
Melvette Hill, CWCSEO (D5 Committee Co-Chair)
Anthony (Tony) Judkins, DSS Office of Child Support Services (D5 Committee Co-Chair)
Nicole Kilduff, Family Strides Inc. (Provider Representative, Executive Level)
Kevin Krusz, Department of Public Health
Lesley Mara, Connecticut State Colleges and Universities
Abdul-Rahmaan I. Muhammad, My People Clinical and Community Services
Jackson Pierre-Louis, Department of Developmental Services
Lynn Reeves, DSS Office of Child Support Services
Meghan Scanlon, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Ariana Trotman, GBAPP (Provider Representative, Program Manager Level)
Interim Commissioner Elena Trueworthy, Office of Early Childhood

Member Regrets:

Paul Bourdolous, Judicial Branch Support Enforcement Services
Heriberto (Eddie) Cajigas, Department of Labor (D1 Committee Chair)
Douglas Edwards, Real Dads Forever
Aileen Keays, Board of Pardons and Parole (D4 Committee Co-Chair)
Jennifer Wilder, Office of Early Childhood
Chairperson Jennifer Zaccagnini, Board of Pardons and Parole

Guests in Attendance:

Kristen Dudanowicz, OEC
Scott Gaul, Office of Policy Management
Michael Tingley, CCADV
Justin Torres, DOL

Connecticut Fatherhood Initiative (CFI) Council Meeting



**December 15, 2025
Meeting Summary**

Welcome/Introductions

Commissioner Navaretta opened the meeting and welcomed Members. She shared that Commissioner Barton Reeves had a scheduling conflict and sends her regrets; however, DSS Chief of Staff Astread Ferron-Poole was in attendance as her representative. Members introduced themselves. Commissioner Navaretta noted congratulations are in order for John Carragher, as the newly appointed Deputy Commissioner at DVA!

Review/Acceptance of September Meeting Minutes

Astread asked members to review minutes from the September meeting. Members reviewed, no edits were noted. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Melvette Hill and seconded by Meaghan Scanlon. All members were in favor. Minutes approved as written.

Strategic Plan: Implementation Update

Domain Committee Chair Reports

DOMAIN 1: Fathers economically stable

Michael Bartley provided the report on behalf of D1 Chair Eddie Cajigas. The Committee reconvened on December 2. He reminded the group that membership includes representation from Adult Education, CT State Colleges and Universities, the Department of Aging and Disability Services' Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Housing, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and the Office of Early Childhood. Two new members have joined, representing DSS Economic Security Unit and the CT Council of Family Service Agencies, Inc. At the reconvening meeting members gave updates on their agency's work in support of fathers and families and new members noted how they believe their work connects to the CFI. All are excited about the next steps in their work together and the group will be identifying activities for the year ahead at their next meeting. It was mentioned that perhaps the prospect for a connection to the CFI and employment and other services for fathers could be via the "Opportunity Centers" that DSS is opening, where residents will get coordinated support for childcare, housing, DSS benefits, etc.

DOMAIN 2:

Fathers in healthy relationships with their children, co-parents, significant others

Committee Chair Anthony Gay reported the Committee has been discussing recruitment of new members, including Christina Morales who has also joined as a member of the CFI Council. The group has been meeting consistently, finalizing the Request for Proposals (RFP) template and "how-to" guide for agencies with recommendations for father-inclusiveness that will be shared with the Council at the next meeting.

Connecticut Fatherhood Initiative (CFI) Council Meeting



**December 15, 2025
Meeting Summary**

Strategic Plan: Implementation Update, continued

Domain Committee Chair Reports

DOMAIN 3: Young people prepared to be responsible parents

A new Chair or Co-Chairs for this Domain are currently being identified. CCADV has committed a staff person, who was in attendance today, to serve as a co-lead for this Committee. SDE is the other agency DSS is in contact with as a potential agency to co-chair, given the focus on youth.

DOMAIN 4:

Men involved in the criminal justice system supported in being responsible fathers

Committee Co-Chair Joe DiTunno reported the web-based training (WBT) session for CSSD staff (Adult Probation, Juvenile Probation, Bail Services and Family Services Divisions) is with the CSSD training team. However, the training staff are currently working on a directive for all state agencies to review and update all of their training curricula for accessibility, which is a labor-intensive task will include the D4 WBT training. Once the CSSD training team has completed this project the training will be tested with CSSD staff. Following that phase, the Committee will revise as needed and then bring training teams from criminal justice system agencies together to show the training, discuss how the different agencies can “make it their own” and provide the curriculum for agencies to incorporate those pieces into the template for delivery to their respective staff.

Recruitment of new members from criminal justice system agencies is also a current priority.

DOMAIN 5: Policy and Public Awareness

Co-Chairs Tony Judkins and Melvette Hill reported the following regarding priorities for their Committee in 2026:

- *Committee Recruitment:* D5 has experienced a reduction in membership (3–5 members); to address this challenge, they plan to engage the Chairs of the other four Domain Committees to identify someone from who may be able to join D5, which will reaffirm the original intent for D5 include representation from all Domain Committees and the 211 Workgroup; they will develop a recruitment message and outreach strategy to encourage D5 participation
- *Training for CFI Network Partners*

Some key training topics identified by fatherhood program staff include child support; co-parenting strategies; employment tools/training; access/custody processes; pardon/parole process; health resources. Next they will collaborate with providers to prioritize topics and decide appropriate formats for provision of information – for some, a “job aid” may suffice; for others, an instructor-led session may be the best format. Further, they will identify subject matter experts within our CFI partner network to develop aids or host/lead training sessions aligned with their area of expertise.

Connecticut Fatherhood Initiative (CFI) Council Meeting



**December 15, 2025
Meeting Summary**

Strategic Plan: Implementation Update, continued

Domain Committee Chair Reports

DOMAIN 5: Policy and Public Awareness, continued

- *CFI Dear Dad Tour as a year-round activity:* Tony noted that this Council approved DSS to move forward with AVP to extend the annual CFI Dear Dad Tour into a year-round public awareness campaign, rather than only securing space at events that were occurring between Mother's Day and Father's Day. The goals for 2026 include execution of the contract with AVP; identification of four key events/months for tour activation (e.g., Back to School, Father's Day, Veterans Day, Men's Health Month, Family Night at Yard Goats); engage D5 members in reviewing and categorizing existing Dear Dad Tour video content – as videos are categorized, they can be shared as a “package” for partners to use in their respective fatherhood work, to enhance impact and visibility. For example, videos featuring veteran fathers can be used by DVA at their events, in staff training, etc.
- *Data Development:* Progress has been limited due to low engagement/response rates to the D5 Subcommittee outreach efforts. D5 and the Council is now pivoting, to partner with OPM to guide this piece of our work, leveraging their experience in data coordination. Tony reiterated that Scott Gaul will present after the Strategic Plan reports on strategies for identifying key data points to better tell the stories of fathers and families served by CFI, with an ultimate goal of establishing a framework for consistent data collection, reporting and sharing.

211CT Workgroup Chair Report

Tany Barrett reported the Workgroup reconvened in October, and the most recent meeting was December 4. Priorities for the workgroup in 2026 are resource curation, training and data. The 211CT e-library papers review will be an ongoing task, with a mid-year review conducted for any changes needed to existing papers, or the additions of papers regarding new topic areas. Program write-ups will be kept up to date in the database as well, to ensure accurate resources are displayed within website searches.

Regarding training, CFI overview sessions will be developed for 211CT Contact Center Specialists (both in-person and virtual formats), the Resources Team and other staff as identified by United Way of CT; a review of a pre-recorded CFI webinar will be done and an updated webinar will be recorded if needed; and 211CT training will be delivered to fatherhood program providers (both in-person and virtual formats). Data collection will continue (211CT calls, needs identified and whether a resource was identified for the caller, website hits for fatherhood-related resources, papers, etc. and metrics will continue to be shared with this Council.

Connecticut Fatherhood Initiative (CFI) Council Meeting

**December 15, 2025
Meeting Summary**



Data Development

Astread stated that while there have been great efforts across the five Domain Committees and 211 Workgroup since the launch of the Strategic Plan in 2016, data development is something the collaborative hasn't fully tackled as of yet. The change made to the United Way 211CT Contact Center staff's script from "how many people are in your household/" to "are you a parent/" has yielded statistics on fathers' needs and this was a great first step. However, there are programs and services our respective agencies manage that aren't necessarily asking questions that will get us the information we are looking for with regard to men as fathers. The state partners who are parties in the Fatherhood Memorandum of Understanding have a common activity to support data development and data development is the overarching strategy of the CFI Strategic Plan because those involved with the Plan's development recognized the lack of data on men as fathers – the Plan itself was named "Dads Count" as a result.

At the September Council meeting, there was dialogue about types of data being collected and the sharing of data across agencies. Sharing of unidentifiable/aggregate data allows the CFI partners to better address needs of and service to men as fathers in our systems. During that discussion, Members agreed that developing 5-6 shared data points to support our collaborative efforts and the Council, as the body which steers the work of the CFI and our Plan, is the appropriate table to discuss and come to agreement on shared data points.

Astread asked Scott Gaul, Chief Data Officer with the OPM Data and Policy Analytics unit to present and facilitate the group's discussion. Scott shared the slides found at the end of these minutes. Discussion ensued. Members agreed data collection and sharing would be for advocacy – connection to resources, funding opportunities – and also to see if the systems change we aim for is making an impact (i.e., have barriers been removed, are fathers being included in our programs/services, were there unintended consequences). We use data to learn. OEC Interim Commissioner Elena Trueworthy noted that the CFI legislation (Public Act 22-138) speaks to the collaborative's responsibility to "integrate state services", so this justifies the state agency partners' collection and sharing of nonidentified data of those we are serving, since we know anecdotally that we share many of the same families.

Scott asked, "what are the systems most likely to be impacted?" Members explained since we don't know the baseline we don't know whether improvements are helpful/making an impact. Issues with federal data are currently a challenge as well. We have a responsibility to collect our own data in the state, accurate metrics – both qualitative and quantitative data are important.

Connecticut Fatherhood Initiative (CFI) Council Meeting



**December 15, 2025
Meeting Summary**

Data Development, continued

Members asked if the Opportunity Centers are a potential place where data can be collected. Also, Reentry Centers, Careline, American Job Centers were mentioned.

The CFI Council seeks to strengthen and empower the current population of fathers and fathers-to-be so that their children will be better off and this also saves the state money – data development and sharing allows us to reach this goal. Members referred back to the CFI Strategic Plan's primary and secondary results statements: "Connecticut children grow up in a stable environment, safe, healthy and ready to lead successful lives" and "All Connecticut fathers are engaged in the lives of their children."

It was agreed that as the Council continues to discuss and identify shared data points for CFI partners, OPM's expertise and guidance will be of great assistance. Data Development will be a standing item on the agenda for 2026 quarterly Council meetings.

Provider Coalition Report

Nicole Kilduff and Ariana Trotman reported program staff have been organizing various events for the holidays and have benefited from toy drives run by DSS as well as some local agencies. They have been expanding outreach and recruitment efforts. Many fathers in programming have been impacted by the cuts to the SNAP program.

The programs also continue their partnership with DMHAS and the Governor's Prevention Partnership for substance use prevention trainings, activities and how to best implement prevention education within their classroom sessions and individual case management activities with enrolled fatherhood program participants.

CFI Annual Report

Under Public Act 22-138, DSS is responsible for submitting an annual report to the CFI Council. DSS also submits an annual legislative report outlining the work of our collaborative. At the March CFI Council meeting, Members agreed that beginning this year, DSS would draft and send out a report template for completion by those state-level agencies who are parties to the interagency Fatherhood MOU, to ensure reports moving forward are inclusive of various partners' activities for which DSS might not be aware but are important to share with the full Council and the state legislature. A paper copy of the report was included in Members' meeting materials, and it was also emailed as an attachment along with these minutes. DSS acknowledged the MOU partners' contributions and thanked them for timely submissions. Council Members representing agencies who are not parties to the state agency MOU were also invited to submit information for future annual reports. When the template is emailed by DSS next year, those leaders will be included in distribution.

Connecticut Fatherhood Initiative (CFI) Council Meeting

**December 15, 2025
Meeting Summary**



Other Business

Commissioner Navarretta reported that the dates for the 2026 quarterly meetings have been confirmed.

She inquired whether any Members were opposed to holding some meetings virtually via Microsoft Teams. No opposition was noted. Members agreed to switch the March and December meetings to a fully virtual format as those are the months more likely to have inclement weather that could affect attendance. The June and September meetings will be held in person at the DSS Central Office (Room 1008-1011) from 1:30-3:30pm per usual.

The 2026 meeting dates are confirmed as follows. Commissioner Barton Reeves' Executive Secretary will email the invites on behalf of the Commissioner accordingly.

- March 30, 2026 (via Teams)
- June 29, 2026 (in person)
- September 28, 2026 (in person)
- December 14, 2026 (via Teams)

Tony mentioned that online registration for the 2026 New England Fathering Conference (NEFC) will be opening soon after the New Year. He stated if Members do not receive the NEFC emails directly, they can sign up for the NEFC email listserv from the NEFC website homepage. Otherwise, the email announcement will be forwarded to them by Diana DiTunno.

If your agency is a financial sponsor for the conference, the five staff using attendee slots provided in return for your contribution will use a special code for registration, so they should not register until they receive a code from Diana. Any staff or program dads for which agencies pay registration fees outside of "sponsor slots" use the general registration process and payment by credit card is required at time of registration. There is a form available on the NEFC website for the person coordinating a group registration that outlines required attendee information, so the information can be collected in advance of entering the system to register the group.

Tony encouraged folks to register early, as the conference has sold out for the past several years. He reminded Members that the event dates are Wednesday, March 18 through Friday, March 20, 2026, and it will be held again this coming year at the Mystic Marriott in Groton.

Anthony Gay reported the DCF Fatherhood Practice Guide has been approved and he will send to Tony and Diana for sharing with the Council.

Kari Adamsons reported the UConn parenting support group "Moms to Moms" is going to expand to have a gender-neutral group and also a dads-only group.

Meeting Adjourned.

Data Development

CFI Council Meeting

December 15, 2025



CONNECTICUT
Policy and Management

Agenda

1. Past Efforts
2. Proposed Approach

Mission



The Data and Policy Analytics (DAPA) unit supports the collection, analysis, coordination and sharing of data to support CT state government capacity.

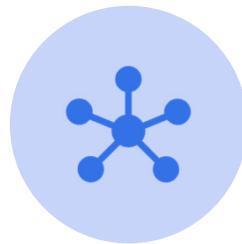
DAPA is responsible for the state data plan, open data, P20 WIN and the GIS Office.

Secure state and local data use supports Governor Lamont's vision for policy that is informed by data and evidence.

Data & Policy Analytics Programs



GIS Office



DataLinkCT



Open Data



Impact &
Evaluation



State
Data Plan



Past Efforts

Agency Surveys

- Does the data your agency collects include men's parental status (i.e., whether they are a father/parent/have children)?
- Importantly, we are not seeking to obtain these data from your agency! We simply are trying to find out how many agencies do/don't already collect this information about the men they serve. We appreciate your response to this poll as it will help guide our next steps in collecting data about fathers and their families in CT! Thank you for your assistance!

211 CT data collection

- Data collection at intake

Calls from fathers

Calendar Year	Call from Parents	% from Fathers
2020	45,600	20%
2021	45,385	17%
2022	51,813	15%
2023	37,038	16%

Race (Jan- Dec 2023)	%	Ethnicity (Jan- Dec 2023)	%	Language (Jan- Dec 2023)	%
Black	20%	Non-Hispanic	41%	English	89%
Unknown or Refused	37%	Hispanic	27%	Spanish	10%
White	19%	Unknown or Refused	32%	Other (Portuguese, Creole, Pashto, Urdu, Polish, Vietnamese, Farsi, Russian)	1%
Other	22%				
Asian/P.I.	1%				
American Indian	1%				

*60% of all 211 calls, on average, are from individuals who identify as female

Top Towns of Fathers

1. Hartford
2. New Haven
3. Bridgeport
4. Waterbury
5. New Britain

211
Connecticut

United Way
United Way of Connecticut

September CFI meeting

- “whether parenting programs across the state, especially those contracting with state agencies, are covering co-parenting skills in their curricula”
- “developing 5-6 shared data points to support our collaborative efforts and the Council”

High-value data inventory

Connecticut SharePoint Search this list

+ New Edit in grid view Share Export Automate Integrate ... All Items

HVDI ☆

ID ↑	Year	Inventory ID	Agency	Business Function	Data Asset Name	Data Asset Description	GIS or Non-GIS	Data Asset Structure
1	2022	DECD016	DECD	Office of Fiscal Administration	Nortridge Loan System	Used for loan management, accounts receivable information, invoicing, reporting	Non-GIS	Non-GIS: Structured (Machine Readable)
2	2022	DECD017	DECD	Office of Television and Film within Business Development	Reel Scout	Used to allow clients to apply and track and research resources and licensing requirements if production houses wants film	Non-GIS	Non-GIS: Structured (Machine Readable)
3	2022	DECD018	DECD	Office of Fiscal Review and Compliance	Regional Economic Models, Inc.	Used for economic modelling and to project economic impact of potential funding arrangements	Non-GIS	Non-GIS: Structured (Machine Readable)
4	2022	DECD019	DECD	Historic Preservation	Retail Management System	Point-of-sale system used for museum operations	Non-GIS	Non-GIS: Structured (Machine Readable)



Proposed Approach

Start with the question

- Is men's parental status (such as being a father, parent, or having children) part of the data collected by your agency?
- Does your agency provide services to men?
- Does your agency offer support to fathers?

Questions?