



State of Connecticut  
Department of Developmental Services

**DDS**

Ned Lamont  
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff  
Commissioner

Elisa F. Velardo  
Deputy Commissioner

**ARPA Residential Committee  
February 2, 2023**

**Present**

Peter Mason, Brian Holmes, Alexis Calarco, Carly, Lori Sandora, Mary Pat DeCarlo, Peter Engelbrecht, Tammy Venenga, Heather LaTorra, Kathleen Calo

Minutes from our last meeting are not available for review today. We will review both sets of minutes at our next meeting.

The Shared Living Model is seen as valuable, however the Department is revamping Shared Living at the moment.

We discussed shared housing – related party guidelines come in to that. When using state funds we have to make sure that any related party transactions are reviewed. We need to make sure that state funds are for the best interest for the individual and there is no financial gain to the owner. Conflict of interest if someone is receiving a profit for their related party person. When DDS rent subsidy involved, that is when DDS is involved for a related party review. A DDS Ethics Committee review is mandatory for these types of related party transactions. Documents including the individual's IP and a lease agreement are essential for review.

**Complexities in shared housing include:**

Staffing and shared staffing  
Landlords, leases and disagreements  
Families as landlords

**Ideas**

Family Forums are an excellent idea – hard for families to know what to consider. It is not as easy as buying a house and pulling people together. Having a housing expert talk to families about housing options.

Making sure that Case Managers are well aware of these issues around housing is important as well.

Elisa Velardo ran a group last night about our ARPA initiatives. She did a wonderful job and shared a lot of great information with the group.

Shared staffing supports sometimes leaves individuals stuck. Both in activities and in leaving the site.

26 agencies submitted interest in moving on phase one. 11 are definitely going to put a plan in. There was one plan submitted that is getting revised, otherwise there are no others at this time.

Tomorrow Deloitte is scheduled to hold a technical assistance meeting.

Today we all received the States Analysis Report by Deloitte and they will be attending our meeting. There were several good ideas from other states included in this report.

Peter noted some of these ideas such as:

Non recurring set up expenses – furnishing, security deposits, utility set up

Hiring Certified Employment Specialists

Shared savings reward for providers who help people transitioning to remote supports

value based payment

It is recommended starting out small, i.e. remote supports while family goes out for a couple of hours

### **Surveys and focus groups:**

Received 1,700-1,800 surveys from families so far. Will start seeing analysis of the surveys.

Provider surveys – 38 responses so far.

Input sessions for stake holders – day and res

Families

Self Advocates

Providers

DDS

### **Some Broad Themes:**

- Barrier accessible transportation has been identified as a major obstacle. DDS is looking at solutions for this problem.
- Barrier affordable housing another major barrier.
- Transition from schools
- Workforce recruitment and retention

### **Peter discussed some other progress:**

Deloitte looking at value based payment – we will get that report in the near future.

Developing 7 videos of various living options in Connecticut.

Employment Network: Rewarding Work Website – This is a Website that allows individuals who self-direct their hours and hire their own staff to post their positions. Potential staff can post as well and matches can be made. This is a whole revamp of the current system – more interactive and will assist families better. It is important to see some metrics about the effectiveness of this site.

There is a Facebook site as well that also serves as matching individuals who self-direct with potential support staff. This is called: CTPCA Job Connection

18 technology grants provided for individuals to increase their use of adaptive technology – Will be setting this up for day programs in employment settings. There is an AT conference scheduled for

June – Speakers and Vendors. There will be a summer camp in July – Camp Harkness – turn a cabin into a smart house.

**Homework:** Read Deloitte Report – Connecticut DDS Moving On Program, Current State Review, January 24, 2022. We will be hearing more about this and will discuss at our next meeting on February 16, 2023, at 2 p.m.