



RFP - AGENCY SOLICITATION SPECIFICATIONS

HEADER: RFP22001418

TITLE: Workforce Recruiting and Development for the Adult I/DD System Services

DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this procurement is to develop and establish statewide mechanisms for ongoing recruitment, onboarding, training, and retention of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) for the system serving adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). There is a need to address and alleviate the shortage in the DSP workforce, estimated to be at least 1,000 vacancies. **This is anticipated to be a 3-year effort** that will involve coordinating multiple efforts already underway as well as directly designing and implementing strategies to support candidates, new hires, and employers. Employers will include agencies as well as individuals who self-direct and hire their own staff.

SECTION A. BACKGROUND

Overview of System

The Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH), Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) is responsible for funding and oversight of services for eligible adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) throughout the State of Rhode Island. DDD provides oversight to the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) for individuals with I/DD in accordance with both its statutory requirements and the Rhode Island Comprehensive 1115 Demonstration Waiver number 11-W-00242/1. The Medicaid 1115 waiver extension, reauthorized on January 1, 2019, constitutes the legal authority granted to the State by federal government to pursue innovations that improve health care access, quality and outcomes and further the goals of the Medicaid Programs.

BHDDH annually receives more than \$300 million in State General Revenue and matching federal financial participation to provide Medicaid waiver services to eligible individuals. There are approximately 4,000 people in the State who are actively funded to receive I/DD services through a network of 33 private community I/DD providers and one State run I/DD provider agency. Approximately 950 participants in DDD services self-direct some or all of their services.

BHDDH currently utilizes a traditional fee-for-service rate structure for Medicaid certified providers. The Division is currently undertaking a project to review and update the current payment methodology, service definitions, and rate development to address issues that providers and participants have had with the current structure in a way aligned with the BHDDH mission, vision, and values.

Mission

BHDDH guarantees high-quality, safe and accessible health care services for all individuals with differing intellectual/developmental abilities, mental health or substance use disorders, or who are in the care of facilities administered by BHDDH through an integrated healthcare landscape, in which all Rhode Islanders will thrive.

Vision

BHDDH will be the leader in the development of policy and research-based, industry-leading services in collaboration with our consumers, families and community partners in order to exceed care delivery expectations while being a consummate advocate for the populations we support.

Values

BHDDH remains true to our core values which are embodied in the state's motto: Hope. BHDDH promotes and inspires hope for good health, a safe home, a supportive community, and living a purposeful life. These four pillars support our foundational values of: dignity, respect, person-centered choice and accountability.

Consent Decree

In 2014, Rhode Island entered into a Consent Decree Agreement with the Department of Justice that addresses findings that the State violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by failing to serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in integrated settings, and by placing youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities at serious risk of segregation. Under the terms of these agreements, the State is committed to transform its service system over a 10-year period of time. The State is required to achieve certain goals each year. The ultimate goal is to provide integrated employment and day services for Rhode Islanders living with developmental disabilities. For more information, see <https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/consent-decree>.

Per the Consent Decree Court Monitor's October 2021 Action Plan, The United States of America and the State ("Parties"), and the Monitor recognized that there is need for increasing the workforce, both to increase capacity of the system but also to ensure that the system is community-based and has a well-trained workforce, including Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), Supervisors, Job Coaches, and other Employment and Community Activity Staff.

Workforce Issues

The DSP workforce crisis has existed long before COVID began in March 2020, though COVID has exacerbated existing challenges. According to a 2017 ANCOR¹ report, turnover rates for Direct Support Professionals in the United States was approximately 45%. This report found that

¹ The [American Network of Community Options and Resources](#) (ANCOR), "[Addressing the Disability Services Workforce Crisis of the 21st Century](#)"

35% leave their position within six months; 56% leave within one year. Relative to Rhode Island, a survey completed by NESCSO² in 2019 with 18 RI adult service providers determined the average turnover rates across all reporting provider was 36%, and the average reported vacancy rate was 18.6%. As of 2021, a national ANCOR survey³ found that 77% of providers are turning away new referrals; 58% are discontinuing programs and services; 81% struggle to achieve quality standards; and 92% report challenges with recruitment and retention.

This Action Plan consists of various actions the State must take in order to successfully comply with all aspects of the Consent Decree and meet the intent of adult DDD system overhaul and longitudinal stability. A key aspect of stabilizing the service delivery system is addressing the current DSP workforce crisis; high staff turnover rates have a negative impact on access to services, continuity of supports, and workforce knowledge, skills, and experiences to support adults with I/DD with complex needs. In an effort to stabilize the workforce, the Action Plan called for a Statewide Workforce Initiative (SWI) to be created. This initiative is focused on recruitment, retention, and professionalization of the DSP career.

Rhode Island's Vision for a Comprehensive DSP Workforce

The SWI articulated a vision that Rhode Island will have a sustainable, comprehensive, diverse DSP workforce who have the knowledge and skills to provide high quality services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities.

This comprehensive workforce should be defined by:

- A common definition of DSP, inclusive of DSPs working in various contexts (self-directed/providers, etc.);
- Redefining of the position to reflect community-based responsibilities
- Core competencies, which are foundational with a build to specific roles;
- Career pathways, ladders, and lattices
- Coordinated recruitment and retention plans/strategies;
- Training and professional development aligned to competencies; and
- Compensation that is commensurate with job responsibilities

SWI Initiative

Rhode Island's approach to this initiative consists of a Core Leadership Team and four subgroups. The core leadership team's role includes developing a coordinated strategy and maintaining consistency between subgroup tasks, alignment of policy and documents, evaluation activities, and communication and dissemination activities. Under the guidance and leadership of the Core Group are the four subgroups, which are facilitated/co-facilitated by State agency representatives and Sherlock Center representatives, with the exception being the Institutes of Higher Education subgroup, which is facilitated by a community stakeholder and representative of the higher education community.

² The [New England States Consortium Systems Organization](#) (NESCSO), internal report for BHDDH

³ ANCOR, "[The State of America's Direct Support Workforce Crisis 2021](#) "

The four subgroups are:

- Recruitment and Retention
- Standards and Credentialing
- Inservice Training/Professional Development
- Institutes of Higher Education

Descriptions of each subgroup follow.

The **Recruitment and Retention** subgroup is facilitated by a representative of the Sherlock Center and is focused on recruitment and retention to develop a talented, diverse, capable workforce through a comprehensive strategy. The group has met twice (January and February 2022) and has worked to map out current recruitment and retention efforts and identify gaps. Plans to increase efforts have stalled since a recruitment vendor is needed.

This group developed a subgroup task list, including developing universal and user-friendly metrics to measure success; develop a comprehensive understanding of DSP hiring needs including hosting employer/self-direct focus groups; receive input from DSPs on what drew them and keeps them in their jobs (DSP focus groups); receive input from service recipients; redefinition of the DSP role and assistance with marketing and branding; engage with local and national experts for guidance, including leveraging existing provider workforce development activities in RI through Amy Hewitt; develop strategies to address barriers to entry into the workforce; recruitment and retention efforts that are responsive to ESL, including those who are deaf and hard of hearing; develop recruitment pathways and pipelines from higher ed institutions and pipelines for student internships through existing CTE training programs; and develop thoughtful matching processes to effectuate better retention.

The **Standards and Credentialing** subgroup is cofacilitated by a State DLT representative and a Sherlock Center representative. The workgroup was formed in January 2022 with the responsibility to identify and develop core occupational competencies to help guide, inform, and prepare the state's DSP workforce. This group has met four times from January to March 2022, and has completed a review of current standards, credentialing, and competencies. The group completed a detailed review of The National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) 15 Core Competency Areas and associated skill statements; this is a nationally recognized standard and provides a substantial foundation for Retention and Career Ladder initiatives, and more robust professional benchmark for DSPs to be able quantify/portfolio their prior training or job experience within Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) models and pipelines to IHE degree programs.

The subgroup came to consensus on endorsement of the NADSP Core Competencies, which will be voluntary in nature – they will not be mandatory nor required by any individual state agency. Rather, they will be offered as guidance to help inform and elevate the DSP occupation and will be the standard to strive towards. We need to build a system to support individuals in gaining these competencies, on a continuum. The group is mindful that training requirements for Medicaid reimbursement and licensing regulations only apply to agencies, not those who self-direct.

A RI DSP Competencies Guidance document is being finalized by the DLT marketing team. Next steps include a public comment round and state agency 'implementation' and distribution plans. Need to define pre-service, career track, and identify necessary pieces to be put in place

before implementation. Possible need to do formal crosswalk of competencies and licensing regulations.

The group had expressed desire for the competencies and credentialing to be tied to a career ladder, with proportionate compensation. The group developed a list of how they believe the competencies should be used, including:

- Core set of trainings with a specific timeframe for the trainings, on a continuum
- Incorporate credentialing/tie into pre-service training?
- Incorporate credentialing/tie into Professional Development?
- Incorporate into continuing Inservice
- Sequenced process to customize competencies within the levels of practice?
- Align standards to trainings that are for specific jobs/roles
- Develop trainings in native languages
- Crosswalk with existing opportunities (align with current training programs – Relias)

The **Inservice Training/Professional Development** subgroup is facilitated by a Sherlock Center representative. This group is tasked with supporting efforts in providing DSPs quality Inservice Training and Professional Development opportunities to build competencies. This group met twice (February and March 2022). They have completed a review of current training requirements in BHDDH licensing regulations for staff working in DDOs, and the group identified Inservice training/pd gaps and barriers, including unmet self-direction training needs and the staffing crisis/turnover rates. An overview presentation on an OHHS self-directed program called the Independent Provider (IP) Program was given to the group, including a summary of training standards and program mechanics.

The group identified that one of their challenges is sharing core training and transferring them from agency to agency. The group determined it could be beneficial to collaborate on trainings, including online trainings; between agencies or possibly statewide, which could also be a cost-saving measure.

The group is also tasked with mapping current opportunities for Inservice Training/PD in the state. An organizational survey is being developed with assistance from the Community Provider Network of RI (CPNRI), a provider trade association representing the majority of providers in the state. The survey will consist of a dropdown menu of all current DDO trainings for front-line staff, and will gather data on training time requirements, training formats, etc., in order to help identify best practices, gaps, and needs. Self-direct data collection is also needed but will not be through the same survey. A document will be developed to discuss what is going on with SWI to include with the survey once it is ready for dissemination.

The final subgroup is **Institutes of Higher Education (IHE)**, facilitated by an individual from The College Crusade of RI. This full subgroup has met once, in March, with representatives from various public and private IHEs in RI. Represented IHEs are Rhode Island College, Community College of Rhode Island, College Unbound, Brown University, Johnson and Wales University, Providence College, New England Institute of Technology, Rhode Island School of Design, Roger Williams University, Salve Regina, and the University of Rhode Island. From each IHE

there are Provosts/representatives from Academic Affairs Offices, as well as Workforce Development/Training continuing education representatives.

The group began developing a plan to achieve two main targets:

1. Recruitment: Recruit students into internships/work-based learning opportunities/jobs to fill immediate DSP openings.
2. Retention: Develop and implement career pathways for current DSPs

Recruitment of college students through a vendor pipeline is the group's "low-hanging fruit" and is intended to kick off in the Summer of 2022. This recruitment should also focus on gap year students with an interest in human services or special education careers. The group was asked to identify direct contacts in their respective Student Employment/Career Development Offices that the recruiter, once identified, can contact directly with DSP job positions and internships. Important to note, there are a number of providers that have existing relationships with IHE, so there is a need to coordinate; lessons learned with providers that have robust college internship/work experiences.

The group also began mapping the current status of DSP career pathway development at each IHE. The group was asked to begin thinking about 2- or 4-year (human services) degree programs that could be potential career pathways/ladders for current DSPs. DSP professional growth is a new market for postsecondary pipelines. Institutions may also utilize Prior Learning Assessments (PLAs) models, under which an adult could portfolio/demonstrate their prior DSP training/job experience in order to receive college credit. As referenced in the Standards and Credentialing subgroup, the NADSP core competencies align well with portfolioing the robust skills that people in this profession have gained. The group was asked to identify PLA contacts in their respective institutions.

The IHE group will reconvene again in late Summer once a recruitment vendor is identified; ideally with concrete plans developed for advertisement opportunities.

SECTION B: SCOPE OF WORK AND REQUIREMENTS

Purpose:

The purpose of this procurement is to alleviate the current shortage in the Direct Support Professional (DSP) workforce, estimated to be at least 1,000 vacancies, and to establish statewide mechanisms for ongoing recruitment, hiring, onboarding, training, and retention of DSPs using multiple platforms that include but not limited to: technology, social media and other successful outreach techniques.

TASK 1: Coordinate Efforts of State Workforce Initiative (SWI) Workgroups and Related Initiatives

- A. The selected vendor will hire staff who will coordinate the SWI subgroups. This staff will align and complete a crosswalk for all SWI subgroup tasks and maintain connectivity among the four workgroups described in the background section above. These subgroups have many assignments and activities that overlap each other.
 - a. Coordinate the work plans for the four work groups described in the background section above.
 - b. Monitor the work plans of the subgroups and provide a report monthly to BHDDS on the progress and barriers to achieving work plan goals.

- B. The selected vendor will coordinate SWI work with another State initiative involving the Transformation Fund (\$10M total), disbursement of which is split up into two phases. Applications for the first phase (\$4M) focused on building and/or expanding a community-based workforce that facilitates individual outcomes of employment and increased integrated community activity. Awards were made to 29 providers who received funds in February 2022.

The selected vendor will coordinate the Statewide Workforce Initiative with the Providers who were awarded Transformation Fund dollars by addressing and managing the following:

- a. Several of the applications proposed hiring recruiters or other similar positions. Most proposals included several recruitment initiatives. Any recruitment-related position supported with these funds will participate in the statewide initiative. Any strategy developed using these funds will be presented to the SWI.
- b. Virtually all of the projects proposed included training initiatives. Each agency should implement these activities as planned; however, agency personnel leading these initiatives should contribute to the development of the statewide training initiatives and curriculum.
- c. All of the activities should be shared with other providers. The selected vendor will assist the Conversion Institute (part of the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at

Rhode Island College) to coordinate mechanisms for sharing activities and results through a Community of Practice, a statewide conference, or other activity.

- C. The selected vendor will ensure all stakeholders are informed about the SWI initiative and will formally draw connectivity between Transformation Fund activities and the SWI. The vendor will help support all providers to fully understand and implement best practice activities which are vital to the success of the initiative.
 - a. Develop a mechanism for broadly sharing activities and results that is easily accessible to all stakeholders.
 - b. Reconcile differences in expectations among stakeholders
 - c. Assist providers to evaluate and establish each party's current capacity to expand services with the hiring of new staff in order to fulfill their designated roles/tasks
- D. Crosswalk and align all subgroup efforts/decisions and the Rate and Payment Methodology Change effort that is underway.

Deliverables:

- 1) Crosswalk and maintenance of a master plan of SWI subgroup tasks, Transformation Fund, and rate and payment methodology project.
- 2) Sharing of all activities with the Community of Practice, statewide conference, or alternate activity to be approved by BHDDH.
- 3) Project and meeting notes and other public materials that are shared with stakeholders.

TASK 2: Inform, develop, and implement a comprehensive plan for recruitment, hiring, onboarding, ongoing training, and retention of new direct support professionals across the system

The selected vendor will lead the State in establishing mechanisms for recruiting and supporting new DSPs, including the following activities:

- A. Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for a statewide structure for recruitment, including internships, apprenticeships, and other recruitment strategies.
 - a. Commit to collaborating with higher education workgroup and all higher education partners.
 - b. Collaborate with secondary education and vocational schools.
 - c. Identify other opportunities to build partnerships such as RI Works, DLT, Refugee Resettlement, and other training programs.
- B. Identify, develop, and implement statewide onboarding and a value driven, person centered training curricula that has a focus on best practice approaches to supporting individuals with developmental disabilities to successfully live and work in their communities.

- a. Provide training as needed to potential candidates, including non-english speaking and ASL candidates.
- C. Develop and implement a plan to provide support to candidates and new hires.
 - a. Support should include mentoring and coaching.
 - b. Develop, utilize, and validate evaluation and feedback from the candidate/new hire experience.
- D. Develop and implement retention strategies.
- E. Provide support to employers in hiring, onboarding, and training in order to achieve the benchmarks found in the United States District Court Settlement Agreement Action Plan found as an attachment.
 - a. Develop a hiring screening tool/process to help employers identify the right candidates. The goals of screening are to:
 - i. Streamline the hiring process to save time and get better results.
 - ii. Increase employee satisfaction and retention rate.
 - iii. Reduce negative costs related to a wrong hire.
 - iv. Increase in new hires with skills and abilities to support individuals with IDD to live and work in their communities and reflect the company's culture.
- F. Identify career path opportunities and training needs to skilled workers who are wanting to move into higher level positions.

Reporting Requirements:

- 1) Monthly status report on activities and outcomes.
- 2) Annual reports of project accomplishments and challenges, and next year plan.
- 3) Final report with lessons learned, including a final evaluation of the candidate/new hire experience and of the employer experience.

SECTION C: PROPOSAL

1. Technical Proposal

Narrative and Format

Vendors must submit a technical proposal which addresses each of the following elements and is limited to fifteen (15) pages, excluding any appendices and resumes of key staff that will provide the requested services:

The Technical Proposal must specifically address the scope of work within each of the following required elements. The Offeror shall present the proposal in the same sequence and with the same numbering scheme and headings shown in this Section.

The required submission format and content is:

A. Cover Letter

- Provide a cover letter introducing the firm and proposal.

B. Company Capability, Capacity, and Qualifications

a. Company Overview

- Provide an overview of the company and the business structure.
- Has the Offeror been part of a merger, acquisition, or had a name change in the past three years? If, so please provide all names used in this period.

b. Qualifications and Management

- Describe the composition of the Offeror's executive leadership team, and describe their qualifications, training, and experience.
- Describe any management changes or staff layoffs in the past three years.

c. Subcontractors

- Describe which components of the proposed service the Offeror intends to be primary provider, and for which, if any, and with whom the Offeror intends to subcontract, and describe any relationships established with other organizations that will have a significant role in the development, delivery, or evaluation of services. BHDDH seeks proposals that demonstrate the existence of any necessary organizational relationships, and describe the nature of such relationships, including but not limited to contractual and/or financial obligations.

d. Conflict of Interest

- Identify and address any conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of business activities or ventures by the organization or associates of the organization, employees, or subcontractors as a result of any individual's status as a member of the board of directors of any organization likely to interact with the Department. BHDDH seeks proposals that adequately mitigate and respond to perceived, potential, and/or actual conflicts of interest.

e. Experience

- Provide a detailed description of the Proposer's experience in similar workforce development initiatives.
- List a minimum of three (3) relevant client references, to include client names, addresses, contact names with emails and phone numbers, dates of service, type(s) of service(s) provided, and outcomes achieved.
- Please provide samples of relevant work, if feasible, in an appendix to the proposal.

C. Key Project Personnel

- Describe the qualifications and experience of the project manager and key staff who will be involved in this project, including their experience in workforce development, recruiting, hiring, onboarding, training, and retention.
- Provide project manager and key staff resumes/CV in an appendix

D. Project Contingency Plan

- Describe the contingency plan if any key staff becomes unavailable to continue with the project to ensure there are no project delays.

E. Approach to Project

- Address each item in the Scope of Work in detail. The Total Estimated Effort Form must be included in this section. The separate Excel file must be completed and submitted.
 - Total Effort must detail the hours dedicated to the task in each year of the project. Detail all assumptions driving the estimated effort.
- Describe the proposed approach to designing, implementing, and firmly establishing a targeted workforce development program for Direct Support Professionals in the Rhode Island system supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- The approach should address recruitment, hiring, onboarding, ongoing training, and retention. Internships and apprenticeships must be included.
- Include the proposed approach to coordinate and support the State Workforce Initiative, and how stakeholders will be educated on the solutions offered and how stakeholder buy-in will be obtained.
- Also include how potential workers and the wider community will receive information on this initiative.
- Describe the feasibility of success and why this proposal is likely to cause the achievement of desired outcomes.

F. Work Plan

- Please describe in detail, the framework within which requested services will be performed, addressing the items in the scope of work.
- Highlight anticipated dependencies for decisions, information, or other items that the State will be asked to provide.

2. Cost Proposal

Please complete the attached Excel file for the Cost Proposal submission.

Offerors must provide a detailed pricing narrative, payment schedule, and cost detail using the provided Excel template. Proposals may be time and materials and/or deliverable based. The cost proposal must include a detailed budget for delivering each of the tasks described in the scope of work. The budget should reflect as accurately as possible, specific costs associated with developing each deliverable and should include estimated costs broken down in detail by personnel, fringe, travel, and other costs as detailed in the template. This should be accompanied

by a budget narrative which explains in more detail how the Offeror arrived at the estimated costs.

The Offeror shall present Cost Proposals according to the guidance specified in this Section. Offeror shall present all other elements of Cost Proposal in the same sequence and with the same letter scheme and headings shown in this Section.

Budget and Narrative

1. Present a detailed Task and Deliverable budget.

Offerors must use the separate Excel template for the Cost Proposal submission. Tasks should be approached with a fully allocated hourly rate for each proposed staff person. Cost for deliverables should be upon delivery of the deliverable.

2. Present a detailed, specific budget narrative

Budget narratives shall, at a minimum, specifically address each of the following elements:

- Explain the basis and rationale for costs proposed.
- Justification for each allocated cost, including but not limited to allocation of staff time.
- Compliance with allowable expenses.

Budget Submission

The purpose of these guidelines for budget preparation, and the attached budget template, is to provide Offerors standard format for proposing costs and pricing when submitting proposals.

All costs proposed in the budget are subject to the cost evaluation criteria established in this solicitation. Fee and budget terms will be subject the final terms, conditions, and award of a contract.

3. ISBE Proposal

See Appendix A on the “Overview” tab in Ocean State Procures™ for information and the MBE, WBE and/or Disability Business Enterprise Participation Plan form(s) (“ISBE Proposal”). Vendors are required to complete, sign and submit these forms with their overall proposal (uploaded to the “Price Evaluation Attachments” section on the “Attach Documents” tab). Please complete separate forms for each MBE, WBE, and/or Disability Business Enterprise subcontractor to be utilized on the solicitation.

SECTION D: EVALUATION AND SELECTION – SOLICITATION SPECIFIC

Technical proposals must receive a minimum of 60 out of a maximum of 70 points to advance to the cost evaluation phase. Technical proposals scoring less than 60 points shall not have the accompanying cost or ISBE participation proposals opened or evaluated; such proposals shall not receive further consideration.

Technical proposals scoring 60 points or higher shall have the cost proposals evaluated and assigned up to a maximum of 30 points bringing the total potential evaluation score to 100 points. As total possible evaluation points are determined, vendor ISBE proposals shall be evaluated and assigned up to 6 bonus points for ISBE participation.

Proposals shall be reviewed and scored based upon the following criteria:

Criteria	Possible Points
Approach to the Project	35
Staff Qualifications	10
Capability, Capacity, and Qualifications of the Vendor	10
Work Plan	15
Total Possible Technical Points	70 Points
Cost Proposal	30
Total Possible Evaluation Points	100 Points
ISBE Participation	6 Bonus Points
Total Possible Points	106 Points

See the “Requirements” tab of this solicitation for additional information on the evaluation and selection process in the “RFP Standard Specification” section.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND

_____)	
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)	
Plaintiff,)	
)	
v.)	C.A. No. 13-442-JJM-PAS
)	
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND,)	
Defendant.)	
_____)	

_____)	
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)	
Plaintiff,)	
)	
v.)	C.A. No. 14-175-JJM-PAS
)	
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND,)	
Defendant.)	
_____)	

ORDER

Given that the court-ordered Action Plan (filed October 19, 2021) stated that “the plan would include a contract to a private organization to coordinate and implement an intensive statewide recruitment initiative”. Six months have passed, and that provision of the Action Plan has not been met.

The workforce shortage continues to be a primary barrier to substantial compliance with the capacity section of the Consent Decree. Consultant reports in April 2021 and October 2021 documented more than 1000 direct support vacancies.

Using other than State sources and organizations (as specified in the Action Plan):

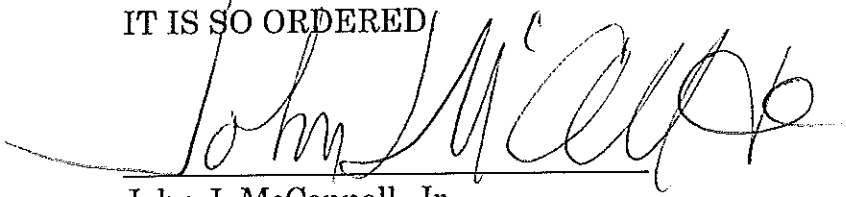
- (1) By June 1, 2022, finalize work plans for the four working groups connected to the Statewide Infrastructure and Recruitment initiative – (i) Recruitment and Retention, (ii) Standards and Credentialing; (iii) Training and Professional Development; (iv) Institutes of Higher Education. Work plans should include (i) intended outcomes, (ii) specific action steps, (iii) responsible persons or organizations, (iv) timeline for implementation.
- (2) By June 15, 2022, scan and identify all recruitment activities being implemented by developmental disability provider organizations; develop strategy and plan for coordinating these activities with activities of the four Statewide Infrastructure and Recruitment workgroups.
- (3) By June 30, 2022, conduct focus groups with provider organizations, individuals and families who self-direct and other pertinent organizations to gather information needed to develop and implement a comprehensive statewide recruitment strategy – including, but not limited to (a) statewide needs, (b) possible career pathways and sources for talent pipelines, (c) new concepts for service provision, (d) staff roles and responsibilities, (e) factors associated with turnover, (f) factors that contribute to retention.
- (4) By July 15, 2022, finalize statewide recruitment campaign including target populations, recruitment strategies specific to each population, interviewing strategies, strategies for providing pre-employment training, strategies for interviewing and preparing candidates who speak languages other than English, onboarding strategies and any other strategies needed to effectively implement the statewide campaign. Work plans should include (i) intended outcomes, (ii) specific action steps, (iii) responsible persons or organizations, (iv) timeline for implementation.
- (5) By July 15, 2022, develop statewide marketing campaign; begin implementation by July 30, 2022.
- (6) By August 1, 2022, employ enough recruiters to efficiently implement the statewide recruitment plan.
- (7) By August 1, 2022, employ staff who will serve as liaison between all participating institutions of higher education and the statewide recruitment activities.
- (8) By September 1, 2022, identify and list all potential retention strategies and resources needed to implement identified strategies.

(9) Resulting from the actions defined above, the following benchmarks will be achieved across the statewide network of provider organizations and individuals who self-direct:

- (i) By September 1, 2022, recruit 60 potential candidates 35 of whom will be hired by providers or individuals who self-direct.
- (ii) By October 1, 2022, recruit 60 additional candidates (120 total), 35 of whom (70 total) will be hired by providers or individuals who self-direct. 35 paid interns from participating institutions of higher education will begin.
- (iii) By November 1, 2022, recruit 60 additional candidates (180 total), 35 of whom (105 total) will be hired by providers or individuals who self-direct. 35 additional paid interns (70 total) from participating institutions of higher education will begin.
- (iv) By December 1, 2022, recruit 60 additional candidates (240 total), 35 of whom (140 total) will be hired by providers or individuals who self-direct. 35 additional paid interns (105 total) from participating institutions of higher education will begin.
- (v) By January 1, 2023, recruit 60 additional candidates (300 total), 35 of whom (175 total) will be hired by providers or individuals who self-direct. 35 additional paid interns (140 total) from participating institutions of higher education will begin.
- (vi) By February 1, 2023, recruit 60 additional candidates (360 total), 35 of whom (210 total) will be hired by providers or individuals who self-direct. 35 additional paid interns (175 total) from participating institutions of higher education will begin.
- (vii) By March 1, 2023, recruit 60 additional candidates (420 total), 35 of whom (245 total) will be hired by providers or individuals who self-direct. 35 additional paid interns (210 total) from participating institutions of higher education will begin.
- (viii) By April 1, 2023, recruit 60 additional candidates (480 total), 35 of whom (280 total) will be hired by providers or individuals who self-direct. 35 additional paid interns (245 total) from participating institutions of higher education will begin.
- (ix) By May 1, 2023, recruit 60 additional candidates (540 total), 35 of whom (315 total) will be hired by providers or individuals who self-direct. 35 additional paid interns (280 total) from participating institutions of higher education will begin.
- (x) By June 1, 2023, recruit 60 additional candidates (600 total), 35 of whom (350 total) will be hired by providers or individuals who self-direct.

Beginning June 2022, the State will provide biweekly (15th and 30th of each month) reports to the Court Monitor.

IT IS SO ORDERED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. McConnell, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

John J. McConnell, Jr.
Chief Judge
United States District Court

May 3, 2022