



**Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2023**

Attending Members

Sherry Alvarez (SCLARC)
Viviana Barnwell (Co-Chair)
Joyce Clark (SDRC)
Lisa Cooley (ACRC)
Richard Dier (NLARC)
Rosalinda Garcia (HRC)
Fran Goldfarb (WRC)
Debby Hight (NBRC)
Vi Ibarra (RCEB)
Tim Jin (RCOC)
Martha Johanson (SARC)
Pierre Landry (FDLRC)
Cathay Liu (ELARC)
Betty Monterrey (SGPRC)
Charles Nutt (FNRC)
Maia Pawooskar (IRC)
Emma Villa (CVRC)
Jennifer Walsh (GGRC)
Rick Wood (Co-Chair)

Absent Members

Chris Miller (RCRC)
Mariela Ramos (VMRC)
Casey Taylor (TCRC)

Others Attending

Aaron Carruthers
Beth Hurn
Carolyn Tellalian
Charles Nguyen
Chris Arroyo
Claudia Lopez
Debra Adler
Danielle Isola
Dena Hernandez
Diana Sandoval
Elizabeth Hassler
Emma Villa
Felicia Ford
Georgina Kier
Irene Litherland
Jan Opsvig
John Forrest
Jon Francis
Judy Mark
Julie Eby-Mckenzie
Julie LaRose
Kaitlynn Truong
Katie Dempsey

Others Attending

Katie Hornberger
Kristianna Moralls
Lisa Culley
Lourdes Gomez
Marlene Morales
Mary Ellen Stives
Michelle Smith
Naomi Hagel
Patricia Herrera
Renee Bauer
Riana Hardin
Robin Maitino-Erben
Robin Monroe
Roxy Ortiz
Samantha Thalken
Sheila Keys
Sheraden Nicholau
Sofia Cervantes
Stella Ramirez
Suzy Requarth
Yasmin
Yaritza Sanchez

1. CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Rick Wood (FA) called the meeting to order at 10:35 A.M.

2. ESTABLISH QUORUM

A quorum was established.

3. WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

Members and others in attendance introduced themselves as indicated.

4. **APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 2023 MEETING MINUTES**

It was moved/seconded (Landry [FA]/Hight [FA]) and carried to approve the February 2023 meeting minutes as corrected. (Motion passed. Fran Golfarb and Jennifer Walsh abstained, the remaining members voted to approve [see page 1 for a list of voting members], see corrections below).

- Correct the spelling of Lori Walker's name.

5. **CO-CHAIR REPORT TO SSDAC**

Co-Chair Rick Wood reported that he has attended various local SDAC's and noted that committees differ widely in the formality, structure, and adherence to Robert's Rules of Order. Co-Chair Wood expressed that LVACs that allow for the informal exchange of ideas seem to have positive and successful meetings. Co-Chair Wood reported that the SSDAC Workgroup has met between meetings to finalize the Best Practices Submission Form and to work on an SSDAC reporting tool. Co-Chair Wood asked that members who are interested in serving on the SSDAC Workgroup reach out to him and encouraged self-advocates and/or BIPOC individuals to consider participating.

Members discussed a variety of issues related to the running of LVAC meetings, including the creation of Bylaws/Codes of Conduct, filling vacancies, the spending of implementation funds, and how to conduct meetings after the expiration of the Governor's Executive Order that allowed for more flexibility in conducting meetings virtually throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Members expressed a need for training and resources to assist members in running meetings. Committee members expressed a desire to find a way for LVACs to communicate with each other to discuss problems and solutions without violating The Bagley Keene Open Meetings Act. Aaron Carruthers, Executive Director of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities said that he would look into how members can accomplish this.

6. **SSDAC REPORTING TOOL**

Co-Chair Rick Wood introduced the SSDAC Bi-Monthly Reporting Tool, a survey that members will fill out between meetings to collect data and report issues with SDP implementation. SCDD staff provided a demonstration of how to use the reporting tool. Members suggested changes to the survey questions to provide more clarity and ensure common understanding of different stages in the enrollment process. Staff will send the link to members after making these changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carolyn Telliarian asked if any of the Regional Centers share how they spend the implementations funds they receive for SDP.

Kristianna Moralls expressed that it may be beneficial to have an option to indicate if a Regional Center does not track certain data.

Felicia Ford expressed concern about impropriety in awarding Request for Proposal (RFP) funds and stated that LVAC members should have to sign an agreement to ensure that they are not benefiting from the awarding of these funds.

Elizabeth Hassler stated that an agreement such as Felicia Ford suggested would not work as well in very rural areas and/or provider deserts.

7. SCDD UPDATES

SCDD Executive Director Aaron Carruthers provided an update on SCDD's SDP activities. The Council continues to hold SDP Orientation trainings, which are attended by 80% family advocates, 10% consumers and 8% professionals. The majority of participants find the information useful (86%) and state that they plan on enrolling in SDP (82%). SCDD has adopted a Zero Tolerance policy for its LVAC appointees to support members in their roles. SCDD, in partnership with UCLA and Disability Rights California, is in the process of drafting recommendations to include in the Self-Determination Program Evaluation. Recommendations are based on the data collected and analyzed by UCLA. The final report will be submitted to the Legislature on June 30, 2023 and will be made available to the public in Plain Language and Spanish.

8. DDS AND OMBUDSPERSON UPDATES

Acting Ombudsperson Katie Hornberger provided an update on the amount and types of inquiries received by the Office of the Ombudsperson. Ms. Hornberger explained that information from these calls can lead to solutions in the form of directives from DDS, citing the recent directive regarding FMS payments as an example. Ombudsperson Hornberger informed members that the Lanterman Ombuds Office opened in December of 2022 to answer questions specifically related to the Lanterman Act. The Self-Determination Ombudsperson position has been posted and DDS is receiving applications. Ombudsperson Hornberger stated that Regional Center staff are still in need of training and are calling the Office of the Ombudsperson for information. Members asked questions about the information that the Office of the Ombudsperson receives about SDP related disputes and resolutions from the Office of Administrative Hearings. Ombudsperson Hornberger explained the new process for OAH decision

making, stating that as of March 1, 2023, decisions will be sent to DDS and the department has 30 days to either adopt the decision or propose their own solution. She encouraged people to visit the new appeals page on the DDS website, which can be found at <https://www.dds.ca.gov/general/appeals-complaints-comments/>.

Suzy Requarth, Assistant Deputy Director of the Policy and Program Development Division and Katie Dempsey, Chief of the SDP and Policy Program provided a presentation of SDP participant demographics as of April 2023, along with an overview of recent DDS Directives and upcoming focus areas. Regional centers are required to offer weekly billing for all FMS through September 30, 2023, and in March 2023 DDS implemented updates to the billing processes to alleviate delays in FMS Payments. As of April 2023, FMS rates have been revised and will be based on the number of employees hired and the number of providers they're using, instead of being based on the number of services purchased. Ms. Requarth informed members that DDS is working to incorporate more data points into their system to allow monitoring of enrollment timelines and is also working to develop Regional Center targets and benchmarks, as required by statute. To view the full DDS presentation, use the following link: <https://scdd.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2023/06/SSDAC-Presentation-6.15.2023.pdf>

Members asked questions about the timeline for collecting RC data and requested that SDP data be broken down by percentage of RC clients to assist in determining which RCs are struggling to serve their population. Members asked questions about the status of 099 vendors. DDS is working with RCs to determine if there are enough 099 vendors and is dedicated to ensuring that people have the support that they need. Members expressed concern about how the increase in FMS rates will impact individual budgets. Suzy Requarth stated that DDS is tracking the issue and gathering information to inform their policies and directives.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Paula S stated that it is very difficult to get accurate and complete information about SDP unless you are connected to DDS or an advocacy organization, and asked where the general public can get information.

Lourdes Gomez pointed out that the way the data is presented doesn't provide a full perspective that includes the total population, those who have taken orientation, and those who have enrolled in SDP.

Jon Francis thanked Suzie Requarth for her presentation and asked that DDS provide information on how the rising cost of FMS will be addressed.

Jan Opsvig stated that the timeline to have all Spending Plans changed is too short, making it impossible for the IF and participant.

Christianna Morales from Disability Voices United (DVU) indicated that she wants to amplify the voices of participants, who have had RCs and FMS place demands on them to change their spending plans. She expressed that participants rights to control their spending plans must be protected.

Judy Mark from DVU expressed concern that the FMS employer burdens eat into participants individual budgets. She stated that there is tremendous demand for SDP, but that there are still systemic barriers to participation. She said that people are happy once they get into SDP, and that the focus has to be on removing barriers to participation.

9. **BEST PRACTICES PLATFORM UPDATE**

CO-Chairs Rick Wood and Viviana Barnwell presented the final version of the SSDAC Best Practices Submission Form and Best Practices Platform, which will be linked to SCDD's Self-Determination Program webpage. SCDD staff provided a demonstration of the Best Practices Submission Form and showed an example of a submission. The Co-Chairs explained that the SSDAC is looking for examples of any practices that Regional Centers have found to work well in the areas indicated on the submission form and encouraged members to make submissions.

10. **SSDAC PRIORITY: DISPARITIES**

Co-Chairs Rick Wood and Viviana Barnwell opened up a conversation about how to approach a project to reduce disparities in the SDP. Co-Chair Viviana Barnwell suggested establishing a disparities workgroup made up members of BIPOC communities to develop a targeted survey that will identify activities to address barriers. Members expressed interest in bringing in individuals who aren't part of the SSDAC to participate in this workgroup. Members discussed experiences with discrimination in the SDP and what is being done at the RC level to address disparities.

It was moved/seconded (Landry [FA]/Nutt [SA]) and carried to delegate the development of a Disparities Workgroup to the SSDAC Workgroup. (Motion passed unanimously. [see page 1 for a list of voting members])

PUBLIC COMMENT

Felicia Ford stated that it is important to address equity at every opportunity. She noted the importance of listening to the Black community and thanked the committee for their attention to the issue of disparity.

Jan Opsvig spoke about the barriers facing monolingual speakers, noting that those who speak Spanish only often struggle with using technology and that it is important to develop trust when working with these individuals.

Yasmin thanked the committee for working to be inclusive and address disparities and stated that she has been offended by the way that she has been treated in this process. She stated that families would benefit from advocacy training. She called for the conversation about disparities to be led by those who have lived experience, especially self-advocates.

11. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

12. **MEETING WRAP-UP AND ADJOURNMENT**

Co-Chair Rick Wood reminded members to submit their bi-monthly reports and best practices. The meeting was adjourned without objection at 3:55 P.M.