



OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

Department of
DISABILITY & AGING

FAMILY SUPPORT STATE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MEETING CALLED BY CHAIR & FACILITATOR

ERROL ELSHTAIN

TYPE OF MEETING

DDA STATEWIDE FAMILY SUPPORT STATE COUNCIL

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON

Yolanda Beason, Errol Elshtain, Amanda Ferrell

MEMBERS WHO JOINED VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Rebecca Simerly, Lori Kieffer, Chrystal Murphy, Chrissy Hood, Lynette Porter, Edward Mitchell, Katie Powers

MEMBERS ABSENT

Tracy Johnson, Carrie Carlson, Lee Ann McKnight

OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON

Misty Voiles, Claressa Ham, Regina Wilson, Jenna Martin, Kimberlee Cantrell, Seth Wilson, Tammie Browning, Lauren Legate, Tanya Hardy

OTHERS PRESENT WHO JOINED VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Pam Sykes, Michelle Harris, LaTisha Maxwell, Troy Allen, Melissa Brewer, Christy Jensen, Marilyn Harris, Lori Legg, Rachelle Blizzard, Kristi Tankersley, Jill Kiehna, Tonya Jones, Taylor Brobeck, Mayra Salgado, Marian Nichols, Diana Bawcum, Shae Herrick, Owen Wallace, Donna Bryant, Carly Elliott, Paul Harvey, Cooper McCormick

CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from February 4, 2025, meeting. Asked for any corrections or additions. Yolanda moved to approve the minutes. Chrissy seconded the motion. Council members approved the minutes as written.



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PRESENTATION: DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITIES AND AGING PRESENTATION- RESOURCES FOR THE AGING POPULATION

Lauren Legate presented

- About DDA Aging
 - Created by the TN General Assembly in 1963 as Commission on Aging
 - State Unit on Aging (SUA)
 - In 2001, renamed Commission on Aging and Disability
 - Given authority to serve adults with physical disabilities under age 60
 - In 2024, Tennessee Governor Bill Lee signed the Tennessee Disability and Aging Act
- Aging Network
 - Federal Allocations
 - State Funds
 - Department of Disability and Aging
 - Consumers Served
 - Service Providers
 - 9 Area Agencies on Aging and Disability
 - First Tennessee
 - East Tennessee Area
 - Southeast Tennessee Area
 - Upper Cumberland Area
 - Greater Nashville Area
 - South Central Tennessee Area
 - Northwest Tennessee
 - Southwest Tennessee Area
 - Mid-South Tennessee Area
 - Older Americans Act (OAA)
 - Information & Assistance
 - Senior Centers
 - State Long-Term Care Ombudsman
 - Nutrition Services



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- Disease Prevention & Health
- National Family Caregiver Support
- Home & Community Based Services
- Elder Rights Protection
- Transportation
- Ombudsman
 - The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs
 - Advocate for residents in nursing facilities, assisted care living facilities, and homes for the aged
 - Residents' Rights education
 - Partnership with entities like HFC, TBI and APS
- Congregate Meals & Home Delivered Meals
 - FY 2023
 - Federal Funding-Served 22,422 clients with 2,248,739 meals
 - State funding-Served 5,266 clients with 693,848 meals
 - Additional funding-9,309 clients with 384,058 meals
 - Total Meals Served-3,326,645
- National Family Caregiver Support Program
 - Counseling & Support Groups
 - Caregiver Training
 - Respite Care
 - Personal Care
 - Homemaker Services
 - Adult Daycare
- State-Funded Programs
 - Options for Community Living (OPTIONS)
 - Public Guardianship
 - Senior Center Grants
 - Respite Pilot Program
 - Unlicensed Facilities Registry
- OPTIONS Program
 - Home and Community Based Services
 - Homemaker Services



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- Personal Care
 - Home Delivered Meals
- Public Guardianship for the Elderly Program
 - Ensures the health and welfare of Tennessee's most vulnerable residents
 - Court-appointed guardians for people over the age of 60, under the age 60 for extreme cases
 - Public option of last resort
- Discretionary Grants
 - ADPI Alzheimer's Disease Program Initiative
 - TN Lifespan Respite Program
 - State Health Insurance Assistance Program (TN SHIP)
- Dementia Capable TN
 - Awarded the Alzheimer's Dementia Programs Initiative grant to provide the following services: STAR-C Program (Evidence-Based caregiver training), Dementia Care Navigators, and Dementia Gatekeepers to educate businesses on becoming dementia friendly.
- TN Lifespan Respite Program
 - Collaboration with the Tennessee Respite Coalition (TRC)
 - Community-based respite care for family caregivers
 - Caregivers receive vouchers to utilize for respite services
 - Goal of reducing stress for caregivers
 - Recently renamed to Tennessee Caregiver Coalition
- TN State Health Insurance Assistance Program (TN SHIP)
 - Created in 1992
 - Free, unbiased Medicare benefit counseling & assistance
 - Provide Medicare & Medicaid education outreach
 - Cost savings of 5 million dollars, average of 2,000 per person
- Volunteer Impact
 - 2023



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- Volunteers
 - 11,989
- Volunteer Hours
 - 532,505
- Older Adults Served
 - 207,528
- 2022
 - Volunteers
 - 10,070
 - Volunteer Hours
 - 452,899
 - Older Adults Served
 - 207,247
- 2021
 - Volunteers
 - 9,183
 - Volunteer Hours
 - 372,733
 - Older Adults Served
 - 228,305
- 2020
 - Volunteers
 - 7,423
 - Volunteer Hours
 - 269,435
 - Older Adults Served
 - 204,626
- Reframing Aging
 - Ageism is discrimination
 - Ageism limits opportunities for older adults
 - What does ageism sound like?
 - “I’m having a senior moment”
 - “These wrinkles and grey hair have got to go”



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- "I'm too old for that"
- "Those are just aches and pains from old age"
- "Sweetie, you don't look a day over 29"
- Instead of this:
 - "Tidal Wave", "Silver tsunami" catastrophic terms for the growing population
 - "Seniors" "Elderly" "Aging Dependents" also known as "other-ing"
 - Using "Ageism" without explanation
- Try this:
 - Talking affirmatively about changing demographics: "As Americans live longer"
 - Use more neutral terms: "Older Americans/People" and be inclusive "We" and "Us" instead of "They"
 - Define ageism: "Ageism is the discrimination against older people due to negative and inaccurate stereotypes."

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- Questions:
 - Family Support and OPTIONS can be used at the same time, as long as the services do not overlap.
 - Regina asked, how do we find case management? A lot of communities do not have people to check in on them.
 - Lauren stated that housing for older residents is income based. There are large overlaps and issues, and housing is one of them. It is going to take a lot to solve the housing issue.
 - Tier 1 Home for the aged allows for providers to license homes with three residents or less. People can apply for it now.
 - Seth stated there is a new DDA unit called the Housing Innovation Unit, under Jeremy Norden Paul. He is also working on the housing barriers and DDA has partnered with the Kelsey to find housing solutions.
 - Alison Moore is the DDA Director of Housing Innovation and is working both with the Aging community and the DDA community.



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STATEWIDE UPDATES

- Jenna brought Conflict of Interest forms for the Council members to fill out and sign. These will be sent out electronically to those not present.
- Council members requesting mileage reimbursement must now complete a W-9. Must be signed with certified Adobe signature or wet signature.

PRESENTATION: FAMILY SUPPORT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS PRESENTATION FY 23-24

Presented by Jenna Martin

- Survey Submissions
 - 10% of the total Family Support Participants were sent a survey (246) to collect their feedback
 - 115 surveys were completed in English
 - 2 were completed in Spanish
 - Total completed 48%
- Surveys were received from several counties across Tennessee. Received two surveys in Spanish from Rutherford and Hamblen County
- Many participants in the survey answered “always” to the question, Has Family Support made your life easier?
- Where did you meet the Family Support Coordinator?
 - Phone Call - 31%
 - At the Agency - 27%
 - Email - 19%
 - My Home - 13%
 - Public Place - 6%
 - Other - 4%
 - Spanish – two participants by phone
- What would happen if this support was no longer available?
 - I could not pay for respite or personal assistance – 26%
 - I could not get medicine, food supplements, supplies or equipment – 21%
 - I could not attend day programs, medical appointments – 13%



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- I would not be able to spend quality time by myself – 12%
- Other – 11%
- My family member could not attend activities outside the home and/or my family member would have to live somewhere else – 6.9%
- I could not stay in my home – 5.6%
- I would not be able to work – 5.2%
- How did you hear about the Family Support Program?
 - Top 3 responses
 - Friend
 - TEIS
 - Another parent
- Do you have additional needs not currently met by the Family Support Program or other programs?
 - No – 73%
 - Yes – 27%
- Additional Needs not being met by Family Support
 - Various answers, but a few examples:
 - Additional respite time for traveling
 - Extra assistance with hardship bills
 - Finding Behavioral Services
 - Behavioral Therapy (only because it cost more than allotted)
- Comments from families to Tennessee Legislature who approve funding for the Family Support Program
 - Several positive comments were made and are available on the PowerPoint presentation.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

POLICY PROCEDURES EVALUATIONS COMMITTEE

- HB1330/SB1316 “Less is More Act of 2025”
 - Chrystal first noted that the discussion regarding the service animal definition was in the Public Awareness committee, and not this committee.



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- The bill will go into effect July 1, 2025. If a governing body has the meeting electronically, the meeting will need to be recorded and posted on the website.
- Will this affect District Councils and will it affect the committee meetings? It should not affect those or the provider meetings. Should only affect the State Council meetings. In person meetings will still have an electronic option.
- Seth stated that there was a recent amendment updating the bill. The bill that was signed by the Speakers is set to go into effect July 1, 2025. Only change would be if the Governor vetoed it. Still some potential for this to change but as it exists, we are already meeting the standards. Does require the meetings to be recorded and within three business days posted to the DDA website. We will remain as we have been meeting as the format.
- Errol asked if the roll call vote remains
- Seth stated yes
- Regina asked if this was specifically for State meetings, or will this roll down to Local and District Councils?
- Seth stated that the opinion provided by the AG's Office from a few years ago was that the FS Local and District Councils are not considered governing bodies for purposes of the public meetings act. That's the position from the Attorney General's office and DDA. It only affects the State Council meetings.

PUBLIC AWARENESS TRAINING AND NOMINATION COMMITTEE

- Rebrand Flyer
 - Reviewed as a committee and made some changes. Revisions have been made.
 - They have to be approved by the Council.
 - English is on one side and Spanish is on the other side.
- Rebranded Brochure
 - In the middle of the brochure, families want to know who is eligible and it is outlined who is eligible.



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- Explains at the bottom who is not eligible.
- Link to DDA website and QR code for Pathfinder and DDA
- Examples of how Family Support can help people including service options.
- Has been sent to coordinator agencies to confirm that their contact information is correct.
- Misty asked that the phone number for Pacesetters be listed as 931-537-9100.
- Cooper asked, is how to apply included?
- Jenna stated that it is on the front page
- Edward asked if there is any way we can bullet point those programs in bold with a bullet point? Under the section under "Who is eligible for Family Support"
- Jenna stated that there may be a spacing issue, but we can ask him to italicize that section.
- Chrissy asked if we feel like italics or bolding would be more beneficial?
- Jenna stated that we can do both
- Claressa stated that people are more visual and possibly adding more pictures.
- Jenna stated that it makes it difficult due to the spacing issue but will make the recommendation.
- Christy Jensen stated that the picture on the front cover is beautiful, but the person has passed away and may want to choose a different photo.
- Service Animal Definition
 - Chrissy stated that there has been a lot of discussion over ADA and federal law, the Department of Justice and the addition of miniature horses.
 - Proposal from the committee is to use the federal definition from the ADA of "service animal," which only includes dogs, but if a miniature horse request comes up, then the Local Council can choose whether or not to approve. Even then, a dog and a miniature horse are the only 2 animals that are approved for the Family Support Program. We can also reference it in the appropriate and not appropriate section.



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- Errol stated that since this is coming as a motion from the committee, we don't need a second.
- Service Animal Definition-Service Animal services under the Family Support program are for the training and/or costs for a "service animal" for use by the person with a disability, as the term "service animal" is defined pursuant to 28 C.F.R. § 35.104 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which is: "any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability." As further noted in 28 C.F.R. § 35.104, "[o]ther species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition." Further, the "work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability" and therefore this service does not include costs for an animal obtained for the "crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence" or "the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort or companionship." If a miniature horse, as defined by federal law, meets the same criteria as provided above, a Local Council may consider approval of services for the miniature horse.
- Vote to accept the service animal definition as presented:
 - Rebecca - yes
 - Lori - yes
 - Errol - yes
 - Chrissy - yes
 - Lynette - yes
 - Edward - yes
 - Katie - yes
 - Yolanda - yes
 - The definition of service animal proposed for acceptable services has been approved.
- Local & District Council Chair Training
 - Chrissy reviewed it and wanted to make sure that the training has been approved with corrections.



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- Jenna stated that she and the Regional Coordinators meet monthly to see how things are going in the regions. Because we see different Local Councils and District Councils, we took the initiative to streamline the process. The goal is to give the empowerment to the Local Council chairs and District Council chairs to take ownership of their meetings. Local Council and District Council chairs were invited to the Public Awareness Training and Nominating Committee meeting so everyone can get the same information. The PowerPoint was shared with the group. A summary and training were provided to outline roles and responsibilities of the Chairs, Agency Coordinators, and Regional & Statewide Family Support Staff.

QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT

The overview of the third quarter financial report is provided below. The following statewide statistical information is from the third quarter financial report as of 5/6/25.

- The total number of Family Support Active Participants in the third quarter was **4,702**.
- **14%** of active participants have an intellectual disability.
- **86%** of active participants have a severe or developmental disability other than an intellectual disability.
- Autism Spectrum Disorder continues to be the highest served disability **1,637**
- Intellectual Disability is the second highest served disability **669**
- Developmental Delay is the third highest served disability **494**
- Health impairment is the fourth highest served disability **487**
- The number one service type continues to be Respite **18.38%**
- The second highest service type was Personal Assistance **17.13%**
- The third highest service type was Transportation **12.76%**
- The fourth highest service type was Health Related **8.88%**
- **\$7,147,479.21.78** was allotted, **\$5,030,778.75** was disbursed, **\$2,116,700.46** was remaining according to the report.
 - At the end of the third quarter, there were **378** waiting recipients for the Family Support Program.



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REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

WEST TENNESSEE

TANYA HARDY- WEST TN REGIONAL FS STAFF

- Everything is going well
- Diana Bawcum will be stepping in from District 8. She introduced herself to the Council. Needs to be voted in.
- Working to fill the District 9 position
- District 8 member vote for Diana Bawcum:
 - Rebecca - yes
 - Lori - yes
 - Amanda - yes
 - Errol - yes
 - Lynette - yes
 - Edward - yes
 - Katie - yes
 - Yolanda - yes

MIDDLE TENNESSEE

TAMMIE BROWNING- MIDDLE TN REGIONAL FS COORDINATOR

- Alex Griner's last day is June 27, 2025. Shea Headrick will be taking his place.
- Jenna and Tammie are scheduled to meet with Shea on the June 21, 2025, for orientation.
- Holly Carter took Peggy Seay's Counties from Developmental Services of Dickson County.
- Middle Coordinators are scheduled to tour Kramer Davis.
- Misty stated that Smith County has \$9,000 available, which is all the extra funding needed at this time to help those on the waiting list. She asked the State Council if they can transfer funds from Smith County?
- Seth asked what the percentage is overall?
- Misty stated that they are right at 50%.
- Amanda stated that we have never had that in Smith County.



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- Misty stated that we have had a couple of deaths, therefore those funds got put back into the county.
- Errol asked if she would look and see how many people are on the Putnam waiting list.
- Misty stated that Marilyn has some just not sure what county.
- Errol stated that voting on approving to move funds from Smith County to other counties to help people on the waiting list.
- Errol-yes is to approve to move the funds from Smith County to another county.
 - Rebecca-yes
 - Lori-yes
 - Amanda-yes
 - Errol-yes
 - Lynette-yes
 - Edward-yes
 - Katie-yes
 - Yolanda-yes

EAST TENNESSEE

JILL KIEHNA- EAST TN REGIONAL FS COORDINATOR

- Still enjoying enough members in our district to have quorum
- District 2 will be asking the group for any volunteers to become chairperson as Carmel is ready to pass the reigns.
- A Grievance has arisen and will be heard later today.

ACTION ITEMS/NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Family Support State Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 5, 2025. The meeting will be held in the Stamps Building located at 291 Stewarts Ferry Pike, Nashville, TN 37214. There will be an option to attend the meeting virtually via Microsoft Teams.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment



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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned. Lunch was provided for the people in the Stamps building.