



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

December 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 support to family of individual transitioning from a CRS to self-direction.
2. Guardian's rights and responsibilities for individuals who reside in group homes.
3. Problems between family members/guardians and private providers.
4. Information and ongoing support for family of individual at a Regional Center.
5. Consultation with DDS Case Managers regarding family/guardian issues/complaints/needs.
6. Information, referral, and outreach on behalf of individuals with autism and other disabilities who are not eligible for DDS funding & supports.
7. Ongoing collaboration with DDS, and monitoring of ongoing health and safety concerns due to unexplained injuries and multiple investigations involving individual in a private group home.
8. Assistance to sibling in re-establishing connection with individual supported by DDS.
9. Issues around healthcare decisions/communication/responsibilities between provider and guardians.
10. Program Administrative Review (PAR) support & assistance.
11. Information, referral, and assistance with school abuse complaint for family of youth with IDD.
12. Consultation and coordination with DCF, DMHAS & ADS.
13. Abuse & neglect.
14. ADA research and exploration of deaf and hard of hearing supports individual with IDD.
15. Meetings with MA Disabled Persons Protection Commission, and NJ Ombudsperson to discuss abuse and neglect investigative systems.

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.
- DMHAS, DCF, DAS.

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 and collaboration with DDS Director of Diversity Equity & Inclusion.
- Consulted with NJ & MA Ombudsmen.
- Met with The Arc Connecticut & CT Family Support Network.
- 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.
- Met with Futures Inc, to discuss microbusinesses and social enterprise.
- Met with ARPA consultants Deloitte & the McDowell Communications.
- Met with Council on Developmental Services subcommittee on DDS Abuse & Neglect process.
- Attended DD Council Bridging the Gap between Aging and Disability Services presentations.
- Met with New Haven Directors of Disability Services to discuss Supported Decision Making.

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
December 13, 2022**