



Volume 11  
July 8, 2024

# DD News and Updates Newsletter



**Happy Disability Pride Month!**



July is Disability Pride Month. This is a month to celebrate all the great things the disability community has done.

Through history they have fought for their right to fair treatment. Though the road to freedom was challenging, people with disabilities never gave up. Thanks to their hard work laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) exist.

[Learn how you can celebrate Disability Pride Month by visiting The Arc website.](#)

## Inside This Issue

- DDD Updates
- Disability Rights
- Community News
- Reporting Abuse
- BHDDH Staff Contact List
- Shared Resources

# DDD Updates

## Conflict-Free Case Management



- **What is CFCM?**
  - Conflict-Free Case Management (CFCM) is a requirement under Medicaid.
  - Rhode Island has chosen to develop one CFCM system for all individuals receiving Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS).
- **Agencies Involved:**
  - Five agencies are interested in offering CFCM.
  - Three agencies are already certified by EOHHS, and two are in the approval process.
  - Profiles of these certified agencies will be included in the next newsletter to help you choose an agency for future collaboration.
- **New Social Case Workers:**
  - The Division is hiring 16 new social case workers to serve as additional conflict-free case managers.
  - Interviews for these positions are currently underway.
- **Rollout and Referrals:**
  - CFCM will begin rolling out by the end of August.
  - Initially, people newly entering the DD system will be referred to CFCM.
- **Current DD Participants:**
  - Existing DD participants will be individually contacted before any referrals are made.
  - This process will occur over several months.
- **Your Role:**
  - You don't need to take any action until you're contacted.
  - Look out for more information this Summer on how CFCM will be offered to you.

# DDD Updates

## Update on Assessment Process

As part of the BHDDH assessment process, we do something called the '2-step process.' Let me break it down:



- **Annual Assessment:**

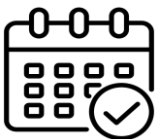
- Every year, we check in with you to see how things are going. We use a questionnaire called the Additional Needs and Support Questionnaire (ANSQ) and have a one-on-one chat (Individual Follow-Up).
- This helps us understand your support needs better. It's like making sure we have all the puzzle pieces to create your Individual Service Plan (ISP).

- **Why It Matters:**

- We look at your answers from the 2-step process along with your previous Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) results and ANSQ.
- All this info helps us figure out how much funding you need. The more details we have, the better we can help you.

- **Results and Letters:**

- After the 2-step process, we'll send you a letter with the results. If anything changes, we'll let you know how it affects your funding.



- **Mark Your Calendar:**

- About 120 days before your ISP due date, a BHDDH team member will reach out to schedule your annual meeting.
- If you get a new SIS done, we'll do the 2-step process 120 days before your next year's ISP.

For more information, see the full assessment process guide attached to this newsletter.

# DDD Updates

## Consent Decree Hearing

### Quick overview:

- The Consent Decree was implemented in 2014 after civil rights violations were discovered affecting the I/DD community
- The Consent Decree requires the Division to complete corrective actions by 2026
- The Division provides quarterly reports on how we are meeting those requirements
- The Division also attends routine hearings where we report all our updates to a judge who reviews the progress
- The latest virtual hearing date was on **June 13, 2024**, with Judge McConnell

### Virtual Hearing Findings:

- Pros:
  - General Assembly and RI State Executive Branch increased funding for the Division
  - Community-facing system of services went into effect July 1, 2023
- Cons:
  - The Division still has some work to do to follow all the Consent Decree requirements
  - Lack of Independent Facilitators (the State of RI's Conflict Free Case Management system)
  - A new Assessment Process to capture all a person's needs is not fully implemented
  - Easier access is needed for I/DD individuals to get "flexible funding/add-on services"
- Outcomes:
  - The Judge will be more involved in monitoring the Divisions progress
  - Providers are allowed to bill for "professional services" going back to July 1, 2023

For a complete detailed article written by Gina Macris on the virtual hearing please visit [RI News today.com](https://www.ri-news.com).

To view the most recent Court Monitor reports, please visit the [bhddh.ri.gov](https://bhddh.ri.gov) website.

# DDD Updates

## DD Community Forum Recording

The Division held a Community Forum on Tuesday June 18, 2024. This forum covered many topics, including employment and self-directed services. Updates on the consent decree and Conflict-Free Case Management (CFCM) were also shared.

A [recording of June 18<sup>th</sup> Community Forum is available online](#).



Visit the [Advocates in Action website to find other recordings of past community forums](#).

## BHDDH Your Life, Your Rights Program



July is Disability Pride Month. What better way to celebrate than learning about your disability rights? On the next page of this newsletter you will find a copy of the Your Life, Your Rights Disability Rights Flyer. This flyer is a cheat sheet to your disability rights, like your right to choose, work, vote, and more.

Laws protect your rights. This means it is illegal for anyone to break them. Everyone has rights, which give everyone the chance to live the life they choose. Be your own hero by learning about your rights and how to protect them.



# Your Life, Your Rights

## Disability Rights

**Did you know it is against the law for people to treat you different because you have a disability? There are many laws that protect your rights. Read the list below to learn about your disability rights.**



Make decisions about your life



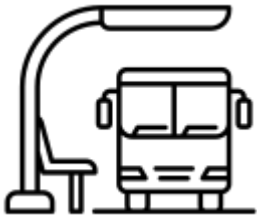
Have a personal life and relationships



Have a job if you want one



Vote in elections



Use public travel like buses and taxis



Join community events and activities



Join government programs



Have access to information



Live in safe, comfortable housing you choose



Communicate with others in ways that work best for you



Stroll down streets and enter buildings with ease



Go to college and training programs to keep learning

# Community News

## Your Voting Rights in Rhode Island



Everyone has the right to vote!

If you're a citizen of the United States of America, and at least 18 years old, you can vote in your community.

Your vote matters, and the Office of the Attorney General and the RI Department of State are here to protect your voting rights.

The Primary Election voting is coming up in **Tuesday, September 10, 2024**.

### Information on **Primary Elections**:

- Imagine a big election where people vote for who they want to be the president of the United States.
- In a primary, each state holds its own mini-election. People go to polling places (like special voting spots) and cast secret ballots for their favorite candidate.
- The goal is to choose a candidate who will represent their political party in the big election in November.



We will be sharing important information leading up to each [important date](#) in this election year.

Most importantly, you have until **Sunday, August 11, 2024**, to register to vote.

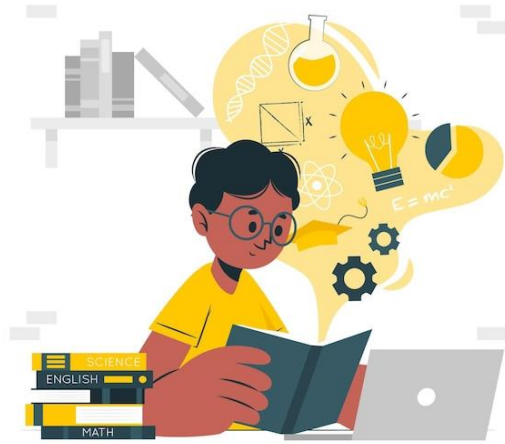
If you are a voter and would like to change which political party (group) you are with, now is the time to do that. Meaning, if you registered with the Democratic party and want to vote as a part of the Republican party in the primary, you have until **Sunday, August 11, 2024**, to make that change.

If you would like to vote by mail? You have until the Tuesday, August 20, 2024, to submit a mail-in ballot for the Primaries.

To learn more about voting and your rights, visit the [Rhode Island Department of State website](#).

# Community News

## Accessibility Tip



One of your greatest superpowers is your knowledge. You can learn anything you want, and no one can take what you learn away from you.

Having to information is important to learning. **Access to information** means you can find, understand, and use information. This can be information from training programs, books, videos, websites, and more.

Your local library is great resource to access information. Not only can you can check out books and join in free events, but there are many online tools available. Some of the resources are tools to learn languages, get electronic books, and join online classes.

Interested in learning more? Check-out the [Ocean State Libraries website](#). Make sure you have your library card. You will need it to sign-up for the classes and other resources.

## Dose of Inspiration

Everyone needs help at some point. What we need help with, and how long we need help, may differ. Needing help is part of being human and not "special." Check-out the [YouTube video "Not Special Needs"](#) for a dose of inspiration.



# Community News

## Upcoming Events

### Event 1: On the Rhode with the RIPIN Self-Directed Support Program

RIPIN is organizing a series of events across Rhode Island. These events aim to **explain self-direction**—a way for people to have more control over their own lives and support services. RIPIN will visit community centers to share important information and answer any questions you have about self-directed support.

**Register:** [Visit the RIPIN website](#)

**Location:** Warwick Public Library, 600 Sandy Ln, Warwick, RI 02889

**Date and Time:** Tuesday, July 16, 2024, from 5:00-6:30 PM

### Event 2: Job Accommodations Make a Difference: Data Points and Implications

Disability Employment TA is celebrating the 34th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with a National Community of Practice (CoP) Webinar.

**Register:** [Register for the Webinar online](#)

**Location:** Zoom

**Date and Time:** Tuesday, July 9, 2024, from 3:00-4:00PM

## Disability Rights Survey needs your help!

Disability Rights Rhode Island (DRRI) wants to hear from you! They're asking for your thoughts on their Focus Areas.

It's a quick survey with just **three questions**, and it'll take only **2-3 minutes** to complete. Your input is incredibly valuable. [You can find the survey online.](#)

Your input is essential as we work to address important issues that empower people with disabilities to live independently and be active members of our community

**Disability Rights**  
RHODE ISLAND

# Report Suspected Abuse

## QA Hotline 401-462-2629

### Mandated Reporting

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

To report abuse and serious incidents call the BHDDH Quality Assurance (QA) Unit hotline at (401) 462-2629. The hotline is open 24-hour hotline, seven days per week, 365 days per year. Staff respond to reported incidents of abuse, neglect, mistreatment, and financial exploitation.

## 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](http://www.bhlink.org).

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 a risk of immediate danger.

If you or someone you know needs support now, call or text 988 or chat [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org)



## For More Information on DD Initiatives

Newsletters: sign up and view old newsletters on our [News and Updates webpage](#)

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

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

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

### Hours of Operation

Monday – Friday

8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

### Contacting DDD Staff

See the full Division Contact List attached to this newsletter.

Send general questions to [BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov).

Please do not email critical issues.

Website: [www.bhddh.ri.gov](http://www.bhddh.ri.gov)

Email: [BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov)

Phone: 401.462.3421

ESPAÑOL: 401.462.3014



## Division of Developmental Disabilities Staff Contacts

<b>Main Phone:</b> (401) 462-3421	<b>Website:</b> <a href="https://bhddh.ri.gov/">https://bhddh.ri.gov/</a>
<b>Fax Phone:</b> (401) 462-2775	<b>Behavioral Health Link (BH Link):</b> (401) 414-5465
<b>Spanish Phone:</b> (401) 462-3014	<b>Report Abuse:</b> (401) 462-2629
<b>TDD:</b> (401) 462-3226	

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## Guide to the BHDDH Assessment Process

### Three-Step Assessment Process

The three-step assessment is done whenever a new SIS-A is conducted. It includes two sets of questions and a follow-up.

- The first set of questions will use the **Supports Intensity Scale-Adult Version** (SIS-A 2<sup>nd</sup> edition).
- The second questionnaire is called the **Additional Needs and Support Questionnaire (ANSQ)**. Participants will meet with a BHDDH SIS social caseworker to complete both the SIS-A 2<sup>nd</sup> edition and ANSQ.
- Three weeks later, the BHDDH SIS social case worker will follow-up with the participant. This is called the **Individual Follow-up**. The BHDDH SIS social caseworker will review the identified areas of support needs and ask the participant if there are any other areas of need that the questionnaires missed.

The BHDDH SIS social caseworker will share the questionnaire answers and notes from the Individual Follow-up with the BHDDH Review Committee. That Committee will determine whether supplemental funding is needed based on the information from the SIS-A, ANSQ, and the Individual Follow-up. BHDDH will send the participant a letter to inform them whether additional funding is granted.

### Two-Step Assessment Process

The Two-Step Assessment Process is done annually during the years a participant does not receive a SIS assessment.

This annual meeting is called the **Two-Step Process**. It will be scheduled 120-days before the service plan expires. The BHDDH social caseworker will ask the participant for updates on their needs using the ANSQ and Individual Follow-Up. The annual assessment gives the participant the opportunity to share changes to their support needs since the last SIS assessment to help create the annual ISP and individual budget.

The BHDDH social caseworker will share what they learn about the participant with the BHDDH review committee. The review committee will determine if supplemental funding is needed based on the information obtained from the most recent SIS-A, ANSQ, and Individual Follow-Up.

The figure below is an overview of the BHDDH assessment process.

