

**DDS South Region
Regional Advisory and Planning Council
Meeting Minutes
July 15, 2020
6:00 PM
(via Teleconference)**

Members Participating: Chair Leslie Bridges-Parent, Lynn Arezzini, Robin Brewer, David Cassano, Carol Cooney, Dawn DeMatteo, Heidi Earle, Kate Haaland, Erin McGuire, and Thomas Dailey, DDS South Regional Director

Scribe: Jolie Crescimano-Goss, DDS Executive Secretary

Chairperson's Report:

- **Call to Order and Introductions** – Chair Bridges-Parent called the meeting to order at 6:06 PM.
- **Citizen Comments**
 - Recognition of how grueling being homebound during the pandemic is for all involved. It is a long time for people to be unstructured and unstimulated. Filling the days with things to do is challenging for some families. Many see no end in sight until a vaccine is developed.
 - DMV now requires individuals to have a current ID card before they will issue a handicapped parking pass.

Due to the pandemic, DMV has extended expiration dates as follows:

- Eligible DMV credentials that expire between March 10, 2020 and June 30, 2020 extended 180 days.
- Eligible DMV credentials that expire between July 1, 2020 and July 31, 2020 extended 90 days.

A suggestion was made to work with the local DMV or AAA office to schedule an appointment outside of regular business hours for those that need a new ID card and are at greater risk for infection.

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes** – *Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to approve the minutes of the June 2020, meeting.*
- **Field Activity Report** – None.

Regional Director's Updates:

- 20 new case managers hired statewide and set to start 7/17/20. This is great news!
- Office staff continue to work remotely to the extent possible.
- DDS Step-down Unit is at full capacity and has a waitlist.

- ETHP on the Meriden Campus is open and serving people. The other two sites are still on hold while DDS waits for its new budget.
- Isolation space at the Meriden Campus is being used by providers as needed.
- Noted increase in emergency situations over the last week or so.
- Providers are stepping in to help DDS with emergencies in temporary placements.
- DDS Respite Centers are scheduled to reopen by mid-August. Positions are being posted and filled.
- The phased reopening of day services is underway. Many challenges and concerns to address.
- DDS is trying to open the Behavioral Service Program (BSP) and other in-home services.
- Camp Quinebaug opened for day camp. Camp Harkness opened June 12 with restrictions. Effective July 4, 2020, Camp Harkness increased the allowable capacity from 50 to 75 people.

Further discussion ensued on reopening day services. It has become apparent that a “one size fits all” approach will not work. Case by case determinations are necessary. Many parents are keeping their loved one home because of the virus. In some instances, providers are keeping entire homes from returning to day program because every resident is high-risk, while others have decided that if one resident is highly susceptible, everyone will be kept home. In other instances, housemates are attending day services as a cohort. There are also individuals who are just returning to their own home and preparing to return to employment services. Some individuals want and are ready to return, but others are scared.

Council Open Discussion Topics:

- Discussion focused on the status of federal stimulus checks. Suggestion made to reach out to your local state representative for help and visit the web to determine if one has been issued. Those who had a change of address or a newer bank account were likely to experience a delay in receiving the check.
- The Council agreed to continue to meet monthly during the pandemic. The next meeting will be held on August 19, 2020, at 6:00 PM via teleconference.

New Business: None.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jolie Crescimano-Goss

Jolie Crescimano-Goss

Executive Secretary

DDS South Region

Next Meeting: August 19, 2020 / 6:00 PM / Teleconference