

Regional Center of Orange County
Self-Determination Program Local Advisory Committee Meeting
Date: June 27, 2022
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

Present

Cathy Furukawa, Self Determination Program Coordinator

Tim Jin, Self-Advocate

April Lopez, Parent

Kathleen McFarlin, Manager of Comfort Connection Family Resource Center

Karen Millender, Parent

Keli Radford, RCOC Director of Services and Support

Tina Stang, Parent

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

I. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. April Lopez, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. She welcomed all attendees of the Self-Determination Program Local Advisory Committee (SDPLAC) Meeting. Each committee member introduced themselves.

II. Approval of March 7, 2022 and March 21, 2022 Meeting Summary

The committee reviewed the minutes from the March 7, 2022 and March 21, 2022 meeting. Ms. Kathleen McFarlin made a motion to approve the minutes. All committee members voted in favor of approving the minutes.

III. RCOC Self-Determination Program (SDP) Update

Ms. Cathy Furukawa provided an update on the status of SDP participants. RCOC has certified 175 individual budgets, with 71 of these budgets for participants from the initial group. There are currently 69 people actively receiving services through SDP, with 29 people from the initial group. Out of the 69 people active in SDP, 47 people received Person Centered Planning (PCP) and/or Independent Facilitator (IF) services.

In regards to the demographics of the 69 people active in SDP, the ethnic/race breakdown is: Asian

(8), Black/African-America (2), Hispanic (14), Other (7), and White (38). Of the 69 people who are active in SDP, 27 people are from the West Area Office while 42 are from the Central Area Office. In regards to the demographics of the 175 people who received a certified budget, the ethnic/race breakdown is: Asian (29), Black/African-America (5), Hispanic (47), Other (23), and White (71). Of the 175 people who received a budget, 72 people are from the West Area Office while 103 are from the Central Area Office.

Ms. McFarlin asked if there is increase in interested person since the SDP Ombudsperson Town Hall was held. Ms. Furukawa shared that it did not seem to result in an increase in interest but outreach to those who attended the Town Hall event can be completed.

Ms. Furukawa shared that Cambrian has been vendored to provide Financial Management Services (FMS) in Orange County.

At this time RCOC has not yet hired a Participant Choice Specialist. Ms. Von Thenen asked if RCOC will open up the job posting to other regional centers. Mr. Jin suggested reaching out to other regional centers to learn how they recruited for the position. At this time, RCOC has not yet decided if the job posting will be open to those outside of RCOC.

IV. Funding to Support Implementation of the Self-Determination Program for Fiscal Year 2021-22

a. Update and Proposal from I CAN regarding self-advocate

Ms. Sandra Ames from I CAN provided updates regarding I CAN self-advocate Independent Facilitator (IF) training programs. The program was designed to help self-advocates develop skills to become Independent Facilitators. The program started with 20 participants and there are currently 17 participants who expressed interested in moving into Tier 2 of the program.

During the past year, I CAN Tier 1 Project provided participants with workshops designed to develop an understanding of the Lanterman Act and service delivery, as well as hands on training focused on the Person Centered Planning (PCP) process. Workshops also included resource coordination and how to IF business development, among other topics supporting participant skill building.

The next phase of the I CAN IF project is focused on assisting participants with developing their own business and/or joining a team of individuals available for hire to provide IF and PCP supports. Ms. Karen Millender asked how many participants are in the Self-Determination Program. Ms. Ames shared that the focus of the SDP Implementation grant was to help self-advocates become Independent Facilitators and to understand the process. She shared that participants in the program have not yet transition into receiving services from the Self-Determination Program. Ms. Ames noted that obtaining Self Determination was not in the Request for Proposal (RFP) nor a measurable included in the I CAN IF plan.

Ms. Ames explained that over 20 PCP meetings were performed by participants as a part of the project's first year of training. This enabled participants to further understand the process that has become a corner stone for Self Determination access. Ms. Ames described the benefits that were evident in having self advocates supporting other self advocates and their families through the PCP process. Ms. Ames stated that participant access to SDP would be a focus for the Tier 2 now that all have completed their PCP meetings.

Ms. Kathleen McFarlin shared that the Comfort Connection Family Resource Center (CCFRC) has a Padlet page that lists the micro-enterprises and businesses of self-advocate. Once participants are ready to start providing Independent Facilitation and PCP services, the CCFRC can help list their contact information on this Padlet list.

A member of the community asked how they can sign up for this project and if the program can accommodate Spanish speakers. Ms. Ames explained this has been a 10 month project. She tried to heavily recruit Spanish speaking participants but did not get any participants who were Spanish speaking only. She is open to support Spanish speaking participants in the future.

Ms. Scarlett Von Thenen asked if the Tier 2 program plan is contingent on supplemental funding. Ms. Ames stated they will plan to continue to do Tier 2 program but the funding would help. Mr. Jin asked if I CAN has a plan to get more people into Self-Determination. Ms. Ames stated that the goal for Tier 2 participants is to get them enrolled in SDP.

The committee started discussions regarding SDP Implementation funds.

DDS Directive dated February 11, 2022: https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/DDS_Guidance_SDP_RCParticipantSupports_02112022.pdf).

Members of the committee asked what other regional centers are doing with their implementation funds. A member of the public said some regional centers have funded training for parents, Service Coordinators, and Independent Facilitators. There has also been coaching and training services for parents.

Another member of the community share that other regional centers are hosting Resource Fairs since a majority of people do not yet know about SDP. Ms. McFarlin shared that everyone serviced by RCOC was notified of the SDP Ombudsperson Town Hall hosted by the committee. Ms. McFarlin asked how a Resource Fair would be more effective than the Town Hall event. The community member shared that the Westside Regional Center Resource Fair was not solely focused on SDP.

The committee asked for information from other regional centers to learn what they are doing with their SDP Implementation funds. The committee can then look into creating a Request for Proposals (RFP). The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) noted there is no encumbrment date for the SDP Implementation funds but the funds need to be expended by March 2024.

V. Discussion: Restructuring SDPLAC Meeting Format to be More Productive

Ms. McFarlin opened the discussion on how the committee meeting can structured so the it is more productive, stays focused on agenda, and ensures community members have a forum to provide input. She suggested that each agenda has an item at the beginning or end to allow community input. Community members should also be allowed to add items to the agenda. Ms. McFarlin also noted that the chat has been distracting as people have been talking about items not related to the agenda in the chat. She noted that it is important to keep on track with the agenda in order to have a more structure and to have a productive meeting.

Ms. Lopez acknowledged the challenges with a meeting via Zoom as it is easier to manage an in-person meeting. Ms. Lopez asked if the committee can continue to meet virtually via Zoom without committee members publicly listing their address since the COVID-19 related government exception had ended. At this time, the exception has not been extended. Attempts were made to hold a hybrid in-person and virtual meeting but due to logistical reasons, the meeting was cancelled.

VI. Community Input and Barriers to Completing the SDP Process.

A member of the community member asked about Social and Recreational services. RCOC submitted the updated guidelines to DDS in December 2021 and DDS responded with follow-up questions. These follow-up questions were answered and sent back to DDS. RCOC should have a response from DDS soon but until updated guidelines are approved, RCOC will continue to use current guidelines. A member of the community member asked why the community was not involved in the discussion of the updated guidelines and that the community should be involved in the process.

VII. Agenda Items and Date of the Next Meeting

b. Discussion: Location and In-person Committee Meeting

Ms. Lopez asked if committee members will have a problem meeting in person for the next meeting. Mr. Jin stated he will not be able to meet in person. A community space will be explored for an in-person meeting on August 8, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.