



**COVID-19 Update August 27, 2020**

**Self-Directed Services – Fiscal Intermediary Contacts**

**CORRECTION:** In last week’s bulletin, the email address for the Fogarty Center was incorrect. Please see the list below for the correct email.

If you are interested in self-directing your services, you can talk with your social caseworker or reach out to the Fiscal Intermediary contacts below to ask questions.

Fiscal Intermediaries and Contacts

Fogarty Center	Nancy Lavena	nlavena@fogartycenter.org
Perspectives	Erin Marler	emarler@perspectivescorporation.com
Proability	Katie Sacco	Ksacco@proability.com
Seven Hills	Pat Linsquist	Plindquist@sevenhills.org
Trudeau	Cathy D’andrea	cdandrea@trudeaucenter.org

**How often can self-directed individuals modify their plan or purchase order?**

There are no limitations on when plans or purchase orders can be modified. New plans or changes can start on any day of the month. They do not have to start on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.

A plan must be amended or a new plan written if there is a major life change that needs to be addressed, but this is not the only time a plan can change. The plan belongs to the individual, who has a right to change what they want during their plan year.

This can often be done by amending the existing plan. For example, if someone decides mid-year that they want to work with an employment provider to get a job, they can amend their plan to add that without doing a whole new plan. But if an individual is unhappy with their plan and wants to do something completely different, they can choose to write a whole new plan at any time and end the previous plan early.

The purchase order (P.O.) reflects how an individual wants to use their funding. This could include buying services from a provider agency. If a plan is amended, the P.O. also needs to change to match the plan. Even if the plan doesn’t change, the P.O. can be amended to reflect changes in the choice of how funding will be used at any time during the plan year. Changes may include:

- Adding or changing what they want to purchase, such as adding an assistive technology device the individual didn’t know about at the start of the plan year.
- Shifting funds to make a purchase that was planned, but the final purchase cost more than was originally allocated.
- Adding, changing, or removing a provider agency, or changing the amount of service they want from a provider agency.

Keep in mind that amendments to a plan or purchase order take time, so individuals should be sure that requested changes are complete and correct, and give at least 30 days for changes to be processed. New plans should be submitted 45 days before the desired start date.

## Work Opportunities Unlimited (WOU) Invites You to Learn About Their Services

Work Opportunities Unlimited (WOU) is inviting you to attend a 1-hour presentation, via Zoom, of the BHDDH services we are offering throughout Rhode Island. The focus of the presentation will be on Supported Employment and how that service is being provided both in the community and remotely. WOU representatives will be available to answer questions following the presentation.

Please choose one of the two September dates below.

**September 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020: 10:00am**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88384791793> [us02web.zoom.us]

Meeting ID: 883 8479 1793

**September 16<sup>th</sup> 2020: 5:00pm**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82555093070> [us02web.zoom.us]

Meeting ID: 825 5509 3070



Thank you and we look forward to “seeing” you in September!

## DD Community Forum Recording Available

If you missed the DD Community Forum on August 17<sup>th</sup>, the recording of the Zoom forum can be found on the BHDDH website under Developmental Disabilities, Community Forums, Events & Meetings, at this link [https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmentaldisabilities/community\\_forums\\_event.php](https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmentaldisabilities/community_forums_event.php). Many thanks to RIPIN for hosting the Zoom meeting and making the recordings available to us!



## Census 2020 in Rhode Island

As of August 23rd, only 62.2% of Rhode Islanders filled out the Census questionnaire.

According to the Tax Policy Center, **Medicaid may be the program most affected by potential census undercounts**. Here's why the census matters for Medicaid: if you undercount a state's population, you overstate how much income each resident has. This makes a state look economically better off than it is, and its reimbursements for Medicaid go down.

That can happen because the federal government provides Medicaid funding based on state per capita personal income. That means that the federal government looks at the total income from an area from data like tax filings, and divides it by the population from the census. If they take the total income for 1 million Rhode Islanders, and divide it by only 620,000 people counted in the census (62%), it makes it look like each person has much more money than they really do.

Other program funding based on the census include student loans, Pell grants, SNAP, highway and transit funding, Section 8 vouchers, and Medicare Part B. The Census also determines the number of seats each state has in Congress. Rhode Island could lose a seat in the House of Representatives if the Census shows a decline in population.

Have you participated in the 2020 census? ***It is not too late***. The census is safe, secure and confidential. **Please fill out the 2020 Census so Rhode Island will be properly counted.**

### Mental Health America (MHA) Annual Conference

Registration for MHA's 2020  
Annual Conference is now OPEN

Register for this free event today



Each year, the Mental Health America (MHA) Annual Conference brings together MHA affiliates, community stakeholders, peers, caregivers, providers, government officials, media and more from across the country to discuss important and emerging mental health issues. MHA's 2020 Annual Conference will take place September 3-4, 2020 and is themed COVID-19, Mental Health, and the Need for Equity. The conference will now be completely virtual.

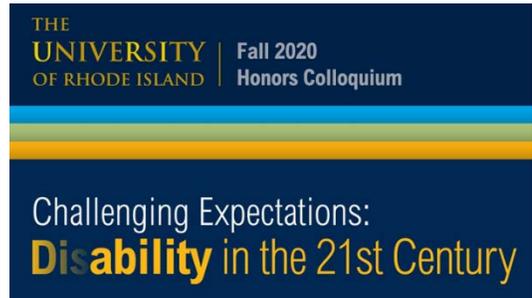
#### **How can I join the event and watch live in Spanish or ASL?**

There will be three different streams in English, Spanish and ASL. All the streams will be hosted on the main conference platform. Registered attendees will receive the link to join the platform the day before the event.

View the agenda here: <https://mhanational.org/2020/annual-conference/agenda>

Register here: <https://mhanational.org/2020/annual-conference/registration>

**URI Fall 2020 Honors Colloquium**  
**Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Sept. 22–Dec. 8, 2020**



**The public is invited to attend this free series of online events.**

The University of Rhode Island's [2020 Honors Colloquium \[emclick.imodules.com\]](https://emclick.imodules.com), coinciding with the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disability Act, will focus on the views and expectations of those affected by disability, steering away from the impossible to the possible.

This year's Honors Colloquium, titled, "**Challenging Expectations: Disability in the 21st Century**" will be held virtually on Tuesday evenings at 7, between Sept. 22 and Dec. 8.

**Sept. 22: Disability and Perception**—Rick Rader, M.D., director of Morton J. Kent Habilitation Center, Chattanooga, Tenn., co-sponsored by the URI College of Health Sciences

**Sept. 29: Disability and Entertainment**—Maysoon Zayid, comedian and activist, co-sponsored by the URI Multicultural Student Services Center

**Oct. 6: Disability and Sexuality**—Paul Choquette, independent living specialist from Nashville, Tenn., and Sarah Everhart-Skeels, M.P.H., public health professor and researcher, Brown University, Tufts University, and Boston University

**Oct. 13: Disability and Sports**—Panel of Paralympic athletes, including Cheri Blauwet, M.D., former International Paralympic Committee President Sir Philip Craven, Anjali Forber-Pratt, Ph.D., Brad Parks, and John Register

**Oct. 20: Disability and Policy Research**—David Mann, Ph.D., senior researcher, Mathematica Progress Together, co-sponsored by the URI John Hazen White Sr. Center for Ethics and Public Service

**Oct. 27: Disability and Health Care**—Lisa Iezzoni, M.D., M.Sc., director, Mongan Institute Health Policy Center, Massachusetts General Hospital, and Harvard Medical School

**Nov. 10: Disability and Learning**—Dan Habib, American documentary film director, producer, and cinematographer. His award-winning films include *Who Cares About Kelsey*, *Intelligent Lives*, and *Including Samuel*.

**Nov. 17: Disability and Technology**—Rory A. Cooper, Ph.D., FISA/PVA Distinguished Professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology and professor of bioengineering, physical medicine, rehabilitation, and orthopedic surgery at the University of Pittsburgh

**Dec. 1: Disability and Fashion**—Stephanie Thomas, founder of Cur8able Media and disability fashion styling expert

**Dec. 8: Disability and Race**—Bradley Johnson, practicing attorney who has served as the lead associate in Americans with Disabilities Act litigation, co-sponsored by Office of Community, Equity and Diversity.

Please join us online for these free events at [uri.edu/hc](https://uri.edu/hc) [emclick.imodules.com].

*If you need a reasonable accommodation, please call 401.874.2303 at least five business days in advance. For TTY assistance, please call the R.I. Relay Service at 711.*

## International Survey on Impact of COVID-19 on Individuals with I/DD

An international survey has been launched on the impact of COVID 19 on individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and those who support them.



The survey is led by the University College Dublin (UCD) Centre for Disability Studies in Ireland and includes a collaboration among 26 researchers working in 19 countries.

Survey participants must be 18 years or older and one of the following:

1. A family member of a person of any age who has an intellectual and developmental disability
2. A paid staff member supporting a person or persons of any age who has intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The survey is estimated to take about 25 minutes to complete.

This survey is entirely anonymous.

Inclusion International, an international group of self-advocates, will review findings and help to develop recommendations. This will ensure that the self-advocate voice will be heard.

Respondents will be provided with information about how to get in touch with organizations where they can get help. There are links to a number of organizations including Protection and Advocacy Organizations and a directory of ARCs on the U.S. version.

There is a Spanish language version of the survey. Respondents will initially be directed to the link "Click here to take the survey in English if you live in the USA", but once on the US main page there is the ability to select Spanish or other languages before starting the survey.

By the end of December, the first article on the findings will be submitted. Following that the data will be on an open platform available to researchers here and abroad.

This survey is expected to yield important information that will be helpful to those who care about people with I/DD in this country and internationally.

These have been deeply challenging times and the results of this survey will help to better prepare us for a reoccurrence of a similar pandemic.

Here is the link to the main page of the survey: <https://tinyurl.com/COVID19IDD> [tinyurl.com]  
Scroll down to the bottom of the list of countries.

Or use this link to go directly to the USA page:

[https://ucdpsychology.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_80RDSUjDPF6hgnH?Q\\_Language=EN-USA](https://ucdpsychology.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_80RDSUjDPF6hgnH?Q_Language=EN-USA)

## **Peer-to-Peer and Family-to-Family Panel Members Needed**

We are looking for a few great people to join a peer-to-peer panel or a family-to-family panel to share their stories. We are looking for individuals and family members who were initially apprehensive about working but who are now enjoying the benefits of employment.



BHDDH is collaborating with RIPIN to develop a series of virtual panels where you can share your experience of how you got past the myths, learned the facts, took the leap to employment, and what working means to you. We know others can learn and benefit from hearing from you!

If interested in joining either panel, please contact: **Tracey** at [Tracey.Cunningham@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:Tracey.Cunningham@bhddh.ri.gov) or (401) 462-3857 or **Jay** at [Gerard.MacKay@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:Gerard.MacKay@bhddh.ri.gov) or (401) 462-5279.

## **Volunteers Needed for Workgroups to Simplify the DD System**

Five workgroups are being developed to address issues raised by the Court regarding complexity within the administrative requirements and procedures within the DD system. The recommendations stem from ongoing review of services under the Consent Decree. We are looking for individuals receiving services and family members to participate in their choice of one of five workgroups to add their expertise and input into the system reform. Meetings will start in September.

If you are interested, please contact Cindy Fusco at [Cynthia.Fusco@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Fusco@bhddh.ri.gov).

1. Eligibility Process Workgroup: This workgroup will look at the process for determining the support needs of each individual and the need to consolidate the application for all pertinent RI services into one process.
2. Appeals Process Workgroup: This workgroup will look at the appeals process for individuals as it relates to eligibility, level of need, or funding level, including the L9/S109 process for requesting additional funding.
3. Individual Budgets and Authority Workgroup: This workgroup will look at the process and timeline for developing annual individual budgets responsive to individual needs; allowable costs; and flexibility.
4. Fiscal Workgroup: This workgroup will look at authorizations, rates, and billing units.
5. Contracts Workgroup: This workgroup will look at the timeline and process by which individuals contract with providers, billing procedures, and how to increase individual control over their services and how their budget is spent.

## If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, 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. Call 911 if there is risk of immediate danger. Visit the BH Link website at [www.bhlink.org](http://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

## Stay Informed with Information on COVID-19

### Rhode Island Department of Health COVID-19 Resources

Hotline (401) 222-8022 or 211 after hours;

Email [RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov](mailto:RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov)

Website <https://health.ri.gov/covid/>

### Center for Disease Control COVID-19 Information

Website [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)

Videos <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/videos.html>

*Includes a link to ASL videos*

### BHDDH Information on COVID-19's Impact on DD Services and the DD Community

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

### RI Parent Information Network (RIPIN)

Website <https://ripin.org/covid-19-resources/>

Call Center (401) 270-0101 or email [callcenter@ripin.org](mailto:callcenter@ripin.org)

### Advocates in Action – for videos and easy to read materials

Website <https://www.advocatesinaction.org/>

*Website offers BrowseAloud, which will read the website to you*

## Sign Up for Our Email List

If you aren't receiving email updates and newsletters from the Division, you can sign up on our website. From the main BHDDH page at [bhddh.ri.gov](http://bhddh.ri.gov), select **What's New**, then go to bottom and click on **DD Community Newsletter**. The link to sign up for the BHDDH Newsletter is directly below the title, as shown in the picture at right.

DD Community Newsletter

[SIGN UP FOR THE BHDDH NEWSLETTER](#)

## Contacting the Division

The department is working on a reduced workforce and therefore calls should not be placed directly to your social caseworker. DDD has put 24-hour phone coverage in place with a central business hour phone number and an on-call number for nights and weekends.

If you have a vital need, please call the numbers below. If you have any general questions or concerns, please email them if you can, in order to try to leave the phone lines free for those who need to call. We will do our best to address your questions directly or through future newsletters.

AM **M T W Th F** PM  
**401-462-3421**

8:30 AM → → → → → ← ← ← ← ← 4:00 PM

**WEEKDAYS DURING BUSINESS HOURS FOR:**

- **VITAL, NON-MEDICAL SUPPORT NEEDS**
- **QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR DD SERVICES**

During business hours  
 (Monday-Friday 8:30-4:00),  
 for questions or support  
**(401) 462-3421**  
 Para español, llame  
**(401) 462-3014**

PM **M T W Th F** PM  
**401-265-7461**

4:00 PM → → → → → ← ← ← ← ← 10:00 PM

**AFTER HOURS ON WEEKDAYS FOR:**

- **VITAL, NON-MEDICAL SUPPORT NEEDS**

For emerging or imminent care  
 related questions,  
 Mon - Fri 4pm-10pm and  
 weekends 8:30am-10pm  
**(401) 265-7461**

AM **SAT SUN** PM  
**401-265-7461**

8:30 AM → → → → → ← ← ← ← ← 10:00 PM

**ON WEEKENDS FOR:**

- **VITAL, NON-MEDICAL SUPPORT NEEDS**

Send general questions to the  
 AskDD email address. Please  
 do not email critical issues.  
[BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov)

**E-MAIL THE DIVISION**

**BHDDH.AskDD**  
**@BHDDH.RI.GOV**

HELP US KEEP THE PHONE LINES OPEN FOR  
 THOSE WHO ARE CALLING WITH A VITAL NEED!

**WHEN POSSIBLE, PLEASE SEND AN E-MAIL FOR:**

- **NON-CRITICAL CONCERNS** about Your Services and Supports
- **GENERAL QUESTIONS** about Your Services or the RI DD System

**911**

**FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**  
**CALL 911**  
**RIGHT AWAY. DON'T WAIT!**

For medical or  
 healthcare related  
 emergencies, call  
 your Primary Care  
 Physician or 911

**CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR**

**CALL FOR:**

- **ROUTINE Healthcare Questions**
- **NON-EMERGENCY Medical Care**

**FOLLOW YOUR DOCTOR'S ADVICE**  
**DON'T go to their office**  
**unless they tell you to!**

# LUNCH AND LEARN SESSION: ASK THE WORK INCENTIVE BENEFITS COUNSELOR

**August 26, 2020**

**12:00-1:00 PM**

*(Subtitles in English)*

***ASL Interpreter provided.***

Advance registration required.



**REGISTER ONLINE at <https://bit.ly/2KkUCVQ>**

The Sherlock Center provides Work Incentive Information and Benefits Counseling services to SSI and SSDI beneficiaries and those that support them (family, guardian, rep payee, professionals). This session will be of value to anyone looking for a basic introduction to disability-related work incentives and/or has related questions. Along with providing an overview of Basic SSI/SSDI and related work incentives, Lunch & Learn sessions provide an opportunity for you to ask questions about the following topics:

- Covid-19 benefits impact on SSI, SSDI and other benefits
- Ticket to Work
- SSI and SSDI Work Incentives
- Resources about Work Incentive Information
- Access to Benefits Counseling
- Working and Impact on Health Insurance Medicaid/Medicare
- Other questions related to benefits and working

Upon registration please share your questions. This session will not address how to apply for SSI/SSDI benefits.

Session will be offered on Zoom. Subtitles in English and an ASL Interpreter will be provided.

**REGISTRATION IS LIMITED!** Registration will be confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the session. You can access the session by computer, mobile device or listen using a cell or landline phone.

**Presenters:**

- Jeanne Fay, Certified Work Incentive Counselor
- Vicki Ferrara, Coordinator, Access to Integrated Employment

**Accommodation requests or registration questions: ASL provided.** Contact Elaine Sollecito at [esollecito@ric.edu](mailto:esollecito@ric.edu)  
**Session questions:** Contact Vicki Ferrara at [vferrara@ric.edu](mailto:vferrara@ric.edu)

