

OPRA FRIDAY FIVE

News, Resources and Events for OPRA Members

FEBRUARY 13, 2026

GES/BEST: We got word this week that DODD is no longer planning to move forward with the rule package that included Basic Employment Skills Training (BEST), small-group rate enhancements for Group Employment Supports and changes to Career Planning. The decision to abandon the proposals comes after a long-standing disagreement among DODD and stakeholders on how to handle community-integrated pre-vocational services, as well as a recent decision from CMS that disallowed the proposed tier structure for BEST. DODD's proposal aimed to eliminate the Community Integration (CI) component in the proposed BEST rule, which we and several stakeholders were not able to support. While we at OPRA are deeply disappointed to not see the rate proposals for GES advance, we are still committed to pursuing policies and resources that expand access and capacity for Group Employment Supports. We believe DODD intends to reach out to applicants for the 'Building Capacity for GES' grants to ensure they are still interested in the funding opportunity, given this latest update. Please reach out to [Scott](#) with questions or further feedback.

Tech Town Hall: Thank you to everyone who attended and presented at our first 'Tech Town Hall' this week. The first of these events featured 'Ted-style Talks' from providers who utilize innovative technology in service delivery and operations. There was a great diversity of ideas and applications for different technologies and the varied presentations offered several thought-provoking and idea-inspiring moments. We're grateful to everyone who attended and shared. We are looking forward to the next one on April 9th!

SDMN: This week, Christine attended the Supported Decision-Making (SDM) Network of Ohio monthly meeting. The Network provides free public resources on SDM and is open to anyone with an interest in SDM. [You can learn more here.](#)

Committees: We will be hosting meetings of OPRA's Residential Resources Committee next week on 2/18 and the Health Care Committee on 2/19 (See events below). Please reach out to [Rachel](#) and/or [Christine](#) with any agenda or discussion items.

Resumes: This week, OOD published new resources for resume writing called 'Refreshing Resumes', which includes a video resource, as well as powerpoint and guidance on the usage of artificial intelligence in resume writing. [Click here to view the video and learn more.](#)

DODD Website: DODD is currently in the process of removing PDF files from their website in an effort to come into compliance with updated federal Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 requirements by the April 2026 deadline. DODD states that "Our teams are exploring new ways to share information, such as posting content as text on webpages, instead of PDFs. Content is being reviewed in phases starting with our most viewed resources." OPRA is exploring solutions so members can easily access key files and materials as DODD looks to remove/alter these resources.



In Case You Missed It...

Additional Updates From The OPRA Team and System Partners

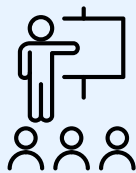
Memo Monday: Click here to read this week's [DODD Memo Monday](#), which includes info on an upcoming Winter Weather Emergency Preparedness webinar, the Alternate EVV Edit Reason Code Requirement, and the First Session of the 2026 Provider Training Series.

Call for Celebrations! In 2026, we're excited to close out our Friday calls with member celebrations, ending each call on a positive note and a bit of good news. If there's something you'd like Pete or the team to celebrate during a Friday call, we'd love to hear it! This could include retirements, milestones, big events, great stories, birthdays, or any other moments worth recognizing. Please email [Scott](#) with the subject line "OPRA Celebrations" and let us know what you'd like us to celebrate.

CALL FOR SPEAKER PROPOSALS!!

Deadline to Submit is Monday, February 16, 2026

Cleveland is the city where rock & roll found its name—and where greatness is celebrated every day. Just steps from the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, OPRA's 2026 Great Provider Summit invites you to Get Ready for Greatness. Join us as we turn up the volume on what it takes to lead in the next era of I/DD services—through strategic leadership, operational excellence, workforce investment, and advocacy that shapes the future of our field. OPRA invites you to submit session proposals that are practical, forward-thinking, and equipped with concrete tools and strategies to help providers reach Hall of Fame-level impact and performance. [Click to submit!](#)



Just Culture: Thank you to everyone who attended this week's 'Just Culture 101' session in advance of this year's learning collaborative. [To review the presentation, learn more, and register for this year's collaborative, click here!](#)

Immigration: Last year, we hosted Bob Harris from Vorys to share information about the intersection of immigration law, including information on TPS, and employment. If you would like the resources Bob shared, please reach out to [Christine](#).

Upcoming Events

2/18: OPRA Residential Resources Committee

2/19: OPRA Healthcare Committee Meeting

Click [here](#) for a full list of upcoming DODD training events

News & Resources

"See who's running for statewide office in Ohio 2026 election"

"White House seeks to tighten control over HHS priorities with personnel shakeup"

"Gov. Mike DeWine says eliminating property taxes could lead to 20% sales tax"

"Ohio career-tech education programs see rising demand, uneven participation"



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