

**Disability Rights California  
OCRA Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, December 12, 2019, 1:00 p.m.  
Embassy Suites, Sacramento, CA**

**PRESENT:** Deaka McClain, Elizabeth Gomez (via phone), Jim Janz, Rene Rodriguez, Sandra Smith (via phone), Tammi Bradley, Tony Sauer (via phone)

**ABSENT:** None

**STAFF:** Alice Ximenez, Carlos Garcia, Catherine Blakemore, Chris Georgiou, Jesse Magano, Karen Mercado, Katie Hornberger, Michelle Mudgett

**GUESTS:** None

**FACILITATORS/INTERPRETERS:** None

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Elizabeth Gomez established a quorum and brought the meeting to order at 1:10p.m. The attendees introduced themselves.

Members provided an update about work they are doing in the community.

### **2. Approval of April 16, 2019 Minutes**

The Committee reviewed the minutes.

It was M/S/C (Rodriguez/Sandra) to approve the April 16, 2019 meeting minutes. Jim Janz and Tony Sauer abstained.

### **3. Introduction of New Member Diana Powell**

Katie Hornberger thanked the members for their participation on the nominating committee to recruit Diana Powell. Ms. Powell was unable to attend the meeting due to a personal commitment. Ms. Hornberger shared that Ms. Powell would be participating in the next committee meeting.

#### **4. OCRA Annual Report**

Ms. Hornberger shared information about the client work that OCRA has done this past year and encouraged members to read the full report. OCRA does small to large cases and many times, it is the small cases that are most impactful. In a recent case, a client needed a special drug for a seizure disorder. The client was told that the generic drug was the same, although the clients' experience told them it was not. The client needed the brand name drug so they contacted OCRA and OCRA filed an appeal. The appeal was won and the client now receives the brand named drug.

Ms. Hornberger talked about a case where the client moved and the financial management company automatically sent the previous landlord two months of rent in error. The former landlord cashed both checks even though the client had asked for the checks back. OCRA staff drafted a demand letter and the client received the money back.

Ms. Hornberger shared information about a regional center eligibility case. As an adult, the client applied for regional center services and was denied. The client's family moved often because a family member was in the military so it was hard to obtain the needed records to prove the disability occurred before the age of 18. OCRA staff gathered records and attended the psycho-social assessment interview to help the client understand the questions so that they could respond accurately. With this help, the client responded to the questions and the regional center found her eligible. She was also homeless and OCRA helped her with her IPP and was able to move to a group home and start receiving social security.

Ms. Hornberger talked about special education cases and how OCRA is working on the issue of informal expulsion and suspension, which is illegal but still happens often. A parent is called whenever a child has a behavior issue at school and is just sent home. OCRA handled a case where the student was expelled until he could behave better. The student was home for five months. OCRA staff filed an expedited due process hearing and successfully got him immediately back to school with supports and compensatory services. Ms. Hornberger shared that many times the OCRA staff have had to help resolve issues like this.

#### **OCRA Outreach Report**

Ms. Hornberger talked about recent OCRA outreach events in the Fresno area that focused on the Asian/Hmong community. OCRA focused on the Hmong community because this community is not likely to reach out to OCRA. OCRA presented a training about early start and regional center eligibility for children of ages 0-3, and explained that eligibility and services are different after the age of 3 years. The presentation focused on the fact that many children are not made eligible after the age of 3 even though some children should continue to receive services. Ms. Hornberger explained that OCRA is conducting trainings in different ways such as a recent Spanish speaking outreach to the Tri-Counties Regional Center Rainbow Family Resource Center. OCRA set up an Intake Clinic at their location so it would be comfortable for the attendees. At the clinic, OCRA conducted 20 intakes and then followed up where more advocacy was needed.

Ms. Blakemore shared that DRC does thousands of trainings every year with various community organizations and that in previous meetings, the board identified some board members who wanted to help DRC reach specific groups and the events where board members participated, went well. Members shared that they believe that DRC should do more and especially continue to include board members. A member suggested that in preparation for the next board meeting that board members go into the community and get data resources to bring to the next board meeting to give to staff.

Ms. Blakemore asked board members to bring contact names for trainings, to the next board meeting.

## **6. Legislative Update**

Eric Harris, DRC Lobbyist, shared information regarding a DRC sponsored bill, AB 823, about access to mobile crisis. The author of this bill is Assemblymember Dr. Arambula. Currently, regional centers are not required to have mobile crisis vendors. Ms. Hornberger and Mr. Harris having been meeting with ARCA and regional center staff to discuss. This bill is in Legislative Counsel now and DRC continues to try to get support.

Ms. Blakemore explained what the bill is about. When people have behavioral challenges, they may need someone to help them de-escalate.

Currently if someone has aggressive behaviors, law enforcement could be called. This bill would allow people to call a mobile team who could help, instead. Some law enforcement agencies have a Psychiatric Emergency Team (PET) team which is similar but this bill would ensure regional centers have on-call vendor to provide crisis services.

Ms. Blakemore explained that DRC will create a fact sheet and it will be shared with the board members for further discussion. The bill would also require the Memorandum of Understanding between the County Department of Mental Health and the regional center, to be posted on the regional center website.

Mr. Harris shared information regarding AB 1643, Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia is the author of this amended bill. This bill would require regional centers to give adequate written notice when changing or terminating services or eligibility. Currently notices must be sent by certified mail, and the bill would allow that they could be sent by email to make it more convenient for some consumers. The current law only requires Notices of Action (NOA) to be sent when there is not mutual consent. Current law requires that NOAs contain appeal information and the phone number to a local clients' rights advocate. In some regional centers, very few NOAs are being sent out regularly. At some, service coordinators are not allowed to send out NOAs and they must go through the hearing department. Mr. Harris noted that DRC does follow and respond to federal bills.

Ms. Hornberger noted that the next OCRA meeting is by phone, between March and June; a date and time will need to be scheduled after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year.

It was M/S/C (Sandra Smith/Rene Rodriguez) to adjourn the meeting.

Ms. Gomez adjourned the meeting at 3:00p.m.

ATTEST:

Elizabeth Gomez, Chair