



Virginia Department of Behavioral Health
and Developmental Services

The Virginia Individual and Family Support Program State Council Member Description

What is the IFSP State Council?

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) established the Individual and Family Support Program (IFSP) State Council to advise the Department on the administration of the IFSP-Funding Program and to develop and maintain [Virginia's Individual and Family Support State Plan](#). The Council provides general recommendations to the Department on its plan to increase family supports throughout the Commonwealth.

What is the role of a State Council member?

Council members participate in quarterly State Council meetings, generally held during afternoon hours. They also participate in the Regional Council efforts for their region, generally held in the evening hours. Council members represent the perspective of families and individuals with a developmental disability and/or share their knowledge as experts in the fields of developmental disabilities.

What are some of the characteristics DBHDS is looking for in a State Council member?

- Local leadership experience around developmental disabilities and an interest in promoting the IFSP at a local level;
- A willingness to share insights and opinions and to actively participate in meetings, primarily virtually and, at times, in-person;
- The capability to reflect on personal experiences while also understanding the views of others and develop recommendations that are for the greater good;
- Experience using technology for virtual meetings, experience using meeting platforms such as Teams or Zoom. Familiarity with email communications and software applications such as Microsoft and Adobe; and
- The capability to attend meetings quarterly primarily using a virtual platform, noting there may be opportunities for an in-person meeting, as determined by IFSP and the Council.

Are there any required qualifications for State Council members?

Yes. State Council members must be residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia. More than 50

percent of State Council positions must be filled by self-advocates who are on Virginia's Developmental Disability Waiver Waiting List (the Waitlist), or family members of an individual who is on the Waitlist. Therefore, priority will be given to family members and self-advocates.

How can I apply?

IFSP advertises the new council application every fall. Please [subscribe to our email list](#) and [follow us on Facebook](#) for updates.

Who will review and approve my application?

All self-nomination applications will be submitted to DBHDS for initial review. DBHDS will review the self-nomination applications and recommend applicants to the State Council. Selected applicants will be asked to participate in a virtual, in-person, or phone interview with a Regional Network Coordinator and as available a current council member for that region. Based results of the interview and recommendations to IFSP, a determination will be made for appointment consideration.

How long is the term of service?

Terms for State Council members are one calendar year. State Council member terms may be renewed up to two times to serve no more than three consecutive terms.

What if I have more questions?

If you have questions about the Regional Councils, please attend a Regional Council meeting in your community. Please visit our My Life, My Community website to [find and connect with your Regional Council](#). Or email us at IFSPCommunity@dbhds.virginia.gov!

