

**Disability Rights of California
OCRA Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 14, 2017, 1:00 p.m.
Crowne Plaza, Redondo Beach, CA**

PRESENT: Elizabeth Gomez, Esther Kelsey, Judy Mark, David Oster, Howard McBroom

STAFF: Catherine Blakemore, Katie Hornberger, Jesse Magano, Koleen Biegacki, Perla Huizar, Carlos Mora, Marisol Cruz

INTERPRETERS/FACILITATORS: Barbara McCants

1. Welcome and Introductions

Elizabeth Gomez called the meeting to order at 1:14p.m., and thanked David Oster, former chair of the committee for his continued support. Members and staff introduced themselves.

2. Approval of May 5, 2017 Minutes

The Advisory Committee reviewed the minutes. It was M/S/C (Oster/McBroom) to approve the May 5, 2017 meeting minutes.

3. Agenda Review

The Committee reviewed the agenda.

4. OCRA Report

Katie Hornberger reported that the annual report for July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, was completed. Ms. Hornberger reviewed the report. She reported that OCRA resolved 10,538 issues for 6,644 consumers, an increase from the previous year. OCRA participated in 556 trainings. Since it was an election year, many of those were voting rights trainings. We are expecting this number to go down this year because that number was so high.

Ms. Hornberger introduced Marisol Cruz, new Office Manager for Southern California. Perla Huizar, the new Clients' Rights Advocate serving clients of South Central Los Angeles Regional Center and the transfer of Carlos Mora, Assistant Clients' Rights Advocate, from North Los Angeles County Regional Center to South Central Los Angeles Regional Center. Mr. Oster asked the new staff how long they had been with OCRA. Marisol Cruz reported 16 years, Carlos Mora 4 years, and Perla Huizar 6 months. Ms. Hornberger provided some of Ms. Huizar's background in public interest

law, and explained that those are attorneys who work at non-profit organizations designed to help people from underserved communities.

Ms. Hornberger reported that the largest age group served continued to be 4 to 17, followed by the age group of 23-40. For those cases where gender is recorded, OCRA has traditionally served more males than females and continues to do so.

Ms. Hornberger reported that for ethnicity of consumers served for the year, 39.5 percent of people OCRA served identified as Hispanic/Latino. This is a higher percentage than last year, and higher than the 37.4 percent of regional center consumers identified by the Department of Developmental Services as Hispanic/Latino in the regional center system.

She also explained that African American consumers served by OCRA was 8.6 percent while DDS reports regional center consumers at 9.1 percent. Asian consumers served was 6 percent and DDS reports 6.5 percent. African American and Asian consumers served vary by .5 percent. Ms. Hornberger reported that OCRA just ended their 2 year outreach plan and several offices identified the African American and Asian communities in their new plans.

Ms. Hornberger said that the percentage of consumers residing in the parental or other family home remains by far the largest number of service requests for consumers served by OCRA.

Ms. Hornberger reported that this past year the review of comprehensive assessments for people living in restrictive settings doubled from prior years. OCRA staff reviewed 437 comprehensive assessments for consumers in residing in developmental centers or IMDs.

Howard McBroom asked why there was increase. Ms. Hornberger reported that regional centers are now providing the assessments as required by law which they weren't doing consistently in the past.

Ms. Hornberger reported on consumer satisfaction. OCRA uses written survey. Ms. Hornberger reported that 1,715 surveys were mailed out and 211 people returned surveys. This represents a 12 percent return rate. This is significantly lower than the last reporting period. David Oster suggested using phone surveys. Ms. Hornberger stated that they are monitoring the return rate and if it continues to stay low they may have to

consider alternatives and will keep his suggestion in mind. Ms. Hornberger reported that of those responding to the surveys, 95 percent of the respondents felt they were treated well by the staff. 89 percent of the respondents believed their call was returned within two days. Ms. Hornberger expressed concern in this area and stated that we will continue to work with staff on making sure the calls are being returned timely. Staff have created electronic call logs and more bilingual Assistant CRAs have been hired to make sure we continue to meet with the call back timeline. 94 percent of the respondents reported that they understood the information they received. 95 percent of respondents felt their Clients' Rights Advocate listened to them, which is the same as last year. 88 percent of respondents felt they were helped with their question or problem. 94 percent said they would ask their Clients' Rights Advocate for help again.

OCRA is required to provide at least two self-advocacy trainings for consumers under its contract. Ms. Hornberger expressed that this is a very low number and instead requires each of its 21 offices to provide at least one self-advocacy training for consumers per year. Staff exceeded this and provided 68 self-advocacy presentations. Ms. Hornberger explained that we currently have 6 different trainings staff can give and are working on an additional one. Ms. Hornberger explained the Clients' Rights Bingo which many on the committee had played before.

Ms. Hornberger reviewed some of the success stories in the report and asked if there were any questions. Judy Mark was impressed with the individual cases, but would like to know more about trends. Every CRA is on an impact team and OCRA has liaisons who gather information from all of OCRA to bring back information and report back as well. Ms. Hornberger also reported that OCRA also tracks changes with SR problems and sub-problems. Ms. Blakemore suggested that a report could be created for the next meeting on problem area trends. This report could be in addition to the regular report given by Ms. Hornberger.

Ms. Mark also asked why some families' report that their Clients' Rights Advocate will not represent at IEP meetings yet there are stories of representation at IEP meetings. Ms. Hornberger explained the factors OCRA considers when representing, such as the merits of the case (chances of winning), the ability for self-advocacy, other resources available, and of course the office resources.

Ms. Hornberger introduced Perla Huizar, CRA for South Central Los Angeles Regional Center consumers. Ms. Huizar shared some of their success stories and how they assisted in the cases. In one of the cases, Ms. Huizar explained that they assisted a family who was trying to get IHSS Protective Supervision for 2 years and had not been successful in communicating with the social worker. Ms. Huizar contacted the IHSS manager via e-mail and participated in the IHSS in-home visit. Protective Supervision was then awarded for the client. In another case, a mother attended an informal meeting and was told that the ABA services provided to her child would end in June. When mother received the Notification of Resolution document the end date was not what she had been told but she signed it anyway not understanding the consequences. OCRA drafted a letter revoking mother's signature and requesting a new Notification of Resolution with the correct end date. Regional center issued a corrected document.

Carlos Mora, Assistant CRA, discussed their success with outreach. Mr. Mora shared that they recently provided training to the regional center Navigator Program. This new program hires parents to work with parents in navigating the services their children need from a variety of agencies. They also attended a Back to School Resource Fair and staffed a booth to introduce OCRA to the community. There was a very successful turn-out and they were able to meet a large number of families. Mr. Mora also reported that they recently provided a training to about 150 regional center staff on "What is OCRA." Since that training service coordinators have referred numerous families to OCRA.

Ideas were shared by the committee on how to reach the community as well. Ms. Mark suggested that Ms. Huizar and Mr. Mora connect with Elizabeth Gomez on how to reach out to the community more. Ms. Mark also expressed that staff can attend the Regional Center Disparity or Board meetings.

5. New Advisory Committee Member Sub-Committee

Ms. Hornberger recommended choosing someone from Northern California to balance the committee geographically. Ms. Hornberger explained that only one application from Northern California was received. She asked for the members to please continue to spread the word of the opening. Ms. Hornberger reminded everyone that the position should be an individual

with a disability, as we already have two parents on the committee. She also explained that the application could be found on-line or available in hard copy. The members who volunteered in May will still be on the sub-committee. The application will be resent to Ms. Mark.

Ms. Gomez adjourned the meeting at 2:54 p.m.

ATTEST:

Elizabeth Gomez, Chair