



The Individual and Family Support Program

IFSP State Council

April 20, 2023, 2-4 p.m.

Registration link: <https://dbhds-virginia-gov.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJltf-2prDkpH3ksYb2tZlISdl3uz4kP0e8>

Attendees: Heather Hines, Rhonda Gaines, Rachel Vamenta, Deanna Parker, Peter Pitard, Chiquita Hubbard, Angela Lello, Christi Stafford, Donna Robel, Erika Rogers, Jen Reese, Jennifer Jackson, Jennifer Rockwell, Jennifer Sheets, Jeremy Langford, Jesse Monroe, Joan Brunner, Lisa Richard, Love Kingsbury, Michelle Reed-Cox, Nickie Brandenburger, Rebecca Stickler, Renee Soniat, Sean Campbell, Shawn Kirk, Sommer Hoffman, Tammara Herbert, Thea Blech-Caulder, Tiffany Cobbs

I. Introductions and Agenda

- a. Staff introductions and welcome
 - i. Rhonda Gaines, the IFSP Support Specialist since July 2022, will start next week as the position of IFSP Community Coordination Supervisor.
 - ii. Welcome remarks from Deanna Parker, the new director of Community Supports and Operations at DBHDS. Deanna most recently served as the senior DD policy analyst in the division of Developmental Services at DBHDS. She has a background in stakeholder work, policy implementation, and quality oversight, and is a parent to an adult with a developmental disability. Deanna encourages and challenges the Council to reimagine the system, including how the DD community's needs can be met without things like paid supports.
- b. Icebreaker: Why were you interested in joining your IFSP Council? What do you hope to achieve for your community?
- c. Orientation review
- d. IFSP State Plan refresh discussion: This will include a short break!
- e. IFSP Updates
- a. Wrap-up and adjourn

II. Orientation Review

- a. The IFSP Program Manager conducted an overview of the Self-Paced Orientation document. Most Councilmembers had completed it prior to the meeting. All outstanding orientation materials are due back to IFSP on April 27th so that appointment letters can be mailed.
 - i. The IFSP State Plan, which is included in the materials, looks different from previous versions. It is a living document that was refreshed in February with the help of the State Council at the January 2023 meeting.

- ii. IFSP expects to revise the State and Regional Council Charters this year with the input of Councilmembers.
- b. Background on IFSP: The IFSP Program Manager provided the Council with a brief history of the program, when it started, and talked about the different components of IFSP (IFSP-Funding; peer and family mentoring programs through The Arc of Virginia and the VCU Center for Family Involvement, respectively; the State and Regional Councils; and the My Life, My Community website and call center). IFSP is particularly interested in working with the Councils to improve how the program and DBHDS provides information to public. IFSP's target population was also shared with the Council; with the exception of IFSP-Funding, the program is open to anyone living with a developmental disability, or anyone supporting someone with a developmental disability in Virginia, regardless of Waiver status.
- c. Council background: Recruitment typically happens in the fall, but that was unable to happen in Fall 2022 due to other programmatic and staffing constraints. Though Council activity may happen outside of previously defined timelines. The IFSP Program Manager also briefly discussed Councilmember roles, responsibilities, and expectations.

The meeting was paused for a five-minute break.

III. Interactive exercise: Connecting with your council (20-minute activity)

- a. Three scenarios were posed with the following question: How might IFSP Councilmembers make an impact? What gaps currently exist?
 - Scenario 1: Imagine what it would look like if self-advocates and families could easily access information that is understandable, relatable, and meets their needs. (*How, when, and where would you get this information? Also consider different disabilities, reading levels, languages, and values.*)
 - Scenario 2: Imagine what it would look like if self-advocates and families were routinely connected to other people with lived experience throughout their lives. (*How important is it to be connected to someone else who has lived experience? Consider the role of your community when navigating the system or facing a challenge.*)
 - Scenario 3: Imagine what it would look like if self-advocates and families had access to the supports and services that they need. (*Consider ALL types of services and supports!, e.g., community and society, public/private partnerships, and eligibility-specific supports.*)
 - Since the icebreaker took a little longer in a larger group, the breakout sessions, which were originally intended to be 30 minutes long, were shortened by 10 minutes.
- b. Responses:
 - i. Chiquita (Eastern): Responding to Scenario 1 – More flexibility within the system; resources needed to be shared with those who have direct contact with people who need services; increased knowledge by DD professionals about services; caregiver support and flexibility.
 - ii. Renee (Central): Responding to Scenario 1 – information that is readily available and presented in plain language; a single point of entry; information that conveys credibility that has been vetted; user-friendly search filters and search functions; information that is available in multiple languages; and prominently-displayed contact information. Responding to Scenario 2 – Opportunities provided for families

- to get together to interact and socialize with self-advocates in both formal and informal settings; opportunities to connect with families in different life stages.
- iii. RNCs were asked to compile a summary of the breakout discussion to share with the IFSP Community Coordination Supervisor after the meeting.

IV. Future Considerations

- a. IFSP will send the Councils a survey to determine a standard meeting day, time, and format (virtual, in-person, or hybrid) that works best for everyone.
- b. 2023 IFSP Event/Activity calendar: The IFSP Communications and Program Coordinator shared an overview of what the 2021 State and Regional Council event and activity calendar looked like. In 2021, there were 4 Regional Council public meetings (Coordinated Regional Council events), but this number will be lower in 2023. Event date targets in 2023 need to be shifted because of the Regional Council reconstitution. The Councils can determine whether they would like their events to take place virtually or in person.
- c. Social media engagement will need to be covered in the June State Council meeting.

V. IFSP Updates

- a. The IFSP Program Manager briefly reviewed the goals in the newly-revised IFSP State Plan.
- b. IFSP-Funding update: Funds were awarded to 3,770 applicants. Applicants were notified of their approval or denial via email by April 8th. Funds were issued via Way2Go debit cards. On April 11th, an issuance notice was mailed to all approved applicants with information about how to register and use their cards.
- c. IFSP staffing update: With Rhonda accepting the Community Coordination Supervisor position, the IFSP Support Specialist position needs to be advertised and filled.

VI. Wrap-up

- a. Orientation must be completed by Thursday, April 27th. Returning members were strongly encouraged to provide IFSP with their contact information so they can receive their appointment letter in the mail. Please provide it in the Post-Orientation Survey, or email IFSPCommunity@dbhds.virginia.gov.
- b. Regional Council kickoff meeting: RNCs will reach out to Councilmembers to coordinate the date and time for this May meeting.
- c. Questions or feedback about anything discussed (State Plan, Regional Councils, meeting format, orientation packet, etc.) can be sent to IFSPCommunity@dbhds.virginia.gov.
- d. Next meeting: June 2023. IFSP will send Councilmembers a poll they can complete to help determine a meeting date and time; the Zoom registration link will follow.
 - i. IFSP will share Council portal login information with the meeting minutes.

