

**Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC)**

**Self-Determination Program Local Advisory Committee Meeting Summary**

**February 18, 2021**

**3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

**Virtual Public Meeting**

**Present**

Jyusse Corey, Self-Advocate

Cathy Furukawa, RCOC Training and Organizational Specialist

Bruce Hall, Parent

Tim Jin, Self-Advocate

Andrea Kumetz-Coleman, Parent

Larry Landauer, RCOC Executive Director

April Lopez, Parent

Keli Radford, RCOC Director of Services and Supports

Karen Millender, Parent

Jacqueline Miller, Clients' Rights Advocate

Michael Rillera, Parent

Tina Stang, Parent

Scarlett Von Thenen, Orange County Office of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Ms. April Lopez called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. She welcomed all attendees of the Self-Determination Program Local Advisory Committee (SDPLAC) Meeting. Each committee member introduced him/herself.

## **II. Approval of Minutes from February 1, 2021 Meeting**

The committee reviewed the minutes from the February 1, 2021 meeting. Ms. Andrea Kumetz-Coleman made a motion to approve the minutes. All committee members voted in favor of approving the minutes.

## **III. Discussion: Request for Proposals (RFP) Submissions and All Follow-up Questions with RFP Applicants**

Committee members were able to meet with Aveanna, PRAGNYA, and I CAN. These three agencies submitted an application in response to the committee's RFP. The RFP Submissions can be accessed [by clicking here](#).

The applicants were asked the following questions:

- How will the applicant address issues regarding diversity of its board?
- Is the applicant willing to accept a partial amount of the grant if the Advisory Committee decides to award it to multiple applicants?
- If applicable, how will you handle potential conflict of interests (i.e. as a vendor with RCOC)?
- What is the applicant's schedule of availability to work with participants targeted by RFP?
- What are the language capabilities of those on your team? How many languages and how many people who speak these languages?
- If your agency is based outside of Orange County, how will you be able to connect with and work with those within Orange County?

The team at Aveanna shared information and responded to follow-up questions from committee members. They are considered for Project 1: Coaching of Self-Determination Program participants to support them in transitioning to SDP.

In response to the question regarding the diversity of board members, Aveanna stated that in California, they operate independently from the national board. The team at Aveanna is diverse and includes people who represent the Latino, Asian, African-American, and LGBTQ community. Aveanna does not hire a team member unless they speak another language. Aveanna does not currently have a person with a developmental disability in a position of leadership but they do have a history of hiring people and offering internships to people with developmental disabilities.

When asked about how Aveanna handles complaints, Aveanna shared that they do regular follow-up phone calls with people on their census and they complete quarterly surveys. If there are issues, someone on the leadership team will reach out to the client.

Since Aveanna is vendored with RCOC, Aveanna was asked how they would handle potential conflict of interests. Aveanna responded that they will be transparent in their processes and provide choice to participants and families every step of the way. Aveanna has been involved with coaching type services in Self-Determination in the past 2.5 years and they have referred people to other agencies. Aveanna's goal in coaching services would be to transition as many people into Self-Determination as possible and they do not want to be the only agency providing Financial Management Services (FMS).

Aveanna was asked how much individual support they will be able to provide to participants, especially if participants have exhausted all their hours of support and they still need help. Aveanna stated that participants will be in different phases and have different situations. Aveanna will help participants for as long as needed with the goal of enrolling people into the Self-Determination Program.

Aveanna was asked to describe their remote services and check-ins with participants. Aveanna stated they will call participants and see if there are special requests for meeting. They use Zoom to meet and are available to set up consultation times whenever needed (i.e. afternoon, weekends, or during business hours). Aveanna helps participants by providing them with a checklist of things to complete after an Orientation and refer participants to a network of people who can provide Person Centered Planning services. For participants who are not able to use technology to meet by video, Aveanna has the ability to hold audio conference calls and they have coordinators who are able to meet in person.

Aveanna confirmed they are staffed by employees and they have 35 staff who speak Spanish and six staff who speak Vietnamese. They have staff dedicated in Orange County so there are no issues with connecting with people in Orange County. Finally, Aveanna stated they are open to splitting the grant.

The team at PRAGNYA shared information and responded to follow-up questions from committee members. They are considered for Project 1: Coaching of Self-Determination Program participants to support them in transitioning to SDP.

In response to the question regarding diversity of their board, PRAGNYA stated they are a young organization that is completely run by volunteers. Their board members primarily consist of people of South Asian descent but they have expanded to include two self-advocates and a person with mental health needs.

PRAGNYA currently has four Self-Determination Coaches who speak Spanish and Tagalog. They want to help people become self-advocates and family members to become advocates. They are currently training people to become coaches to help PRAGNYA with this coaching RFP. If participants are not able to meet in person,

PRAGNYA uses technology to meet remotely. PRAGNYA does not currently have coaches in Orange County but parents have reached out to them to be trained to provide services in Orange County as coaches and Independent Facilitators.

When asked if they have a system in place to handle complaints, PRAGNYA shared that so far they have not received any complaints. They work closely with the regional center and most of the discussions with their clients are reported back to the regional center and advisory committee. If someone is not happy with their services, they will report this back to the regional center and advisory committee. PRAGNYA stated they typically meet with the family initially to ensure satisfaction and to provide options. PRAGNYA can also refer families to other agencies who can meet their needs.

PRAGNYA was asked how much individual support they will be able to provide to people, especially if people have exhausted all their hours of support and they still need help. PRAGNYA stated they understand that the allocated time for help may go over but they will not charge for time that exceeds the allocated time. They believe that the Self-Determination Program needs to be a success so they are motivated to get people enrolled in the program. When asked for clarification regarding the number of individual coaching hours provided, PRAGNYA stated they have the goal of providing eight hours of coaching but if more time is requested, they will not charge for any hours in excess of the eight hours. PRAGNYA stated that their organization is completely volunteer driven and they contract with other organizations to provide Person Centered Planning and Independent Facilitator services.

When asked to describe their remote services, PRAGNYA stated they are flexible with how and when to meet with people. They listen to participants and provide participants with information in order to make a decision. They have Spending Plan tools and referral lists for Person Centered Planners. They try to avoid conflict of interest by not providing other services.

PRAGNYA is based out of Northern California but they are working with coaches who are in the Orange County region. They will try to do as much as they can virtually but are willing to travel to provide support in person as needed. They are currently training people in the Westside Regional Center area to be coaches and Independent Facilitators. If people do not have the ability to meet by video conference, PRAGNYA will work with family members or support staff to get the person onto Zoom. If the person is not able to participate they make sure that the person is at least in the room during the meeting. Due to safer-at-home orders, PRAGNYA has not yet done in-person coaching but they are willing to travel and meet with people in person.

PRAGNYA has worked with Aveanna in the past and they are open to splitting the grant with another agency.

The team at I CAN shared information and responded to follow-up questions from committee members. They are considered for Project 2: Building the capacity of self-advocates (persons with developmental disabilities) to be Independent Facilitators within SDP.

In response to the question regarding board diversity, I CAN shared that there is some diversity on their board of five people but it is not enough. They plan on having strategic planning meetings to address this issue. I CAN has worked with people from different cultures and disabilities. I CAN will be looking for diversity when looking for self-advocates to train.

I CAN is not a vendor of RCOC and do not see any potential conflicts of interests. I CAN collaborates and work with different parent agencies and individuals.

I CAN will complete trainings on Saturdays to accommodate the schedules of self-advocates. Workshops will be offered depending on availability of self-advocates and can be done on the weekends or evenings. The plan is to train 20 self-advocates and 10 additional neurotypical people. I CAN training will be conducted in English but they will have a Spanish interpreter available with the possibility of a Vietnamese interpreter.

Mr. Bruce Hall made a motion to award the RFP for Project 1 to Aveanna. This motion was seconded by Mr. Michael Rillera. During the discussion, Ms. Tina Stang stated she is impressed by their application and experience. Mr. Tim Jin shared that the RFP should be split between the two agencies. Ms. Lopez shared about her positive experience with Aveanna and noted they have good customer service. All committee members voted in favor of awarding the RFP for Project 1 to Aveanna.

Ms. Jacqueline Miller made a motion to award the RFP for Project 2 to I CAN. This motion was seconded by Mr. Bruce Hall. All committee members voted in favor of awarding the RFP for Project 2 to I CAN.

#### **IV. Agenda Items and Date of the Next Meeting**

The committee asked RCOC to provide available dates and times for the next meeting via an online poll and to allow committee members to select the best date. Agenda items will be solicited at that time as well.

There was a comment from a member of the public. This parent of a person in the Self-Determination Program expressed worry and frustration because they need to go through the Fair Hearing Process whenever they request for something. He stated it seems like RCOC is looking for ways to deny help for his son and he asked for help from the

committee on how to move forward. Ms. Miller suggested that the family work with an Independent Facilitator. The Independent Facilitator of this person shared that certain items on the Spending Plan are denied by RCOC while other regional centers are more flexible. She is asking for help and directions for the committee.

**V. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:13 p.m.