



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

May 2022 Monthly Report to the Council on Developmental Services

Assistance to Individuals and Families

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

1. Inquiries about abuse & neglect investigations and process.
2. Assisted individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities who are not eligible for DDS funding explore support options through BRS, DSS, and community supports.
3. Assisting individual & family with Helpline issue.
4. Connected family of an individual with mental illness, who wants to leave a nursing home with the Long-Term Care Ombudsman.
5. Assisted families & schools with questions & issues regarding DDS eligibility process.
6. Assisting individuals on the waiting list & families in pursuing less traditional housing options.
7. Assisted parents & family members with private & DDS provider complaints.
8. ADA inquiries.
9. Provided information to family about DDS data breach.
10. Transportation issue.
11. Working with family, private Support Broker, The Arc & DDS to support individual in moving into his own home.
12. Supporting an individual & family who received a 30-day notice from provider.
13. Supporting individuals with IDD and mental illness work through issues with residential programs.
14. Working with guardian & DDS to expand access and visitation for family member.
15. Assisting an individual in finding an advocate.
16. Assisted DDS with an information request from an local education authority.

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
- Legal Director
- Director of Case Management
- Self Determination Directors
- AID
- Eligibility Unit
- Helpline

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 co-chair of the SELN Interagency Collaboration Subcommittee.
- Attend regular state-wide and regional meetings including incident command calls, forensic meetings, waiver team meetings, provider leadership meetings and others.
- Meetings with DRCT, CT Council on Developmental Services, and The Arc Connecticut.
- Monthly meeting with DDS Health Management Administrator.
- Attended Autism Awareness Day at the Capitol.
- Attended a People First meeting.
- Attended a Northwest Regional Center Family meeting.
- Met with DDS Director of Investigations.
- Met with DDS Division Director of Quality and Systems Improvement.
- Attended DSS Long Term Services & Rebalancing Steering Committee Meeting.
- Attended DSS Autism Advisory Council Meeting.
- Met with BRS Education Consultant to learn about supports and eligibility.

Areas of Concern

- Impact of staffing crisis on ability to access supports, person centered planning, advocacy, provider flexibility.
- Impact of loss of staff and experience, particularly at STS and Regional Centers due state employee retirements.
- Maintaining active family involvement, 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.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Shannon Jacovino
Ombudsperson
May 19, 2022**