

IFSP All-Council Annual Meeting

January 19, 2024, 10 am. - 3:15 p.m.

Registration link: <https://dbhds-virginia->

[gov.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJltcOiuqTMpHbPIQwNFPzeiqloyp0EGPXs#/registration](https://dbhds-virginia.gov.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJltcOiuqTMpHbPIQwNFPzeiqloyp0EGPXs#/registration)

Attendees: Heather Hines (DBHDS), Rhonda Gaines (DBHDS), Rachel Vamenta (DBHDS), Lynne Fetter (DBHDS), Heather Norton (Assistant Commissioner, DBHDS Division of Developmental Services), Deanna Parker (Director of Community Network Supports, DBHDS), Nickie Brandenburger (VCU CFI), Rebecca Stickler (VCU CFI), Jen Reese (VCU CFI), Lisa Richard (VCU CFI), Renée Soniat (VCU CFI), Donna Robel (VCU CFI), Joan Brunner (VCU CFI), Natasha Cooper (The Arc of Virginia), Kim Tarantino (VirginiaNavigator), Parthy Dinora (VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities), Beth Kessler (UMKC Charting the LifeCourse), Thea Blech-Caulder (Western), Andrea King (Western), Dana Koenig (Western), Katie Morningstar (Western), Erika Rogers (Western), Brooke VanTyne (Western), Tiawanda Webb (Western), Dawn Aronson (Northern), Carolyn El-Khatib (Northern), Angela Lello (Northern), Doug McCallum (Northern), Jennifer Rockwell (Northern), Phara Rodrigue (Northern), Mehwish Shahyrrar (Northern), Donna Shank (Northern), Pamela Bryant (Southwest), LaSherron Diaz (Southwest), April Hughes (Southwest), Stephanie Lavinder (Southwest), Love Kingsbury (Southwest; meeting co-host), Stacey Nichols (Southwest), Jennifer Sheets (Southwest), JoBeth Wampler (Southwest), Currie Wells (Southwest), Sean Campbell (Central), Keisha Dortch (Central), Shenika Eldridge (Central), Shawn Kirk (Central), Brittney Lee (Central), Monica Mann (Central), Christi Stafford (Central), Timiko Blackman (Eastern), Deanna Dixon (Eastern), Tammara Herbert (Eastern), Jennifer Jackson (Eastern), Kellie Lockerby (Eastern), Jonathan Meador (Eastern), Jesse Monroe (Eastern), William O'Connell (Eastern), Tina Williams (Eastern), Lara Zawacki (Eastern)

Hamilton Relay link: <https://www.streamtext.net/player?event=HamiltonRelayRCC-0119-VA4100>

I. Introductions and Agenda

- a. Staff introductions and welcome
 - i. In addition to the DBHDS staff and partners presenting at this meeting, Love Kingsbury (Southwest Regional Council) cohosted the meeting.
- b. Icebreaker: In one word, describe your dream job.
- c. Council 101: Responsibilities, meeting schedule, and what to expect
- d. Communications update
- e. The IFSP State Plan and regional gap analysis activity
- f. IFSP Partner Roundtable
- g. Council business: Recruitment update, IFSP-Funding and Satisfaction Survey data highlights, and proposed changes to IFSP-Funding
- h. Wrap-up and adjourn

II. Council 101

- a. The Community Coordination Supervisor thanked the members for their commitment and asked for their engagement. She shared a brief overview of: Council member expectations; activities; the Councils' role in providing feedback to DBHDS; the role of the Regional Network Coordinators (RNCs) at VCU; meeting structure and schedule; communications between Council members, DBHDS staff, and the community. New for 2024 are Regional Council monthly business meetings.
- b. Serving on IFSP Councils: What to Expect
 - i. Love introduced Renée Soniat and Sean Campbell, who shared their personal and professional backgrounds with the Council, as well as their respective experiences as the VCU RNC and a continuing Council member. The RNCs' role is to facilitate and support Council activity. Renée encouraged participation and communication throughout the year. Sean shared his journey as a parent advocate in Virginia's DD system how it led to his history of service with the IFSP State Council. Sean encouraged Council members to attend meetings, share their experiences with the IFSP staff, and to bring information back to their communities and other organizations they are connected with.

III. Welcome: Heather Norton, Assistant Commissioner, DBHDS Division of Developmental Services

- a. Heather welcomed Councilmembers and thanked them for their interest, talents, and commitment as DBHDS partners, volunteers, and ambassadors. The Councils' perspectives and work will be critical in expanding the agency's reach in connecting individuals and families with information to get the supports and services they need and might not know about.

IV. Communications Update

- a. The IFSP Communications and Program Coordinator discussed several aspects of IFSP communications, beginning why IFSP seeks input from Councilmembers about various program components, and how that has been achieved in the past. Since the 23rd Study and per the 2023 revisions to the IFSP State Plan, the program is continuing to identify alternate methods and platforms that will allow the program to store, send, and receive more accessible, immediate communications with Councilmembers and stakeholder partners.
- b. The Communications and Program Coordinator also shared the FY 2024 Communications Plan and the specific areas in which the Councils could assist with outreach and enhancement. Councilmembers named stakeholders within the education system as an area for outreach, using the example of special education professionals and Parent Resource Centers.
- c. The Councils were provided with an overview of the program's Facebook pages and some basic social media guidance. Councilmembers were encouraged to share information about IFSP and other services in their communities and to clearly disclose their roles as program ambassadors. Regional Communications representatives will receive more social media guidance from the IFSP Communications and Program Coordinator.
- d. IFSPCom mailbox: IFSPCom@dbhds.virginia.gov is where folks can send resource suggestions for Facebook, the IFSP Digest, or My Life, My Community. All suggestions will be reviewed by IFSP staff.

The meeting was paused for a 30-minute lunch break.

V. The IFSP State Plan and Regional Gap Analysis Activity

- a. Per the 2023 revisions to the IFSP State Plan, the Regional Councils must develop a workplan to identify and address resource gaps. The IFSP is collaborating with their Technical Assistance (TA) facilitator from the Community of Practice (CoP) for supporting individuals and families to incorporate the University of Kansas City's Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC) framework as a brainstorming tool.
- b. Councilmembers were provided a [link to the current IFSP State Plan](#) to review ahead of the meeting. The IFSP Program Manager briefly reviewed each IFSP State Plan goal and described it in plain language. Then the IFSP Program Manager shared each goal's accomplishments for the 2023 Fiscal Year, a brief description of what each goal is meant to achieve, and a brief description of what each goal should avoid. Following each goal, this CoP facilitator asked the Councils to think about what would be different in their regions if each goal was achieved, and how that would be seen, heard, and felt on a local level. Feedback from Councilmembers included:
 - i. Goal One (IFSP-Funding): Increased connection in the community, more integration in relationships and work, increased independence; an increased number of referrals to the IFSP; more sharing of experiences; increased access to resources; less stress for families and caregivers; an improved quality of life; lower numbers of people who are institutionalized; opportunities to voice feedback will eliminate mental stress; increased access to transportation and service providers (though this might not change so much in rural areas); use of personal success stories.
 - ii. [NOTE] There was only time to explore feedback for Goal One; Councilmembers were advised to raise their questions and bring feedback for Goals Two, Three, and Four to their Regional breakout discussions.
- c. Regional Breakout sessions: RNCs facilitated a one-hour breakout session in which the first half of the meeting focused on a Council discussion of how the IFSP State Plan goals were working and not working in their region. The second half of the meeting was intended for a Regional business meeting kickoff.
- d. Returning from the breakout, the CoP facilitator described the CtLC framework, and how Councilmembers should use the brainstorming tool. Once the tool is completed, Councilmembers' responses will be used to guide each Regional workshop meeting as facilitated by the CoP TA facilitator; these workshop meetings will take place between February and March 2024 to allow each Regional Council to develop its workplan structure, goals, and strategies. Feedback from the Councilmembers will also be used to inform potential revisions to the State Plan.

Councilmembers were encouraged to take a 5-minute break.

VI. IFSP Partner Roundtable

- a. Love introduced the IFSP's program component partners:
 - i. Natasha Cooper – Director of Peer Engagement at [The Arc of Virginia](#), who administers Peer Mentoring services
 - ii. Parthy Dinora – Executive Director at the Partnership for People with Disabilities at VCU. Parthy was standing in for Molly Dellinger-Wray to represent the [Leadership and Empowerment for Abuse Prevention \(LEAP\)](#) project, which provides healthy relationships trainings designed for and led by people with disabilities.

- iii. Nickie Brandenburger – Director at the Family to Family Network (at the [Center for Family Involvement](#) within the Partnership for People with Disabilities at VCU), who administers family mentoring services
 - iv. Kim Tarantino – Deputy director at [VirginiaNavigator](#), who maintains the [My Life, My Community website](#) and call center
 - b. The partners answered the following questions, facilitated by Love:
 - i. Tell us your name, your role, your organization and who it serves, and its connection to IFSP and/or the Waitlist.
 - ii. Based on your experiences in your work with the people you serve, tell us about the most pressing issue(s) you encounter.
 - iii. Given Question 2, what do you see down the line? How would you like things to change? How can the IFSP State Council help? What resources can they share from your organization?
 - iv. The “30-second commercial”: Please tell us in 30 seconds how people can connect with your direct services! Is there a cost?
 - c. Please see the promotional materials for The Arc of Virginia’s Peer Mentoring program and CFI’s Family to Family program, attached at the end of these minutes.

VII. Council Business

- a. Council Recruitment Update: The IFSP Support Specialist shared updates from 2024 Council Recruitment. There are 11 new State Council members and 17 new Regional Council members, 5 returning State Council members, and 11 returning Regional Council members. The Western region has 7 combined State and Regional Council members; Northern has 8 combined Council members; Southwest has 10 combined Council members; Central has 9 combined Council members, and Eastern has 10 combined Council members.
- b. IFSP-Funding and Satisfaction Survey Data Highlights: The IFSP Program manager shared highlights from the FY 2024 IFSP-Funding Program and data highlights from the FY 2023 IFSP Annual Satisfaction Survey.
 - i. Funding data included the total amount of money that was funded and requested, the number of applications received, awarded, and denied, the number of applicants under age 18 and those over the age of 18, the number of applicants applying on their own behalf and those who applied on behalf of someone else. The IFSP provided a breakdown of how much money was requested and funded in each region, and the amount funded for each request category. The IFSP also shared the number of applicants funded in each Waitlist priority, and how many of those applicants requested the full amount or less than the full amount of funding.
 - ii. Survey data included the percentage of respondents reporting satisfaction with the IFSP-Funding Program, the percentage of respondents reporting having knowledge of family mentoring, and the percentage of respondents reporting having knowledge of peer mentoring. The IFSP Program Manager encouraged Council members to share the survey more widely in their communities to help improve response rates, which will help the program receive statistically significant feedback. The IFSP Program Manager also shared data from the

question block asking about overall satisfaction with the FY 2023 IFSP-Funding Program, and its components.

- c. Proposed changes to IFSP-Funding Guidelines: The IFSP Program Manager also shared six proposed changes to existing IFSP-Funding Program Guidelines; for these changes to take effect in time for the FY 2025 IFSP-Funding cycle, the State Council must provide input on these proposed changes. Once the State Council has provided their input, the IFSP will develop a draft revision of the Funding Guidelines to be shared for public comment.
 - i. **[PROPOSED] Section III:** Name change for "*Funding Program Categories*" to "*Funding Priority Categories*" for clarity.
 - ii. **[PROPOSED] Section III:** Change language explaining how much the program expects to provide each year to "*Up to approximately \$2.5 million as allocated from the General Assembly*".
 - iii. **[PROPOSED] Section III:** Change Guidelines to enable Priority 1 applicants with the lowest Critical Needs Summary (CNS) scores to be considered alongside Priority 2 and 3 applicants.
 - iv. **[PROPOSED] Section III:** Change application review period to "*no later than 30 days upon the close of the application period, and monthly thereafter until funds are exhausted*".
 - v. **[PROPOSED] Section V:** Change the Funding Portal link from *dbhds.virginia.gov/waitlistforms* to *dbhds.virginia.gov/IFSPOnline*
 - vi. **[PROPOSED] Section VII:** Change language for funding award process to clarify the following: "*All applicants whose determination was based on a randomization will not be awarded funding in a consequent funding cycle until all eligible applicants have had an opportunity to access and be awarded funding*".
 - vii. **[NOTE]** Because the meeting ran short on time, Councilmembers will provide input on these proposed changes through a post-meeting survey sent from the IFSP.

VIII. Wrap-up and Adjourn

- a. Council Recruitment reminder: The Northern region still has one spot for a self-advocate that will be advertised in February.
- b. Next Coordinated Regional Council meeting: Thursday, March 21st from 6 to 8:15 p.m. on Teams. The topic will be announced before Regional Councils' February planning meetings.
- c. Council members will receive a post-meeting survey asking them to provide feedback on the proposed IFSP-Funding changes and future State and Regional topics.
- d. Any questions or feedback about anything discussed (State Plan, Regional Councils, stakeholder outreach, etc.) can go to IFSPCommunity@dbhds.virginia.gov. Communications questions or resources to share with IFSP can be sent to IFSPCom@dbhds.virginia.gov.