**State of California**

**Health and Human Services Agency**

**Department of Rehabilitation**

**DHHAC meeting notes**

**March 16, 2023**

**DOR Central Office, 721 Capitol Mall, Room 301, Sacramento, CA 95814, with virtual participation via Zoom.**

**In-attendance:**

DHHAC Members (virtual), Callie Frye (DHHAC Chair), Toni Chapman, Frank Lester, Hugh Lafler, Anthony Davis

DOR staff (in-person): Michael Thomas, Assistant Deputy Director, Specialized Services Division, Jennifer Wilbon, Advisory Committee Liaison

DOR ASL interpreters (virtual): Judy Sophn, Brad Byrd

DOR staff (virtual): Craig Rubenstein, Program Manager DHHS, Kimberly Nguyen, Program Coordinator DHHS, Tiffany Barlow, Program Coordinator DHHS, Edward Tagge, David Lewis, Angelica Martinez

**Item 1: Welcome and Introductions**

Callie Frye (DHHAC Chair) reviewed DHHAC rules. Callie welcomed attendees, conducted roll call, and established a quorum.

**Item 2: Public Comment**

Callie Frye asked public members if there were any issues or concerns to address that were not on the agenda.

Public comment and questions

None.

**Item 3: Update Regarding the December 8, 2022, Meeting Minutes**

Jennifer Wilbon: Questions/comments regarding the December 8, 2022 meeting minutes. Minutes from the last meeting approved. There were no questions or concerns.

Committee members comment and questions

None.

Public comment and questions

None.

## **Item 4: DOR Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) Section Report**

Michael Thomas: Michael invited others to reach out to the department if assistance is needed during this time of extreme weather in California. Thanked committee members and Craig and his team for their hard work. Michael mentioned the department’s goal of working towards competitive integrated employment (CIE). Integrated employment is working with individuals with or without disabilities, not segregated employment working only with individuals with disabilities.

Tiffany Barlow: Tiffany shared the RCD report: Open Cases: (1) D/HH + Other Disabilities: **5,021.** (2)D/HH alone: **2,771**. Successful Case Closures: (3) D/HH + Other Disabilities: **335.** (4) D/HH alone: **197**. Unsuccessful Case Closures: (5) D/HH + Other Disabilities: **774**. (6) D/HH alone: **370**. Top Reasons for Unsuccessful Closures:

1. Unable to locate or contact
   1. D/HH + Other Disabilities: **311**
   2. D/HH alone: **152**
2. Refused services or no further services
   1. D/HH + Other Disabilities: **242**
   2. D/HH alone: **115**
3. Failure to cooperate
   1. D/HH + Other Disabilities: **122**
   2. D/HH alone: **55**

Craig Rubenstein: Craig mentioned there are two different categories with the reports. One category is RCD’s only and the other category is the hearing counselors who may have a few hard of hearing or deaf consumers. Craig provided clarification regarding the reports and options consumers have. There will be a training on April 6, 2023, at the GLAD office in Southern California and April 25, 2023, at the Berkley District office. SB105 will be in the fall, in Southern California, and will hopefully be announced by the end of the month. Craig and his team are working on increasing the interpreter rates. Some vendors are gone but hopefully some will return. A new program/system is in place called VRIOD (Video Remote Interpreting on Demand). Adding one new vendor to support the deaf and hard of hearing consumers in Southern California. A new RCD was hired in Fairfield, and one will be hired in the Santa Barbara district.

## **Item 5: DHHAC Meeting Purpose**

Michael Thomas: Michael reviewed and discussed the purpose of the DHHAC quarterly meetings and how the agenda is set up. The advisory committee is to bring issues and solutions, strategies, and things that are happening in the community to the department. This will help the department find resources to help support individuals in the deaf and hard of hearing community to get services they need to obtain competitive integrated employment.

## **Item 6: Proposed DHHAC Bylaws**

Brief discussion of Bylaws.

Committee members comment and questions

Hugh Lafler: Hugh suggested to discuss this topic at the next DHHAC meeting if there are no suggestions, feedback, or questions at this time. Hugh asked that the bylaws be emailed to members after today’s meeting.

Frank Lester: Asked if the bylaws can be shared with everyone so they will have time to discuss and review before the next meeting.

Callie Frye: Requested the bylaws be emailed.

Michael Thomas: Michael informed members that the bylaws can be emailed to the members and discussed at the next meeting but members cannot discuss it between each other (it can only be done at a public meeting). Michael stated that the committee did not have to wait for the next DHHAC meeting to discuss the By-laws. He said that a public meeting could be set up prior to the next DHHAC meeting to discuss the By-laws only.

Public comment and questions

None.

## **Item 7: Employment Development Department (EDD)**

David Evans, Southern California, Program Manager for GLAD. David shared information about the program. The program partners with EDD and provides services for deaf and hard of hearing individuals using EDD services. David also works with local schools, some colleges, DOR, and other agencies. A referral is needed to be placed into the program.

Craig Rubenstein: Participated in the discussion and talked about referrals. Michael Thomas: Expressed the department would like to resume the working relationship with GLAD. Michael discussed ADA laws and mentioned accommodations should be provided for as long as an individual is employed.

Committee members comment and questions

Toni Chapman: Shared an experience with a client. Discussed OTJT (on-the job training).

Hugh Lafler: Commented that the EDD/GLAD webpage is great.

Frank Lester: Frank requested clarification as when to send a referral to EDD.

Public comment and questions

Angelica Martinez: Angelica had questions and shared concerns regarding employers who hire deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Discussed the navigating that takes place with employers. Discussed on the job training, and sign language interpreters, and mentioned there are not many interpreters.

## **Item 8: Identification of Future Agenda Items**

Callie requested suggestions for possible agenda items and logistics for future meetings.

Michael Thomas: Cal State University Northridge is hosting a convention about how to use AT. The department gets a notice when the convention is going to take place. In the future, the department can send that information to the committee so they will know the date of the conferences.

Craig Rubenstein: Craig asked committee and public members if they had any suggestions/questions about new services, what they would like to hear or learn about, and about presentations they think would be beneficial to learn about to be presented at a future meeting.

Committee members comment and questions

Callie Frye: Would like someone to attend a meeting and explain the new AT devices and provide information about new technology.

Frank Lester: Frank would like to discuss Pathways to Diploma and how that will support students. Frank will look for contact information. There is a conference currently happening about how to use AT. Frank feels this information would be beneficial.

Anthony Davis: Would like to learn more about Pathways to Diploma.

Would like an attorney from Fresno to speak at a future meeting to discuss laws in education.

Public comment and questions

Angelica Martinez: Would like to receive information regarding students that are on the pathway to receive a high school diploma. Angelica mentioned how long it takes for a deaf consumer to earn a degree and would like to hear/learn more about this topic.

## \*Adjourn (3:32 p.m.)