

OPRA FRIDAY FIVE

News, Resources and Events for OPRA Members

OCTOBER 8, 2021

Immigration Meeting: In the continued efforts to find solutions to the workforce crisis, a meeting was held at the OPRA office with stakeholders about potential opportunities to hire DSPs immigrating from other countries. Dave Rastoka, who facilitated the meeting, introduced the group to Robert Cohen, an immigration attorney, who walked the group through the various processes to bringing people from other countries to Ohio. Rob walked us through the various agencies in Ohio who may be able to help with this process. As this conversation continues, we will be developing resources for members who are interesting in utilizing this process to bring more immigrants into their direct service positions. This is one of many potential solutions to the workforce shortage and we are appreciative of Dave for bringing this group together and facilitating the productive conversation.

Hot Spot Follow-Ups: Beginning next week we are going to do follow-up visits to the 8 counties we visited two months ago as part of the WCTF/Hot Spot process. The team will be checking in with the people and families we met with previously to gauge how much things have changed and what their experiences have been in the past two months since we first visited. We will also be using the opportunity to record interviews with people and their families as to their experience over the last several months to support our continued advocacy about the need for support and better rates to support higher wages for DSPs in Ohio. Please contact [Pete](#) with any questions.

On-site/On-call: This week we participated in another OSOC meeting, attempting to finalize the assessment for when OSOC should be utilized. The group were able to get the assessment down to 9 questions, with 3 different outcomes; on site on call, hpc, or remote support. In speaking with OACB, they have stated that their priority is to encourage county boards to get their OSOC assessments done within 3 months of the tool's release, which we hope will be by late November. We will also be developing training as well as a 'quick guide' and live chat options. We will also be testing the tool and will be sending out links for a select group of providers to test the assessment before it is released statewide. Please contact [Rachel](#) with any questions.

EEOC: The EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunities Commission) [has put out guidance throughout the pandemic on ensuring employers are following a number of HR related federal laws](#), including the ADA. While vaccine documentation for an employer may not fall under HIPAA, there are still rules about how you can store and share that information. We strongly encourage members to make sure you have a process in place that follows this guidance. You will want to scroll all the way down to the Section K of the guidance which discusses vaccines. Contact [Christine](#) with any questions.

OOD: Earlier this week, OOD held their quarterly stakeholder meeting, reviewing recent service data and trends and an update on the rollout of the AWARE vendor portal. Most interestingly, OOD reps walked through the results of the 2021 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. This process is federally required to be conducted by VR agencies every 3 years and impacts how OOD/VR services are developed and tailored in the coming years. This year's report highlights the need for more resources and supports for people with physical disabilities and outlines the disparity in outcomes for Black and African-American VR participants. [You can read the 2021 Needs Assessment here.](#)



In Case You Missed It...

Additional Updates From The OPRA Team and System Partners

Memo Monday: This week's roundup of DODD communications included information on the continuing OISP regional support sessions, the upcoming service and rate changes in for day array services and an upcoming webinar with medical experts for caregivers of children with disabilities. [Click here to read Memo Monday.](#)

Provider Relief Fund: Phase 4 of the PRF is open and will be for the next 3 weeks. There are technical assistance webinars scheduled throughout the month of October to help navigate the process. [You can find information on the opportunities here.](#) Please contact [Christine](#) with any questions.

New Co-Chair: The OPRA Day Array Committee would like to thank and congratulate our new co-chair, Laura LaGodney of Ability Works. Laura will join Anne Haning of Belco Works as chairs of the committee. We would also like to extend a big 'thank you' to Rich Patterson for his leadership as co-chair of the Day Array committee for the past 3+ years.



Upcoming Events

[10/12: OPRA HR Committee](#)

[10/12: OPRA District 6 Meeting](#)

[10/13: HIPAA Fall 2021 Six Part Training Series Session 5: Managing Privacy Rights](#)

[10/14: OPRA HealthCare Committee](#)

News and Resources

["COVID-19 surge begins to ease in Ohio"](#)

[ODH: "Federal Report Shows Life-Saving Benefits of COVID-19 Vaccines"](#)

["Researchers aim to understand COVID-19 in children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities."](#)

["Pfizer Asks F.D.A. to Authorize Its Covid-19 Vaccine for Children 5 to 11"](#)



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