

Developmental Disabilities Administration

Waiver Advisory Council Charter

Purpose

The purpose of the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) Waiver Advisory Council is to create meaningful engagement and a feedback loop with all interested stakeholders, with a focus on people with lived experiences. Members will have the opportunity to advise and provide recommendations to the DDA on system design, service delivery, and quality enhancement strategies for the DDA-operated Medicaid waiver programs.

Waiver Advisory Council Charge

The Waiver Advisory Council is charged with providing input on:

- DDA-operated Medicaid waiver program system design;
- Service delivery and access to services;
- Federal waiver assurances;
- Ensuring Access to Medicaid Services (Access Rule); and
- Quality enhancement efforts and improvement strategies.

Council Values and Conduct

The Waiver Advisory Council will use these guiding principles as a foundation for their work:

- Person-Centered Thinking: Outcomes and processes are person-driven, recognizing the unique needs of people who receive or may receive services.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Principles:
 - Consideration of all voices.
 - System-level thinking to promote equity and eliminate biases.
 - Promotion of diverse viewpoints.
 - Member representation that reflects all people receiving DDA services and people who support them.
- Evidence based, data-driven and solution focused: Discussion, problem solving, and recommendations are based on research and data.

- Commitment to continuous quality improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.

Meetings

Structure of meetings

- Meetings will be open to the public.
- All meetings will be goal-driven, will follow agendas set ahead of the meeting, and will end with a clear understanding of expectations and assignments for future steps.
- Meetings will be held in person, with a virtual option (live streaming).
- Meetings will be held bi-monthly at a meeting place to be published at least 2 weeks before each meeting.
- Off-cycle meetings may be held if deemed necessary by the co-chairs.
- Travel arrangements may be made for people receiving services, as necessary.
- DDA staff will ensure logistical and accessible accommodations are available for meetings.
- Meetings will be facilitated by two co-chairs, one of whom is the DDA Director of Federal Programs and the other is a member voted on by the Waiver Advisory Council.
- Sub-workgroups may meet as indicated and directed by the co-chairs.
- After all meeting agenda items have been addressed, time will be provided for public comment.

Communication and Documentation

- Waiver Advisory Council members will be informed of meetings through email and provided with an agenda at least one week prior to the meeting.
- Documents will be shared with the Waiver Advisory Council at least one week prior to the meeting to provide time for review.
- Meeting minutes will be distributed to the Waiver Advisory Council within two weeks after the meeting.
- Meeting times/dates, agendas, and other meeting documents will be posted publicly on a dedicated DDA Waiver Advisory Council webpage.

- If a schedule change is required, it will be communicated to the full Council and the public as soon as possible.
- Waiver Advisory Council meetings will be recorded and posted to the dedicated DDA Waiver Advisory Council webpage after the meetings.
- Documents will be made accessible for all members and the general public.

Conduct

All Waiver Advisory Council members will:

- Assume positive intent.
- Speak one at a time – refrain from interrupting others.
- Speak in plain language – for example, refrain from using acronyms.
- Share information openly, promptly, and respectfully.
- Listen to other points of view and try to understand other interests.
- Remain flexible and open-minded, and actively participate in meetings.
- Maintain a respectful stance toward all Council members.
- Limit distractions – turn off or silence cell phones during meetings.

Membership

Composition

The Waiver Advisory Council is comprised of 33 voting members and at least 13 non-voting members, to include the following representation:

- 17 - People with lived experiences (51%)
 - Current and past DDA program participants (self-directed and traditional services models)
 - Representatives from Maryland self-advocacy groups for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (e.g., People on the Go, local self advocacy groups, provider self advocacy groups).
- 7- Providers (21%)

- o 2 - DDA Licensed providers
 - Providers of residential and day services
 - Maryland Association of Community Services (MACS) and non-MACS members
- o 2 - DDA Certified providers
 - Providers that offer multiple types of services (e.g., employment, personal support, technology, transportation)
- o 2 - CCS providers
- o 1 - Financial Management and Counseling Services Provider
- 5 - Advocacy groups (15%)
 - o 1 - Representative from a Maryland ethnic advocacy group
 - o 1 - Representative from the Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities
 - o 1 - Representative from the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council
 - o 1 - Representative from the Self-Directed Advocacy Network of Maryland
 - o 1 - Representative from the Parents' Place of Maryland
- 4 - Family Members (12%) (one per region)
 - o 2 - Representatives with experience with self-directed services
 - o 2 - Representatives with experience with traditional services
- At least 13 - Non-Voting Ex Officio Members:
 - o Non-voting co-chair: DDA Director of Federal Programs
 - o State Agencies & MDH Administrations include:
 - 1 - Maryland Department of Disabilities
 - 1- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
 - 1- Maryland Department of Human Services

- 1- Maryland State Department of Education - Division of Rehabilitation Services
- MDH
 - 1 - Office of Long Term Services and Supports
 - 1- Behavioral Health Administration
 - 1- Office of Health Care Quality
 - 1- Office of Eligibility Services - Eligibility Determination Division
 - 1- LTSS*Maryland* Program Management Office
- o 1 or more - Legislative Representative(s)
- o Other:
 - 1 - National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS)
 - 1- Applied Self-Direction

Recruitment

The DDA will use a transparent process for recruiting and selecting members who will serve on a time-limited, rotating basis. The process will ensure that diverse representation is achieved.

Terms of Membership

The first Waiver Advisory Council cohort will include an equal number of members that serve for 2 years, and members that serve for 3 years. After the first cohort, subsequent cohorts of Waiver Advisory Council members will serve for 3 years. This pattern will enable members to rotate out instead of changing the makeup of the full Waiver Advisory Council every 3 years. New member selection will be based on the application and review process developed by the DDA. Members may not be immediately re-appointed at the end of their terms, but may serve multiple non-consecutive terms.

Council members agree to:

- Arrive at each meeting on time.
- Actively participate at each meeting and collaborate to find solutions to problems.

- Attend all meetings possible. If a member is not available to make a meeting, the member will send a proxy in their place, who is familiar with the work of the Waiver Advisory Council.
- Review documents promptly, in advance of each meeting and be prepared for discussion.
- Complete all necessary assignments prior to each meeting.
- Share unique perspectives based on the role they represent.
- Act as a liaison sharing information and feedback between their respective stakeholder groups and communities, and DDA.
- Maintain a solution-directed and outcome-directed focus.
- Present its recommendations to DDA.

Co-chairs agree to:

- Effectively manage meetings and ensure resources are available to adequately manage meeting logistics.
- Ensure that all members who wish to have an opportunity to speak are encouraged to do so.
- Promote collaboration and exchange of ideas among Waiver Advisory Council members.
- Facilitate communication with subject matter experts and other groups, as indicated.
- Keep Waiver Advisory Council members informed of progress.
- Provide Waiver Advisory Council members the opportunity to collaborate on making recommendations for DDA.
- Provide technical expertise.
- Take the group's feedback/perspectives to consider and include when making final decisions.
- Explain the reasons for accepting, not accepting, or accepting with amendments on recommendations.
- Be open and transparent with sharing information and decisions.

Recommendations

The Waiver Advisory Council is primarily advisory and cannot vote for the DDA to take any action. The Waiver Advisory Council's decision making authority is limited to voting on advice to submit to the DDA. Members will strive to reach agreement by consensus at a level that indicates that all partners are willing to "live with" the proposed action. All Waiver Advisory Council members have an equal voice and will be listened to. If agreement cannot be reached on a particular issue, the Waiver Advisory Council may take a vote with a 75% agreement threshold.

Waiver Advisory Council members or their designated proxy must be present at the meeting, including members or proxies who are attending in person or virtually, in order to vote.

- Council members cannot vote on behalf of another member and voting cannot take place outside of the meeting.
- A member's proxy may vote on a member's behalf if they are attending a meeting for the member.
- A member's proxy may not vote on their own behalf.
- Council members will strive to work expeditiously and try to avoid revisiting decisions once made.