



Save the Date – Next DD Community Forum

Tuesday, June 20 from 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM

[Click Here to Register](#)



Join BHDDH for the Spring DD Community Forum on Tuesday, June 20th from 3:00-4:30 PM to get the latest news from the BHDDH Division of Developmental Disabilities.

Everyone must register in advance. After you register, you will receive a confirmation email with your unique login details to join the forum.

When you register, you can enter your questions or comments about the RI DD System. Director Kevin Savage and the DD team will answer questions and share other information and updates at this quarterly online event.

The forum will be hosted by Advocates in Action and will be held on Zoom. You will also be able to call in. If you can't join us, the forum will be recorded to watch later.

An ASL interpreter will be present at this event. For other accommodation requests, please email MichelleWhite@AdvocatesinAction.org. If you have any questions or need assistance registering, call Advocates in Action toll-free: 1-877-532-5543, or email aina@AdvocatesinAction.org.

Parents and Guardians Can Continue To Be Self-Directed Paid Staff

With the new 1115 waiver extension, individuals who self-direct will continue to be able to hire and pay their parents and guardians to provide supports.

The Rhode Island 1115 Demonstration Waiver Extension Request in December 2022 included the request to allow parents and other relatives of adult beneficiaries to be paid for day and community services under Self-Direction. Legal guardians are covered in this request.

The general timeline for the waiver extension is that it will go into effect for January 1, 2024. The existing federal authority to pay family caregivers is tied to what's known as "Appendix K" authority during the pandemic public health emergency (PHE). Appendix K authority will expire on November 11, 2023. We are working with CMS to ensure that we don't have a gap in authority between the middle of November and start of January; it is possible that CMS will approve this piece of the waiver earlier than the others so it can go into effect sooner.

At the Division

There have been a lot of comings and goings at the Division of Developmental Disabilities recently. We wish many good things to those who have moved on to new jobs or retired, congratulate those who have been promoted, and welcome those who have recently been hired.

Natalie Sam has retired from being a DD Social Caseworker.

Lori Vandall has retired. Lori answered the phones and provided clerical support.



Meredith MacDonald has left her DD role as a Social Casework Supervisor to become the Administrator of Program Management at RICLAS.

Carl Desjarlais has moved on from his role as a Social Caseworker at DD to a new role at the Executive Office of Health and Human Services.

Mary Beth Stevens and **Stacey Perry** have both been promoted from Social Caseworkers to Social Casework Supervisors.

DD will welcome two new social caseworkers on July 16th, **Amber Matson** and **Crystal Morel**.

Amethys Nieves joined the Division in May as Associate Administrator of Community Services to work on improving information and communications. She obtained her Bachelor's in Psychology and Masters in Social Work. She has experience providing direct therapeutic services and supporting healthcare program development. Her professional interests include healthcare/system transformation, mental wellness, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Elvys Ruiz is from the Dominican Republic where he was born and raised. He came to the United States in 1991. He joined the Division of Developmental Disabilities on May 8, 2023, and is currently the Administrator III, Business and Community Engagement. He has been working for the State of Rhode Island since July 2000. He started his career at the RI Department of Human Services (DHS) where he worked for 11 years. Elvys' last position at DHS was Civil Rights/Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Coordinator. In 2016, he joined the RI Department of Administration's Office of Diversity, Equity and Opportunity (ODEO) as Chief Program Coordinator in the Minority Business Enterprise Compliance Office (MBECO). His last position at DOA was Interim Administrator for MBECO. In 2011, he worked for the RI Department of Transportation as a Highway Safety Coordinator. He holds a M.S. degree in Science in Leadership and Organizational Management from Springfield College and a Specialty in Linguistic and Translation from the University of Catalunya (Spain).

Cynthia Fusco has been promoted to the new Interdepartmental Project Manager position from her prior role as Chief Implementation Aide. Cindy had many years of state service, beginning at DCYF and continuing with 20+ years at RI College working for the Upward Bound Program. She has a Master in Public Administration degree from URI. Cindy's role will focus on the Division's goals and strategies to meet compliance of the Consent Decree.

Johanna Mercado is the new Coordinator, Community Planning & Development focused on communications. She is an Academic Librarian with an MLIS with a concentration in Digital Media from the University of Rhode Island. She also has a B.A. in Political Science with a minor in Gender & Women Studies.



Jackie Camilloni Prior to working in State service, she was employed for approximately 25 years by a non-profit organization that provides services to adults and children with I/DD. During her employment, she served in many different roles ranging from Direct Support Staff to Assistant Residential Director of Community Services. Jackie began working at the Department of Children, Youth and Family as a Social Caseworker II in June 2017. She moved to BHDDH, Division of Developmental Disabilities in July 2019 as a Social Caseworker II. Jackie has recently taken on the new role of Coordinator, Community Planning & Development focused on Self-Directed Services.

Kelly Petersen is the new Chief of Training, Staff Development, and Continuous Quality Improvement. Kelly began working at BHDDH in 2015 as a DD social caseworker and later a social casework supervisor. Kelly started her work as a social caseworker for the RI DCYF in 2006. Early in her career, Kelly worked for Groden Center in HBTS services and as the Manager for Family Resources foster care program. Kelly graduated from Rhode Island College with a degree in Psychology in 2001 and later achieved a Masters in Business Administration in 2019 from Franklin Pierce College.

Peter Joly is the new Principal Community Development and Training Specialist with the Department of Developmental Disabilities. Peter is a native Rhode Islander, an army veteran, a graduate of the University of Maryland and who has worked in the mental healthcare field for over 20 years. Work experiences include the Groden Center, Gateway Healthcare and Avatar Residential. He looks forward to working with the Division of Developmental Disabilities to make services more accessible for the general public and bring more freedom and independence in their lives.

Steven Seay is the the new Coordinator of Integrated Community Services. He began his career in human services in 1993, providing direct support to group home residents with developmental disabilities. He worked with older adults, some with developmental disabilities, in nursing home social services, adult protective services, and as a long-term care ombudsman for over 23 years. He started his career at BHDDH in 2018, in DD, but then moved to Quality Management (Office of Quality Improvement) in 2019. He was part of a team that conducted quality reviews of DDOs' services. He transferred back to DD last month in this new role.

Supported Employment Highlight

The Arc of Blackstone Valley has produced a new You Tube video highlighting their Supported Employment Services and two of their participants at their jobs. [Watch the video here.](#)



CMS Issues Resources on Supporting Adults with I/DD and Their Aging Caregivers

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has released a set of resources designed to support state Medicaid and partner agencies that play critical roles in designing and delivering supports and services that meet the current and future needs of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their aging parents and caregivers.

These resources detail ways that agencies can anticipate and meet the needs of aging caregivers and adults with I/DD, design person-centered planning processes across the lifespan, develop policies to support aging caregiver needs, and demonstrate innovative strategies that states are using in key focus areas. The materials can be used by state agencies, providers, and aging and disability networks to engage stakeholders and plan for the design and implementation of future services and supports using data to identify current and future service demands, develop interagency partnerships and relationships, and focus on assessment, early identification, and training to help families better navigate support as their needs change across the lifespan.

The resources are especially important because the number of people with I/DD receiving Medicaid home and community-based services and living with family has increased by 143% between 1998 and 2018. An estimated 1 million households in the U.S. include an adult with I/DD living with and supported by an aging caregiver, and this number is growing.

- [How State Agencies Can Anticipate and Meet the Needs of Adults with I/DD and Their Aging Caregivers](#) describes strategies that state Medicaid and partner agencies can leverage to anticipate and meet the needs of adults with I/DD and their caregivers, including strategies related to services, data management, and partnerships.
- [State Policies and Practices to Support Person-Centered Planning Across the Lifespan for Individuals with I/DD and Their Aging Caregivers](#) highlights ways that states can design and implement person-centered planning processes to support adults with I/DD and their caregivers throughout their lives.
- [State Policies and Practices to Support Aging Caregivers of Adults with I/DD](#) discusses strategies states are using to address the needs of aging caregivers, including assessment, training, and navigation support.
- [State Spotlights: Supporting Adults with I/DD and Their Aging Caregivers](#) highlights innovative strategies states are using in four areas of focus: building interagency partnerships and relationships, providing engagement and navigation supports, implementing person- and family-centered systems of support, and planning for the future.

Medicaid.gov
Keeping America Healthy

Frontline Initiative Newsletter for DSPs

The current issue of [Frontline Initiative](#) features articles on DSPs supporting people's health and wellness.

[Frontline Initiative](#) is a free newsletter covering the issues important to direct support professionals and supervisors who support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and other disabilities in a variety of community settings. Each feature issue contains resources, perspectives, and strategies to advance the profession of direct support.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR SUPPORTING A PERSON'S PREFERENCES IN THEIR HEALTH AND WELLNESS GOALS

SARA MADARIS



For more information about the series and past issues see: <https://ici.umn.edu/series/7>.

Guardianship Grant Flexibility Act

U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging Chairman Bob Casey and Ranking Member Mike Braun have introduced the [Guardianship Grant Flexibility Act](#) to allow [Administration for Community Living \(ACL\)](#) grants to be used for programs that train and recruit law students to help with the guardianship system.

The [Guardianship Grant Flexibility Act](#) would amend the Elder Justice Act to allow ACL's Elder Justice Innovation Grants for Improving Guardianship to be used for programs that train and recruit law students to help with the guardianship system. State courts could recruit and train law students to provide representation for respondents and to serve as guardians ad litem. Eligible programs would work through clinics supervised by a licensed attorney.

Protect Yourself from Scams



[Images source](#)

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is actively working to combat Social Security impostor scams and raise public awareness about them. These scams, where individuals impersonate Social Security representatives, have been prevalent in recent years and are among the most reported government impostor scams. Through extensive outreach and investigative efforts, the SSA has successfully reduced reported losses to Social Security scams by 30 percent from 2021 to 2022.

To report a scam attempt, please [click here](#).

For more information and resources, please visit <http://www.ssa.gov/scam> and <https://www.ssa.gov/fraud/>

Report Suspected Abuse

Mandated Reporting

Reporting suspected occurrences of abuse, neglect, and mistreatment of individuals with developmental disabilities

To report abuse and serious incidents call the QA hotline at
(401) 462-2629

The Quality Assurance (QA) Unit at BHDDH operates a 24 hour hotline, seven days per week, 365 days per year. Staff respond to reported incidents of abuse, neglect, mistreatment and financial exploitation.

For More Information on DD Initiatives

Consent Decree: see <https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/consent-decree>

Conflict Free Case Management: see the [EOHHS CFCM website](#) or [DD Initiatives-CFCM](#)

RI DSP State Workforce Initiative: see <https://riswi.org/> or [DD Initiatives-SWI](#)

Sign Up for Our Email List

If you aren't receiving email updates and newsletters from BHDDH, you can [sign up here](#) or on our website. Go to

<https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmentaldisabilities/events/newsandupdates/> to sign up or to see past quarterly newsletters and issues of DD News.

> SIGN UP FOR THE BHDDH NEWSLETTER

Contacting DD Staff

See the full Division Contact List attached to this newsletter.

Monday-Friday
8:30 AM - 4:00 PM
for questions or support
(401) 462-3421

Para español, llame
(401) 462-3014

Send general questions to the
AskDD email address.

BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov

Please do not email critical issues.

BH Link is Here for You



BH Link's mission is to ensure all Rhode Islanders experiencing mental health and substance use crises receive the appropriate services they need as quickly as possible in an environment that supports their recovery. Visit the BH Link website at www.bhlink.org or for confidential support and to get connected to care:

CALL **(401) 414-LINK (5465)** If under 18 CALL: **(855) KID(543)-LINK(5465)**

Visit the 24-HOUR/7-DAY Triage Center at **975 Waterman Avenue, East Providence, RI**

Call 911 if there is risk of immediate danger

Division of Developmental Disabilities - All Staff Contacts

Main Phone #:	(401) 462-3421	TDD:	(401) 462-3226	Website:	https://bhddh.ri.gov/	To report abuse/neglect: (401) 462-2629
Fax:	(401) 462-2775	Spanish Line:	(401) 462-3014	BH Link:	(401) 414-5465	

Name		Title	Phone	Email
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Amethys	Nieves	Associate Admin, Communications	462-6629	Amethys.Nieves@bhddh.ri.gov
Peter	Joly	Principal Training Specialist	462-6638	Peter.Joly@bhddh.ri.gov

CASE MANAGEMENT UNITS

East Providence/Pawtucket/Central Falls region

Marguerite	Belisle	Casework Supervisor II	462-0714	Marguerite.Belisle@bhddh.ri.gov
Amie	Adams	Social Caseworker II	462-2480	Amie.Adams@bhddh.ri.gov
Suzanne	Porter	Social Caseworker II	462-1972	Suzanne.Porter@bhddh.ri.gov
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Vacant		Social Caseworker II	462-2438	
Vacant		Social Caseworker II	462-6097	

Northern RI/West Bay/Kent Region

Janice	Bijesse	Casework Supervisor II	462-4290	Janice.Bijesse@bhddh.ri.gov
Mary	Cameron	Social Caseworker II	462-1307	Mary.Cameron@bhddh.ri.gov
Megan	Gilbert	Social Caseworker II	462-2524	Megan.Gilbert@bhddh.ri.gov
Dayna	Hansen	Social Caseworker II	462-2505	Dayna.Hansen@bhddh.ri.gov
Erin	Simonelli	Social Caseworker II	462-2502	Erin.Simonelli@bhddh.ri.gov

South County/West Bay/Kent Region

Mary Beth	Stevens	Casework Supervisor II		Marybeth.Stevens@bhddh.ri.gov
Marisa	Abbruzzi	Social Caseworker II (RICLAS)	462-6099	Marisa.Abbuzzi@bhddh.ri.gov
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Celestina	Okai	Social Caseworker II (RICLAS)	462-3896	Celestina.Okai@bhddh.ri.gov
Jill	Murphy	Social Caseworker II	462-2409	Jill.Murphy@bhddh.ri.gov
Lena	Sousa	Social Caseworker II	462-1834	Lena.Sousa@bhddh.ri.gov
Joseph	Tevyaw	Social Caseworker II	462-2474	Joseph.Tevyaw@bhddh.ri.gov

Providence/West Bay/Kent Region

Stacey	Perry	Casework Supervisor II		Stacey.Perry@bhddh.ri.gov
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ELIGIBILITY UNIT

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TRANSITION UNIT

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Carolee	Leach	Professional Services Coordinator	462-1723	Carolee.Leach@bhddh.ri.gov

SUPPORT STAFF

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Laurie	Rossi	Implementation Aide	462-2563	Laurie.Rossi@bhddh.ri.gov



Transportation Options Through Your DD Services

Division of Developmental Disabilities

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

In the past, you were only allowed a specific number of transportation trips per year. Now you can choose to use your funding for as many trips as you need. You also have flexibility to use your funding three ways to meet your transportation needs.



WHAT ARE THE THREE OPTIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION?



1. You can pay your agency for transportation they provide.
2. You can use your funds to pay for trips on The Ride Program (RIPTA). You need to add RIPTA to your plan and purchase order. RIPTA will bill the Division directly. There is no cost to you.
3. You can use the self-direct option for transportation, even if you use an agency for most services. Through self-direction, you can pay for trips on Uber, Lyft or taxi service or to pay someone you know for driving you.

DO I NEED TO SELF-DIRECT TO USE THE SELF-DIRECT TRANSPORTATION OPTION?

No, you do not have to be in a self-direct program to use the self-direct transportation option.

Contact your provider and tell them that you want to use "self-directed funds option" for transportation to use Uber, Lyft, taxi service, or to pay someone for rides.



WHO DO I CONTACT?



Contact your provider.

Your provider will help you make sure your plan and purchase order have the transportation options you need.

You can use one or all of the transportation options.

1. Pay your provider agency for transportation.
2. Pay for Ride services.
3. Self-direct funds to pay for other transportation services such as Uber, Lyft, taxis, or someone who drives you.

Read more at <https://www.bhddh.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/services-adults/self-directed-services>



DEPARTMENT OF

Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental
Disabilities & Hospitals

State of Rhode Island



Medicaid Conflict-Free Case Management



Changes are coming to case management for people with disabilities, older adults, and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

1 What does this mean for me?

- Your case management services must be provided by someone who does not also deliver your direct support services.
- Case management is focused on **you**.
- Your case manager will help you find community supports so you can meet goals you have for your life.

2 Who will provide my case management?

- You will be able to pick a case management agency from a list provided by the State.
- If you do not pick an agency, one will be selected for you.

3 How does this affect me?

- For some people, case management will be a new service.
- Others may need to choose a new case management agency.

4 Why and when do things have to change?

- Federal law requires service providers to be separate from the case management role.
- The change will gradually start for most people in January 2024.
- You will be contacted before any changes are made.



For more information, please visit:
eohhs.ri.gov/conflict-free-case-management
(Click [here](#))



SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORTS NETWORK

A NETWORK OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILY MEMBERS USING SELF-DIRECTED
SUPPORTS IN RHODE ISLAND

ONLINE MEETING
Wednesday, June 21, 2023
7:00 – 8:30 PM

Dialogue with: Robert D. Kalaskowski

Program Development Chief

RI Department of Labor and Training

Learn about Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

(Invite your Direct Support Professionals to join)

This meeting will take place online using Zoom. When you RSVP, you will receive an email with the directions and a password to join the meeting. You can connect by computer, mobile device, or listen using your telephone. You may be prompted to download an app depending on the device you plan to use.

The Self-Directed Supports Network is a resource for individuals and families using self-directed supports through the Division of Developmental Disabilities. Meetings provide an opportunity to share experiences and learn from others.

AGENDA

7:00 – 7:30 – Dialogue with Robert D. Kalaskowski – WIOA

7:30 – 8:00 – Dialogue with Iraida Williams – Lazo RI

8:00 – 8:30 – Dialogue with Dana Spencer and Britney Dorrance – Skills for RI

This session will be recorded.

RSVP LINK: <https://bit.ly/2YUamqz>

Please RSVP using the link above. Click the link or cut and paste it into your browser. If you need a reasonable accommodation (e.g., ASL Interpreter, large print) or information in a language other than English, please make your needs known when you RSVP.



For questions, call or email Crystal Cerullo, Sherlock Center on Disabilities:

Email: ccerullo@ric.edu

Voice: 401-456-8915 TTY: 711

COMMUNITY PARTNERS



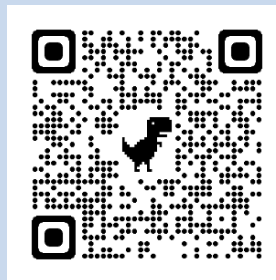
VISIT OUR WEBSITE
<https://www.accesspointri.org/RI-Map.html>
TRAINING LOCATION
1240 Park Ave, Cranston, RI 02910

REAL JOBS

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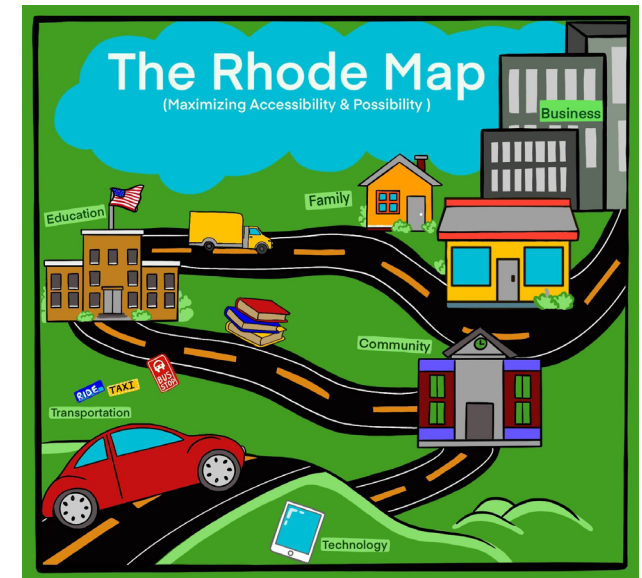


CONTACT
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Workforce Initiative Program
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*AccessPoint*_{RI}

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+ Retail Customer Service Training

| What will happen within the 8 weeks of training?

LEARN ON-THE-JOB SKILLS

- Cash register operation
- Retail store operations
- CVS corporate culture
- Enhanced customer service skills
- Optional paid 2-week externship

DEVELOP ESSENTIAL PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- Communication
- Problem solving & critical thinking
- Collaboration

PRE-EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION

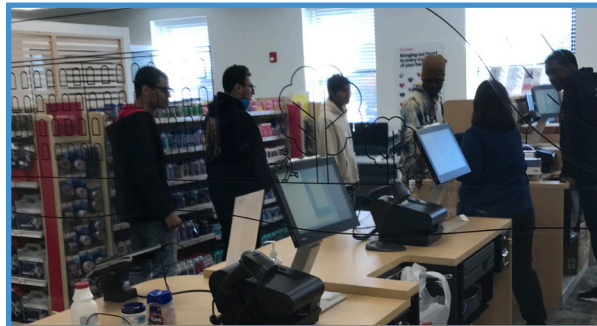
- Customized resume development
- Mastering the art of the job interview
- Networking strategies for employment
- Integrating technology/online job applications

All participants will be encouraged and supported to apply for a position within CVS or any other retail company.

+ Program Training Essentials and Features

| Woonsocket Education Center

CVS HEALTH WORKFORCE INNOVATION TALENT CENTER



IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION AVAILABLE!

Customized job development is offered if necessary.

+ AccessPointRI Additional Services

| Transition Services Students 18 – 21 Years Old

Our transition services meet the requirements of the Rhode Island Department of Education's Employment First policy.

Students beginning at age eighteen, in conjunction with the IEP process, have the opportunity to engage in person-centered planning, create a personalized career development plan and participate in meaningful work opportunities.

SUPPORTIVE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

- Vocational evaluations
- Skill development
- Referrals for benefits planning
- Job exploration and placement
- On-the-job orientation and training
- Transportation
- Job coaching as needed
- Ongoing career development
- ORS Vendor

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

<https://www.accesspointri.org/transition.htm>