



Mission: To build and serve a
community of great
providers.

Board Report

January 28, 2026

OPRA's Guiding Principles

Anchor Statement: Ohio's providers are focused on supporting the success of the people we support.

Principle #1: Providers must be trusted to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and run effective businesses.

Principle #2: Providers must receive sufficient funding to deliver services that meet the needs of people they support in an ever-evolving society.

Principle #3: All services across the spectrum must be recognized as valuable and vital to every person we support.

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Safe Place Statement

We would like to thank you for attending this meeting. This meeting, like all of the OPRA Committee meetings, are designed to offer a safe place for OPRA Members to share thoughts, opinions and ideas. The OPRA Team and the OPRA Board relies on these discussions to inform our efforts to provide Advocacy, Information and Resources. We are respectfully asking you, as a participant, to assist us to make this a safe place for professionals to openly share without fear. It is important that when personal experiences are shared, there is an assurance that what is shared stays within this group. We are looking forward to an open and honest conversation and we would like to thank you for being a part of this important meeting.



OPRA Board of Directors Meeting Agenda
January 28, 2026
10:00am – 12:00pm

1. Welcome & Safe Place Statement

- Review of Safe Place Statement

2. Approval of Agenda

- Review and approve today's meeting agenda (any additions and/or deletions)

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Review and approve minutes from the December meeting

4. Finance Report

- Financial Statements Review and Approval

5. Board Report

- Legislative Meetings
- Modernizing Ohio's DD System
 - 1. DODD Meetings
 - 2. County Board Sustainability

6. CEO Report

- Great Provider Summit
- TransAmerica Retirement Proposal
- Consulting for Human Services Proposal
- Ohio University Focus Groups
- Member Renewal Update
- The Good Stuff (Trainings, Partnerships, Networks, etc.)

7. Open Forum

- Member Comments



Board of Directors Minutes

Date: December 17, 2025

Time: 9:00am – 10:00am

Location: Virtual (Zoom)

Board Members:

Present			Absent
District 1	District 4	District 7	Ashley Brocious
Felicia Hall	Steve King	Tami Honkala	Roy Cherry
Jamie Steele	Tim Menke	Nikki Jaras	Adam Guinther
Jim Steffey		Laura Lamb	
District 2	District 5	At-Large	
Scott DeLong	Steve Colecchi	Kurt Miller	
Dennis Grant	Jeff Johnson	Chris Wolf	
	Michelle Madden		
District 3	District 6		
Mary Thompson Hufford	Bob Heinzerling		
Lisa Reed	Liz Owens-Detillion		
Tim Neville			

OPRA Staff: Melissa Fannon, Rachel Hayes, Teresa Kobelt, Scott Marks, Pete Moore, Sonya Summers and Christine Touvelle

Guests: None

Minutes*:

Agenda	Discussion	Tasks/Conclusion	Responsibility
<i>Welcome & Safe Place Statement</i>	Scott DeLong chaired the meeting, welcomed Board members. Safe place statement was read.		
<i>Approval of Previous Minutes</i>	Board reviewed minutes from October board meeting. Motion to approve: Michelle Madden; Second: Tim Neville	October board meeting minutes approved unanimously.	
<i>Finance Committee Report</i>	Liz Owens-Detillion reviewed November financial statements highlighting cash reserves, investments, Works For Me revenues. Motion to approve November financials: Jim Steffey; Second: Tami Honkala. 2026 OPRA Operating Budget Scott Marks presented the 2026 budget, highlighting a projected negative operating budget of \$60,000, attributed to frozen dues, increased health insurance premiums, and conference expenses. He explained plans to review the dues structure in 2027 and discussed potential membership changes, including a 100% ANCOR membership. Scott also mentioned opportunities for improved financial performance through membership growth, lower insurance claims, and new training initiatives. Discussion included insurance costs and a question about what all OPRA had considered or explored. Scott explained they explored options with Gallagher and Aetna, considering various plan adjustments, but ultimately decided to stick with the current plan due to a high claim year, as it offered a refundable plan as a safeguard.	November financials and 2026 Operating Budget approved unanimously.	Pete/Scott will convene finance committee to continue discussion ANCOR membership. Dues committee will reconvene in 2026.

Agenda	Discussion	Tasks/Conclusion	Responsibility
	<p>Motion to approve 2026 Operating Budget: Liz Owens-Detillion; Second: Dennis Grant.</p>		
<p><i>2026 OPRA Board Meeting Calendar</i></p>	<p>Pete provided an overview of the meeting calendar for 2026, including a combination of virtual and in-person meetings and a possible meeting before the Great Provider Summit and Annual Conference, and a Board Retreat in August.</p>	<p>OPRA team will distribute calendar invitations once dates are finalized.</p>	<p>Pete/Sonya</p>
<p><i>Other Business</i></p>	<p>None.</p>		
<p><i>Adjourn</i></p>	<p>Motion to adjourn: Michelle Madden; Second: Liz Owens-Detillion.</p>		

* More detailed information available upon request

Policy Committee

The policy committee serves as the clearinghouse for most issues affecting any aspect of DD services and makes recommendations for action to OPRA's board of directors. Every effort is made to allow sufficient time to discuss issues in detail in order to understand the impact on individuals and providers, and to consider what position OPRA should take on a given issue. OPRA Committees examine issues and may pass them on to the Policy Committee for review. Ad hoc workgroups may also be established from time to time to examine issues more fully. The policy committee is chaired by the vice chair of the board of directors with a representative provider group selected to serve as the core committee. This core committee is tasked with convening and commenting on policy issues as they arise, whether during a meeting or between meetings. Other committee workflows through policy committee to the board of directors, and vice versa.

Policy Core Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 24, 2025

12:00pm – 2:00pm (Virtual Meeting)

Welcome & Safe Place Statement

The meeting opened with informal conversation before transitioning into the formal agenda. There was brief confusion regarding the timing of the Safe Place Statement due to late arrivals and calendar mix-ups; this was resolved quickly and with good humor. Once underway, the Safe Place Statement was delivered and the group moved into committee business.

County Board DD Service Reduction Concerns

Committee members discussed increasing concerns related to county boards of DD reducing services or reframing authorizations based on "wants vs. needs." Members noted that OPRA has already received letters or communications from several counties, including Hamilton, Portage, Medina, and Summit.

Key discussion points included:

- The importance of due process whenever services are reduced, modified, or eliminated.
- Growing financial instability among some county boards, with concerns that several may face insolvency within the next year.
- The need for OPRA to track trends, language, and patterns across counties rather than responding in isolation.

Members were encouraged to forward any service reduction notices or related correspondence to OPRA for monitoring and follow-up.

OPRA Modernization Plan & Toolkit

Staff reviewed OPRA's modernization plan toolkit, including elevator speeches, a one-pager, and the full plan. The toolkit is intended to support consistent messaging across the membership and external partners, with focus areas including:

- Access
- Case management
- Sustainability
- Quality and accountability
- System efficiency

Plans were shared to distribute the toolkit broadly to agency CEOs, the main contact listserv, and the Policy Committee.

Mergers, Acquisitions & Strategic Partnerships

A significant portion of the meeting focused on OPRA’s potential role in supporting members interested in mergers, acquisitions, affiliations, or shared services.

Discussion highlights:

- Feedback from recent “future-proofing” conversations indicates growing interest in M&A and affiliation strategies.
- OPRA shared an initial membership snapshot to illustrate the diversity of provider size, service mix, and geography.
- The concept of hosting a voluntary “matchmaking” or “speed dating” style event was discussed as a way to help members explore potential partnerships.
- Members emphasized the importance of discretion, cultural alignment, and confidentiality when exploring these options.

Several existing collaborations and shared service models were referenced as potential learning examples.

Collaboration, Shared Services & Resource Pooling

The committee discussed broader opportunities for collaboration beyond formal mergers, including:

- Shared back-office services
- HR and workforce data sharing
- Training and professional development partnerships

Members raised thoughtful questions about transparency, the role of consultants, and how OPRA might serve as a neutral convener or connector rather than a broker.

ICF Services & Vent Program Updates

Discussion turned to specialized services, particularly ICFs and the ventilator program. Members noted the need for clarity on:

- Bed availability and use of existing licenses
- Funding models and quality expectations

Staff confirmed preparation for an upcoming meeting with the Department on December 5 to address these issues and follow up on submitted questions.

Exploring a DSP Professional Registry

The latter portion of the meeting focused on exploring the feasibility of a professional registry for Direct Support Professionals, modeled after Ohio’s Professional Registry used in early childhood.

Key takeaways from the discussion and demonstration included:

- Overview of how the existing registry functions as a centralized, electronic repository for credentials, training, and background checks.
- Benefits such as reduced administrative burden, electronic portfolios, automated compliance notifications, and portability across employers.
- Lessons learned from phased implementation and the importance of avoiding a high-pressure rollout.

Members expressed interest in further exploration and Q&A to better understand applicability to the DD system.

Policy Core Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 15, 2025
12:00pm – 2:00pm (Hybrid Meeting)

Opening & Context

The meeting began with the safe space statement. The group then transitioned into a substantive discussion focused on OPRA’s proposed Modernization Plan for Ohio’s Developmental Disabilities system, with an emphasis on member feedback, system readiness, and strategic next steps.

Discussion

1. Feedback on the OPRA Modernization Plan

Committee members shared candid reactions to the modernization framework. Overall, there was general alignment with the direction and goals of the plan, paired with varying levels of comfort with specific elements and the pace of change.

- Some members expressed concern that the plan feels aggressive, particularly given:
 - Limited data on the role and cost impact of independent providers
 - Uncertainty about the state’s ability to implement and enforce meaningful quality measures
 - Potential resistance from county boards
- One member characterized their support as “6 out of 10,” citing implementation risks rather than disagreement with the underlying goals.
- OPRA leadership emphasized that the current phase is about shaping the conversation, testing assumptions, and gathering feedback — not final decisions.

The group agreed that member education and communication will be critical, particularly around complex concepts such as managed care, quality indicators, and alternative system structures.

2. Strategy: Engagement vs. Legislation

The committee discussed OPRA’s dual strategy of:

- Continuing direct engagement with DODD and county boards, while
- Maintaining the option to pursue legislative solutions if necessary.

Key points included:

- County boards are facing significant and growing financial pressures, which limits their flexibility and contributes to strained provider relationships.
- Early engagement with policymakers was viewed as important to shape reforms proactively, rather than reacting to externally imposed changes.
- There was consensus that messaging should be serious but not alarmist, focusing on sustainability, quality, and readiness rather than fear-based narratives.

3. County Board Structure, Innovation, and Accountability

A significant portion of the discussion focused on challenges within the county board system.

- Members raised concerns about:
 - Resistance to innovation and regionalization
 - Inconsistent expectations placed on providers across counties
 - A tendency for system challenges to be attributed to providers rather than structural issues
- Ideas discussed included:
 - Exploring regionalization or shared functions across county boards
 - Developing clearer quality and accountability measures applicable across the system

- Using OPRA learning labs to bring providers and county boards together to align expectations, documentation, and reporting requirements

The group acknowledged that system-wide improvement requires shared responsibility, not cost-shifting to one part of the system.

4. Managed Care, Quality Indicators, and System Design

The committee discussed managed care models and broader system design questions, including:

- Whether certain populations (e.g., age-blind, disabled) should remain in managed care
- The importance of pairing any managed care or opt-out approach with clear quality indicators and safeguards
- Concerns that poorly designed changes could result in gaps in care for high-need individuals

Members emphasized the need for data-driven decision-making, including transparency around costs, outcomes, and provider capacity.

5. Role of Providers in Case Management

The group explored alternatives to county board-based case management.

- Members shared examples from other states (e.g., Iowa, Pennsylvania, Vermont, South Dakota) where service coordination is:
 - Privatized
 - Provider-led
 - Or structured outside of managed care
- Discussion highlighted that residential and service providers may be well-positioned to serve in care coordination roles due to their day-to-day involvement with individuals.
- The transition from fee-for-service to per-member or value-based models was noted as a significant shift that would require providers to develop new cost-setting and business skills.

6. Impact on Small and Independent Providers

Committee members raised important concerns about how modernization could affect:

- Small agencies
- Independent providers
- Continuity and quality of care

While acknowledging these risks, the group also discussed:

- The reality of long-term system sustainability challenges
- The need to be honest with members about potential impacts
- Opportunities to support providers through partnerships, affiliations, mergers, and improved quality frameworks rather than abrupt displacement

7. Culture, Professional Dialogue, and System Maturity

The discussion also touched on broader cultural issues within the system:

- Challenges with open, professional dialogue and resistance to feedback
- The tendency to focus on individual compensation or personalities rather than system performance and quality
- The importance of reframing conversations toward business discipline, data, outcomes, and self-assessment

There was agreement that OPRA can play a role in modeling constructive dialogue and elevating the conversation.



Policy Core Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 14, 2026
2:00pm – 3:00pm (Virtual/Special Meeting)

Purpose of Meeting

The meeting was convened to continue discussion of OPRA’s DD system modernization efforts, with a specific focus on legislative versus non-legislative pathways, growing county board fiscal instability, and short-term strategies to stabilize waiver funding and service delivery.

Healthcare System Modernization & Funding Concerns

The committee revisited OPRA’s broader DD system modernization plan, which has been under development for several years with the goals of sustainability, quality, and long-term system viability.

Key discussion points included:

- Broad alignment on the overall modernization vision, paired with increasing concern about county board funding instability.
- Recognition that several county boards are facing acute fiscal stress, creating near-term risk to service continuity.
- Teresa shared that draft language has been developed to propose potential solutions, while the Department reiterated a preference for non-legislative approaches where possible.
- The Department acknowledged, however, that legislative action may be necessary if administrative or collaborative solutions are insufficient.

The group agreed to review the Department’s forthcoming written response to OPRA’s proposal and prepare for a board discussion in the coming weeks to assess options.

DD System Reform Bills & Legislative Pathways

The committee discussed two draft legislative concepts related to DD system reform:

- **DD System Reform Bill:** Intended to establish foundational elements and lay the groundwork for longer-term modernization.
- **Fiscal Sustainability Bill:** Focused on stabilizing funding for HCBS services and addressing systemic fiscal pressures.

Discussion highlights included:

- DODD has acknowledged serious concerns about county board fiscal health and confirmed that the Department technically has authority to assume Medicaid authority from county boards but is reluctant to do so without broader support and clear direction. They also noted many proposed changes would require additional appropriations and staff capacity to implement effectively.
- Members explored alternative structural approaches, including managed care models and changes to case management, with concerns raised about administrative cost and complexity.
- One member noted apprehension about managed care adding cost without improving outcomes.
- The group discussed potential engagement strategies, including collaboration with the Governor’s Office, legislative town halls with Senator Romanchuk and Representative Gross, and outreach to the County Commissioners Association.

County Waiver Funding Crisis & Short-Term Stabilization

A significant portion of the meeting focused on the immediate waiver funding crisis affecting county boards.

Key points included:

- Approximately 10–11 counties are currently struggling to meet waiver match obligations.

- While legislation was viewed as a possible last-resort solution, there was consensus that collaborative, short-term stabilization strategies should be pursued first.
- The group emphasized the need for a concrete, near-term funding plan to ensure continuity of services for individuals and families.
- Members expressed skepticism about the state’s ability to manage large, complex system changes quickly or efficiently, particularly under crisis conditions.
- There was discussion about OPRA potentially playing a stronger role in data collection, scenario modeling, and planning to inform decision-makers.

The idea of formally declaring a fiscal emergency was discussed as a way to elevate urgency, raise awareness, and prompt coordinated action from the Governor and General Assembly if other efforts fail.

Membership Update

The current membership roster reflects the following totals, with non-renewals scheduled to be removed from the roster on March 31:

- **OPRA Provider Members: 188 total**
 - 89 members have not yet renewed
- **OPRA Public Entity Members: 28 total**
 - 8 members have not yet renewed
- **OPRA Associate Members: 72 total**
 - 35 members have not yet renewed

The 2026 membership renewal period began in mid-December. As of January 23, renewal and new membership activity is as follows:

- **Provider Members**
 - 91 renewals and 8 new members
 - Approximately \$991,825 invoiced
- **Public Entity Members**
 - 20 renewals
 - Approximately \$43,500 invoiced
- **Associate Members**
 - 31 renewals and 6 new members
 - Approximately \$15,800 invoiced

In total, approximately **\$1,051,125** has been invoiced to date for 2026 memberships.

To support continued renewal activity, an email blast reminding members of the renewal process was sent to all members during the week of January 19.

OPRA Committee Reports



Day Array

Summary

This committee provides a platform for information sharing, networking, deliberating, and problem-solving topics and issues unique to leaders in the day array. Topics covered in meetings may include, but are not limited to, updates from the field, national and state trends, policy and rule review, best practices in organizational leadership, operating fiscally sound organizations, and identifying and mitigating organizational risk as relates to the broad array of services and supports, including day programs, active treatment, vocational training, career development, and employment. Policy recommendations from this committee are taken to the policy committee for review and action.

Committee Chairs: Chelsea Ashcraft (Ohio Valley Goodwill Cincinnati)

OPRA Staff Lead: Scott Marks

OPRA Day Array Committee Report

Thursday, December 4, 2025

9:30am-11:30am

Given that regular guests of the committee and the general busy-ness of the holiday season, the Day Array Committee meeting was cancelled.

The next Day Array Committee meeting is scheduled for February 5th @ 9:30am

The Day Array Committee has two standing subcommittees:

- **Day Services Committee:** This committee is designed for program directors, frontline supervisors, and direct support professionals who are providers of adult day support. Meetings include information sharing, networking, problem-solving and discussion of best practices and trends in day support for adults with DD. Training and updates from the state concerning adult day supports, vocational habilitation, career planning, and non-medical transportation is provided. Policy recommendations from this committee are taken to the Day Array Committee for review and then forwarded to the policy committee.

Committee Chair: Nicole Smith (RHDD)

OPRA Staff Lead: Scott Marks

- **Employment Services Committee:** The employment services committee is designed for program directors, frontline supervisors, certified employment support professionals, job developers, and job coaches. This committee is a platform for information sharing, networking, deliberating, and problem-solving topics and issues unique to providing integrated, competitive employment services. Topics covered may include, but are not limited to, policy and rule review, state trends, understanding and implementing DODD, OOD, and ODM rules, braiding funding, best practices service delivery, establishing relationships with employers, supervising remote employees, operating fiscally sound programs, and dual customer model, and identifying and mitigating individual and programmatic risk. Policy recommendations from this committee are taken to the Day Array committee for review.



Committee Chairs: Justin Blumhorst (Capabilities) and Nicole Smith (RHDD)
OPRA Staff Lead: Scott Marks

OPRA Day & Employment Committee Report
Thursday, January 8, 2026
10:00am-11:30am

Quick recap

The Day and Employment Committee meeting focused on several key topics, including service reductions, the Group Employment Services (GES) proposal, and upcoming changes to committee structures. Scott provided updates on the GES proposal, noting that while DODD still plans for a July 1st implementation, there may be room for a fresh conversation given recent leadership changes. Providers shared their experiences and concerns about the proposed changes to Community Integrated Vocational Options (CI VOC) and GES, with some expressing uncertainty about the fiscal feasibility of the proposed rate increases. The committee also discussed the need for better progress reporting templates. Jay from OOD provided an update on the current fiscal situation, explaining that while they received a quarter of their funding for 2026, they are still practicing cost containment measures. Finally, the committee learned that it would be transitioning to focus specifically on employment services, with Paul Soprano stepping down as co-chair and Nicole Smith and Justin Blumhorst continuing in their roles.

Summary

Employment Committee Certification Updates

The Day in Employment Committee meeting began with Scott welcoming attendees and explaining the meeting's recording and webcam protocols. Paul and Nicole Smith, the co-chairs, greeted the group and expressed hope for a productive start to 2026. The meeting included a discussion about certification processes, with Andrew clarifying that providers renewing certifications must now submit actual certificates rather than attendance letters for CPR and first aid updates. The committee also planned to schedule a follow-up meeting for January 18 or 19.

DODD Grant and Service Changes

Scott led a meeting to discuss several key topics, including a new DODD grant opportunity for group employment services that is pending the release of an RFP. He also addressed concerns about service reductions, sharing a memo that outlines due process rights for individuals whose services are modified or eliminated. The meeting covered the status of the BEST and GES proposals, with DODD planning to implement changes on July 1st, and Scott invited feedback from attendees about their experiences with service reductions, particularly regarding OOD services and the upcoming BEST implementation.

Vocational Habilitation Service Transition Concerns

The group discussed concerns about the removal of vocational habilitation (VH) services in Lucas County due to upcoming rule implementation on July 1st, with Nicole Elton explaining that services are being terminated based on vague progress reports. Scott confirmed that similar concerns have been raised by other members about the transition from VH to ADS services ahead of the BEST rule implementation, noting that the rule allows for 4 years of service before monitoring. The group agreed to create a work group to review and improve the progress report template, with Nicole expressing interest in participating to address the current issues with the documentation of service progress.

Employment Services Budget Discussion

The meeting focused on several key topics related to employment services and budget constraints. Jay from OOD explained the current fiscal situation, noting that they are operating on a quarter of their year's budget due to the recent shutdown and are being cautious with spending. The group discussed the proposed changes to GES and CI VOC services, with concerns raised about the elimination of CI VOC and the increased rates for small group employment. Providers shared their experiences and budgeting decisions based on these proposed changes. The committee also discussed the upcoming transition of this meeting to become the Employment Service Committee, with Nicole Smith and Justin Blumhorst taking over as co-chairs. Paul Soprano announced his retirement from co-chairing the committee but will continue to attend as a member.

The next Employment Services Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 5th @ 10:00am

Health Care

Summary

The Healthcare committee is comprised primarily of nursing staff but does include other members who are interested in health and healthcare related issues. The committee focuses on nursing and medical services in the waiver and ICF settings. Areas of focus include but are not limited to: rules and regulations that affect the DD nursing community, training, education and best practices.

Committee Chair: Shelly Wharton (The Society)

OPRA Staff Lead: Christine Touvelle

**OPRA Health Care Committee Report
Thursday, December 18, 2025
10am-12pm**

The Health Care Committee scheduled for December 18th was cancelled.

The next Health Care Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 19th @ 10am

Human Resources

Summary

The HR committee is comprised of HR professionals, or anyone responsible for the life cycle of employment for his/her agency. This group of professionals meets to discuss best practices in HR, from recruiting and hiring process, to keeping abreast of upcoming new regulations that affect employment law and/or training requirements.

Committee Chair: Michelle Madden (IOPC)

OPRA Staff Lead: Christine Touvelle

OPRA Human Resources Committee Report
Thursday, November 20th, 2025 & Thursday, January 15th, 2026
10am-12pm

The Human Resources Committee notes for both dates will be shared on the next Board Report.

The next HR Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 19th @ 10am

Residential Resources

Summary

The ICF & Residential Waiver Committees was combined as a forum for providers offering residential services, including ICF and waiver-based models. The committee explores funding, staffing, regulatory requirements, and issues that have a direct impact on the programs and services our members offer.

Committee Chair(s): Susan Berneike (Help Foundation), Bob Heinzerling (Heinzerling Community), Kurt Miller (Empowering People) and Jamie Steele (OVRs)

OPRA Staff Lead: Rachel Hayes

The new meeting structure beginning in 2025:

9:30 AM – 11:00 AM | Residential Waiver

Focused on updates, discussions, and presentations specific to the Residential Waiver service.

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM | Department Updates/Presentations

Content applicable to both Residential Waiver (RW) and ICF services.

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM | ICF

Centered on updates, discussions, and presentations specific to the ICF service.



OPRA Residential Resources Committee Report
Wednesday, December 17, 2025
9:30am – 1:00pm

Quick recap

The Residential Resources Committee meeting focused on several key topics, including concerns about county board reassessments of waiver services and the implementation of new statewide assessments. The committee discussed changes to assistive technology, remote support, and support broker services in the 2026 waiver amendments, with particular attention to billing and documentation requirements. The meeting also covered the Department of Developmental Disabilities' compliance review process, including the steps involved in conducting reviews and addressing non-compliance issues. Additionally, the committee addressed concerns about new compliance leadership requesting additional information for rule waiver requests, particularly regarding ICF respite beds and overcapacity requests.

Summary

County SSA Reassessment Concerns

The Residential Resources Committee discussed concerns about county board SSAs conducting reassessments of individuals, with members reporting that multiple counties have sent letters to providers about reducing service hours. The group expressed concerns about the aggressive approach to reassessments and the potential impact on individuals who may need continued services. Rachel inquired about the process for making changes to assessments, and members shared that team meetings are being held to discuss these changes. The committee also discussed the upcoming statewide assessment being rolled out by DODD.

County Budget and Service Cuts

The meeting focused on concerns about county budget issues and service cuts, particularly in Portage County which is planning to lay off three SSAs due to a \$600,000 deficit. Pete expressed that the department is not supportive of these county moves and emphasized the need for a statewide approach rather than piecemeal solutions. Rachel discussed the upcoming InterRAI rollout which will replace the ODDP on the waiver side, with 60 county board assessors being trained, though the exact contents of the assessment remain unclear. The group also discussed Hamilton County's development of an untested app to determine authorized hours for individuals, with others expressing concerns about the potential impact on families and the need for careful monitoring of these changes.

Waiver Changes for Assistive Technology

Rachel discussed upcoming changes to waivers in 2026, focusing on assistive technology, remote support, and support broker services. She highlighted broadened definitions, updated coverage details, and new requirements for written agreements and documentation. Teresa raised questions about compliance expectations and timelines, which Rachel agreed to address. Others discussed specific implementation concerns, such as written agreements for backup support providers and protocols for different homes. The group acknowledged the need for further clarification from the department on several issues.

Healthcare Updates and EVV Progress

The meeting focused on updates and discussions regarding several key topics. Scott Marks explained that while some proposed changes were fought against, such as monitoring bases and provider choice, the Department of Health agreed to revisit these issues after CMS approval. Rachel discussed updates to assistive technology, remote support, and support broker services, noting that these are still pending final CMS approval but expected to

proceed smoothly. The group also addressed EVV implementation, with Christine confirming that utilization rates had increased to 73% as of late October. The conversation ended with a poll on EVV administrative time and denial management, revealing that most participants were managing claims relatively well, though some challenges with record setup and hold times were noted.

State Disability Support Modernization Plan

Rachel presented OPRA's modernization plan for the state's disability support system, outlining goals to create a coordinated, value-driven system with a single access point and standardized assessments. The plan identifies key priorities including self-direction, a statewide continuum of services, maintaining DODD's cabinet-level position, and quality compliance measures. The discussion covered policy levers across five areas: access to services, case management, sustainability, quality and accountability, and efficiency, with specific proposals including centralized eligibility, risk-based oversight, and technological investments.

System Modernization and Regulatory Updates

The meeting focused on a comprehensive plan for modernizing the system, which has been shared with the department and coalition for feedback. Pete emphasized the importance of regular meetings with Director Nash to discuss the plan's progress and potential next steps. It was suggested having speakers explain managed care and value-based systems compared to the current fee-for-service model.

The group then discussed concerns about a proposed rule regarding audiovisual devices in ICFs and HCBS, with Rachel mentioning they have submitted comments and will meet with the department's MDA division to address issues. Members shared experiences with using cameras for security in ICFs, and the group discussed the need for clarification on the new rule. The conversation ended with a brief discussion about APSE requesting financial information, which Pete agreed to follow up on.

DODD Compliance Review Process Overview

Julie Gregg, the Assistant Deputy Director of the Compliance Division at DODD, provided an overview of the compliance review process. She explained the different types of reviews, including regular, licensure, special, and abbreviated reviews, as well as who conducts them and where. Julie detailed the steps involved in setting up and conducting a review, including potential delays and challenges. She also described the process for non-responsive providers and the resources available to reviewers.

Kaizen Process and Provider Compliance

Julie Gregg also discussed the outcomes of a recent Kaizen process focused on improving protocols for agencies, with plans for short-term changes and anticipation of a major system update by the end of next year. They addressed concerns about the frequency and quality of reviews for independent providers, emphasizing efforts to streamline processes and catch up on backlogs. She clarified that new compliance inquiries, particularly regarding rule waivers and overcapacity requests, are aimed at ensuring more detailed and specific information to better manage requests and funding. The team also discussed the need for clearer communication and potential group meetings to address provider questions and concerns.

Provider Updates and AV Rule Concerns

The meeting focused on updates and discussions regarding provider communication, a new audio-visual (AV) rule, and the continuation of peer learning initiatives. Lisa Ahlersmeyer from the department introduced herself as the new provider support and DSP manager, replacing Anne Weisent, and discussed her role and how to reach out for updates. The group expressed concerns about the AV rule, particularly its implications for personal privacy and the lack of clarity on issues like equipment costs, storage of recordings, and signage requirements. Rachel

mentioned a meeting with the MDA team to address these concerns and promised an update on Friday. The peer learning initiative for QIDPs was also discussed, with plans to hold sessions every two months in odd-numbered months, continuing the focus on networking and resource sharing.

Q's, Compliance, and Modernization Plans

Rachel discussed feedback from Cincinnati and Cleveland meetings, noting differences in local issues and the effectiveness of in-person networking. She emphasized the importance of focusing on Qs and compliance, networking, and developing relationships with other Qs. The modernization plan was reviewed on the ICF side, highlighting the need for a sustainable system to address rising acuity and complexity of needs. Key policy levers discussed included access, case management, sustainability, quality and accountability, and efficiencies. Teresa provided updates on the ICF reimbursement group, including administrative changes and proposed changes to Attachment 11. Concerns were raised about the Peer Group 6 proposed rule, with Teresa explaining the need for more flexibility in implementation. Members expressed worry about the department's focus on small home sizes, which many believe is financially unsustainable. The group agreed to review the development rule in the coming year and consider forming a subgroup to discuss changes. Members reminded everyone of the importance of utilizing PWD funds before they expire in six months.

The next meeting of the RR committee is scheduled for February 18th @ 9:30am.

Marketing and Communications

Summary

The Marketing and Communications Committee is designed for organization leaders and their marketing and communication staff. The goal is to provide a focus on sharing strategies and tools, develop and hone innovative ideas, and provide feedback to other members of the group. The committee will periodically invite guest speakers to address identified needs of the group.

Committee Chairs: Liz Owens (The Alpha Group) and Carla McDonald (Weaver Industries)

OPRA Staff Lead: Melissa Fannon

**OPRA Marketing and Communications Committee Report
Tuesday, November 11, 2025 & Tuesday, January, 13, 2026
10:00am – 11:00am**

The Marketing & Communications Committee for November 11th & January 13th was cancelled.

The Marketing & Communications Committee is currently being revised. More details to come.