

IFSP All-Council Annual Meeting

January 23, 2026, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Registration link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/2294eecb-dd0b-48d8-a949-a3ded9fed6a1@620ae5a9-4ec1-4fa0-8641-5d9f386c7309>

Attendees: Heather Hines (DBHDS); Rhonda Gaines (DBHDS); Lynne Fetter (DBHDS); Deanna Parker (DBHDS); Eric Williams (DBHDS); Rochelle Hopkins (Hamilton Relay Captioner); Jennifer Reese (CFI Northern RNC); Lisa Richard (CFI Southwestern RNC); Nickie Brandenburger (CFI Central RNC); Donna Robel (CFI Eastern RNC); Renee Soniat (CFI); Kim Tarantino (Virginia Navigator); Natasha Cooper (The Arc of Virginia); Jonathan Wallace, Monica Mann, Sarah Horne, Keisha Dortch, Michelle Bellinger, Shawn Kirk (Central Council); Anthony Almodovar, Daniel Soya, Farwah Rubab, Jana Murgia (Northern Council); Stacey Nichols, Nikki Plaster, Linda Lawrence, Allyson Hart, Steve Grammer, Ginni Buller (Southwestern Council); Mark Dixon, Sylvia Dixon, Josephena Winfield, Tammara Herbert, Jason Krause (Eastern Council); Tia Webb, Suzanne McDonald, Linda Lundin-Seidel, Sarah Alsop (Western Council)

Hamilton Relay link: <https://www.streamtext.net/player?event=HamiltonRelayRCC-0123-VA4429>

I. Introductions and Agenda

- a. Welcome, Ground Rules, Staff Introductions, and Icebreaker
 - i. Icebreaker question: What is the name of your alter ego or fantasy personality and their superpower?
- b. IFSP Council 101
- c. IFSP Communications Update
- d. IFSP Partner Roundtable
- e. The IFSP State Plan
- f. Wrap-up and Adjourn

II. Council 101: Led by the Community Coordination Supervisor and the IFSP Support Specialist

- a. The community coordination supervisor discussed:
 - i. Special appreciations for various regional network coordinators, council members and their contributions to the work in 2025.
 - ii. The importance of councilmember ideas and contributions.
 - iii. How councils have taken a more active role in the past year when it comes to planning and carrying out regional meetings.
- b. Ginni Buller, Regional Council member in the Southwest region, shared about her council experience.
- c. The council meeting schedule was displayed.
- d. The IFSP Support Specialist discussed the upcoming Self-Advocates' Forum, an annual opportunity for self-advocates to come together and share experiences and ideas in an intentional way.

The meeting was paused for a 5-minute break.

III. IFSP Communications Update: Led by the IFSP Communications and Program Coordinator

- a. The Communications and Program coordinator discussed:
 - i. How council input is gathered per the IFSP State Plan;
 - ii. The IFSP Communications Plan;
 - iii. The IFSP communications items needing Council input, including:
 - The IFSP State Plan;
 - Annual mailer to all individuals on the Waitlist (Satisfaction Survey, First Steps, one-pagers);
 - IFSP-Funding materials, including FAQs; and
 - (State and Regional) Ideas for social media items for our monthly Digest and Facebook pages.
 - If council members have ideas to share, they should email IFSPCom@dbhds.virginia.gov; and
 - iv. The IFSP Council Facebook pages, including what information should and should not be posted on those pages.
 - v. Questions:
 - Darlene: Is it possible to mail information to schools, CSBs, case managers?
 - Rachel: Every year, we mail to medical professionals, dentists, and early intervention leads in paper copies. We also send an electronic mailer to education professionals.
 - Heather: CSBs all get a copy, and support coordinators have access and are asked to share with anybody coming to the CSB for intake.
- b. Jonathan Meador, a former Regional Council member and communications representative from the Eastern region, shared takeaways from his time in that role.

IV. IFSP Partner Roundtable

- a. Four IFSP partners shared about their agencies/projects.
 - i. Natasha Cooper, Director of Programs, The Arc of Virginia – shared about the Peer Mentoring and Tech Mentoring programs
 - ii. Nickie Brandenburger, Director, Family to Family Network (The Center for Family Involvement at VCU’s Partnership for People with Disabilities) – shared about Family Mentoring
 - iii. Kim Tarantino, Deputy Director, VirginiaNavigator – shared about the My Life, My Community website and helpline.
 - iv. Renee Soniat, Project Director, VCU’s Partnership for People with Disabilities – shared about the Leadership for Empowerment and Abuse Prevention (LEAP) program.

The meeting was paused for a 20-minute lunch break.

V. The IFSP State Plan: Led by the IFSP Program Manager

- a. An overview of why the State Plan matters and why and how to provide input on it was shared.

- b. Each of the four goals of the State Plan was reviewed, in both original and plain language. Farwah Rubab, a current Regional Council member, shared her experience with each one as a council member.

VI. Wrap-Up and Adjourn

- a. If any new council members would like to have a mentor to help them understand council duties in the first quarter, please have that discussion in your business meeting.
- b. Next Coordinated Regional Council meeting: Thursday, March 19th from 6:00-8:15 p.m.
- c. Next State Council meeting: April 2026
- d. Meeting minutes will be distributed by email and posted to the My Life, My Community website at <https://mylifemycommunityvirginia.org/ifsp-state-council-minutes>. If Council members have any questions, they may email the IFSP at IFSPCommunity@dbhds.virginia.gov.
- e. The main session of the council meeting was adjourned.
- f. Council broke into separate Zoom meetings by region to hold their first business meetings of the year until 2 p.m.