



**GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS**
OFFICE OF GOV. JEFF LANDRY

**Full Council Meeting
Wednesday, September 17, 2025
9:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Wednesday, September 17, 2025, GACDA's Full Council meeting was called to order at 9:04 AM. The meeting took place in the press room on the fourth floor of the state capitol and via the virtual platform Zoom.

Role was called by GACDA Chairperson - Julia Tanner. Quorum was reached.

GACDA Member	Present	Proxy	Proxy Name	Absent
Ashley Allen	X			
Rep. Rhonda Butler				X
Rikki David	X			
Jamar Ennis	X			
Sen Franklin Foil				X
Rocky Fuselier	X			
Barry Mele	X			
Julia Tanner	X			
Attendees	Agency/Affiliate			
Mitchell Wood	ASL Interpreter			
Gayle Coronado	ASL Interpreter			
Brenton Andrus	LaDDC- Deputy Director			
Ashlee Babin				
Brenda Bares	FHF Acadiana			
Allie Boquet	LSU			
L. Burns				
Jancie Corie	GOSEPH			
Tamara Crane				
Nicole Crowden				
Amanda Daigre	Louisiana Dept of Health			
Eryn Dopson	LDH- OAAS Statewide Program Manager			
Erin Downing	LDH – OCDD Senior Advisor			
Kathy Dwyer	LA Emergency Resources -Disabilities			
Melinda Elliott	Disability Advocate			
Diana Esordi	One Krewe			
Ben Grauer				
Robbie Gray	Rehabilitation Program Coordinator with LRS			
Gail Hollins				
Dana Hubbard	Office of Public Health and Early Hearing Detection & Intervention			
Holly Johnson				
Lindsey Jones	People First of Louisiana			
Kelli Kent	LDH - OCDD			

Frances Landry	
Jazmyne Lemar	Louisiana Commission of the Deaf
Shannon Loannou	
Ashley McReynolds	Arc of Louisiana - Acadiana
Jim Mitchell	Louisiana Office of Technology Service
Sarah Mulhearn	
Jackie Pierce	Bayou Land Families Helping Families
Susan Riehn	FHF – Southwest Louisiana
Tory Rocca	Disability Rights of LA
Sandra Trammell	BSN ABHLA
ThinkFirst Ark-La-Tex	
Damon Vincent	Train Unique
Rebecca White	
Staff	Title
Jamar Ennis	GODA Executive Director
Liam Doyle	GODA Assistant Director
Tillie Carrier	GODA Senior Coordinator

2. Approval of September 17, 2025 GACDA Meeting Agenda

Ashley Allen made a motion to approve the September 17, 2025 [meeting agenda](#). Jamar Ennis seconded the motion. The motion to approve the September 17, 2025, meeting agenda passed without any objections, abstentions, or discussion.

3. Approval of June 25, 2025 GACDA Meeting Minutes

Ashley Allen made a motion to approve the June 25, 2025 [meeting minutes](#). Rikki David seconded the motion. The motion to approve the June 25, 2025 meeting minutes passed without any objections, abstentions, or discussion.

4. Proposed GACDA Subcommittee Changes - Discussion/Questions

Madam Chairperson Julia Tanner opened discussions on changes to GACDA subcommittees and appointing people to sit on the committees. Jamar Ennis gave a brief description into each committee and what are the responsibilities for each committee. Several people attending the meeting made nominations for persons who may want to volunteer their time and knowledge to sit on the various committees. A formal invite will be sent to individuals nominated. Appointments will be announced at the next council meeting.

5. Program Presentation – Ashley McReynolds – ACT 479 Recap & Update

Ashley McReynolds, Arc of Louisiana – Acadiana, gave a [presentation](#) from the ACT 479 - 2025 updates and what it means for the disability's community.

- Overview of ACT 479 presentation:
 - Huge overhaul of both the Restraint/Seclusion Law and Sped cameras
 - New definition of physical restraint
 - Requires only trained personnel in CIT to use physical restraint
 - Added a nurse check in
 - New parent notification requirements
 - Requires continuous monitoring instead of every 15 minutes
 - Requires teacher preparation programs to include completion of a crisis intervention training
 - Mandates camera installation by Feb 1, 2026 in ALL sped classrooms
 - Requires IEP teams to educate parents about Medical Opt-Out of R&S
- McReynolds opened the floor for questions and discussions. There were none.

6. Updates from the Governor's Advisory Council

Julia Tanner, Chairperson of GACDA, gave a council report.

- Tanner discussed the upcoming events of the GACDA committee – GOLD Awards and Inclusive Art Contest. Information for both were placed in the chat room. She encouraged all to participate.
- The floor was opened for questions and comments. There were no questions or comments.

7. Updates from the Office of Public Health - Bureau of Family Health

Dana Hubbard gave a presentation on the agency's 6 different programs. The [power point presentation](#) included:

- Children with Special Health Care Needs Services: Clinical Services continues to provide direct specialist care clinics for children and youth with special health care needs in all Louisiana Department of Health regions (except 1 and 7) to meet specialty care needs in provider shortage areas. More information may be found [here](#).
- Transportation assistance provides needed medical appointment transportation assistance for eligible families. They must request transportation assistance through their Managed Care Organization before requesting assistance through Children's Special Health Care Clinical Services. Families may contact the Family Resource Center (BFH-FamilyResourceCenter@la.gov) or their local Families Helping Families Center for more information.
- Family Resource Centers can connect you to Physical and Mental Health, Care Coordination, Early Childhood Education, and Insurance and Finances, Monday – Friday from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.
- Title V Pediatric Medical Home
 - It is a family-centered and team-based approach to providing comprehensive, coordinated primary care and is considered the gold standard for organizing and delivering pediatric health care services.
 - Receiving care in a medical home is recommended for all children but is essential to ensuring optimal outcomes for children and youth with special healthcare needs.
 - Implementation training and support for Louisiana providers (at no charge) to expand clinic capacity to deliver high quality, efficient pediatric medical home care is provided.
 - Pediatric Medical Home Initiative - Resources, training and implementation support focuses on three key elements:
 - Universal Developmental Screening
 - Holistic Care Coordination
 - Youth Health Transition: Adolescent Well-Care
 - More information: Julie.emory@la.gov
- Provider Medical Home Took Kits:
 - [Developmental Screening Toolkit](#)
 - [Care Coordination Toolkit](#)
 - [Youth Health Transition Toolkit](#) (Just Released!)
- Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program
 - The support care ensures that all babies receive hearing screenings, that all children who are deaf or hard of hearing receive timely diagnosis, early intervention and family to family support, and that all children who are deaf or hard of hearing receive appropriate early intervention to optimize language, cognition, literacy, and social-emotional development.
 - To learn more about Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program:
 - [LouisianaEHD](#)
 - [PartnersforFamilyHealth](#)
 - [InfantHearing Statement](#)
 - Upcoming Advisory Council for Early Identification of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Infants is scheduled for October 24, 2025, from 12:00 pm – 2:30 pm at the Benson Tower in NOLA.
 - Contact info:
 - laehdi@la.gov
- Intervention Partners
 - [EarlySteps](#) – early intervention services that can support developmental skills such as language and communication.

- [Guidance, Outreach, and Language Development \(GOLD\)](#) – family centered services from certified teachers of the deaf to ensure optimal language development
- Family Support Partners
 - [Louisiana Hands & Voices](#) (LA H&V) & [Guide By Your Side \(GBYS\)](#) – a family-based organization providing family-to-family support and deaf adult-to-family support
 - [Louisiana DeafBlind Project](#) (LA DBP) – resources/support for families whose children are identified with suspected or confirmed vision impairment and are hard of hearing and their providers
 - To learn more about Hands and Voices, their programs and to become active in Louisiana's state chapter, visit: <https://www.handsandvoices.org/>
- **Louisiana Commission for the Deaf**
 - LCD's mission is to Engage, Empower, and Enrich the lives and opportunities of the Louisiana's Deaf, Deaf/Blind, and Hard of Hearing population. LCD provides people who are Deaf, Deaf/Blind, and Hard of Hearing with programs, services, and resources to ensure full communication access to the world around them.
 - Programs:
 - Hearing aid program- qualifying based on age and income
 - Assistive Technology- free for qualifying individuals free of charge
 - Support Service Providers (SSP)- to assist individuals to live within communities with independence for deaf- deaf/blind
 - Interpreting Program- support for those who use ASL & ASL interpreters, standards, services, oversight, and support for communication accessibility for individuals who use ASL and the American Sign Language interpreter workforce.
 - In May 2025, LCD released [Notices of Intent to announce proposed changes to the Louisiana Administrative Code \(LAC\)](#).
 - Proposed Amendments to [LAC Title 67:VIII.309](#) – Louisiana Commission for the Deaf Board of Commissioners: This amendment provides the necessary roles and responsibilities of the board of commissioners.
 - Proposed Repeal to [LAC Title 67:VII.1301](#) – State Sign Language Interpreter Certification Standards: The current rule regarding certification standards is proposed for full repeal as it no longer is applicable. New standards for sign language interpreters will be introduced into Title 46 to replace these. Anticipated publication is September 2025.
 - Proposed Promulgation to [LAC Title 46:LXXII](#) – Professional and Occupational Standards for Sign Language Interpreters – This proposal establishes new requirements regarding minimum qualification standards, registration processes, and policies for grievances, suspension, and revocation of registration for sign language interpreters working in Louisiana.
 - To read more about Notices of Intent, visit the [Louisiana Commission for the Deaf news webpage](#).
 - Statewide Mentorship Program - Goal: Increase the quality and quantity of American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters working in Louisiana. 2 opportunities available:
 - Current Opportunities 2025-2026 Specialized Cohort Year2
 - Received 33 applicants
 - Up to 20 could be selected (8 mentors)
 - Once college intern
 - Four participants are participating in the Idaho State University Promoting Equity in Healthcare Interpreting Project (PEHI) Partnership - Cohort 3 with 5 participants
 - To learn more, visit [Interpreter Mentorship webpage](#)
 - Outreach & Training Opportunities
 - Offers Deaf Sensitivity Training upon request to organizations to increase awareness of deafness as more than a medical condition, exposure to common barriers, awareness of sign language interpreters/communication strategies and group discussion scenarios and more
 - Customized training courses are available upon request. Contact them at LCD@la.gov
 - Public Meetings dates scheduled are:
 - Friday, October 17, 2025

- All meetings are live-streamed and open to the public.
- Meeting times are 9 am – 1 pm
- Location varies. Visit <https://lcd.la.gov/> for more information.
- New Initiatives
 - The Louisiana Commission for the Deaf submitted a Request for Proposal for its Support Service Provider Program for individuals who are DeafBlind. The Intent to Award and selected contractor will be announced soon.
 - The Louisiana Commission for the Deaf intends to submit various Requests for Information to interested organizations/vendors for fiscal year 27 the following services:
 - Regional support centers for the Deaf
 - State-Funded Interpreting Services
 - Statewide Interpreter mentorship program
 - Louisiana Commission for the Deaf contact information:
 - LCD@la.gov
 - <https://lcd.la.gov/>
 - The floor was opened for questions or comments. There were none.

8. Updates from the Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities

Erin Downing, Senior Advisor at OCDD gave an [agency update](#) just touching on highlighted areas.

- House Bill (HB) 1/Act 1 –
 - Requires OCDD to add a nursing consultation waiver service. Providers will be able to bill when nursing consultations are provided up to \$750 per person per plan year. This requires a waiver amendment, so implementation is contingent upon CMS approval. Funding for this activity is through the Disability Services Fund.
 - OCDD and OAAS will implement a one-time payment to support coordination agencies when a waiver participant is initially certified into the waiver.
- House resolution (HR) 218 – Requests LDH to coordinate with stakeholders including The Arc to explore the creation of an ISNP (Institutional Special Needs Plan). LDH will convene meetings with internal and external partners and present findings before the 2026 legislative session.
- HB 595/Act 294 – Adds a pathway to meet nursing facility level of care for the TEFRA program if a child presented to the emergency room more frequently than once per month and the hospital is medically necessary to stabilize the sickle cell anemia. The child will still have to meet MEDT to qualify.
- HB 559/ Act 381 – Requires additional metrics, activities and reporting from the board of the LGE to LDH and legislative committees.
- HB 624 – moves SNAP and disability determinations from DCFS to LDH effective 10/1/2025.
- OCDD continues to work on CMS-approved activities associated with Section 9817 of the American Rescue Plan Act. ARPA funding for various initiatives is set to expire in December, but OCDD has requested an extension to September 2026.
- HCBS Settings Rule – OCDD received the final letter of closure that CMS determined Louisiana completed all required milestones outlined in the HCBS Setting CAP. CMS will continue to provide technical assistance regarding the required federal waiver assurances as needed.
- The floor was opened to comments and questions. There were none.

9. Updates from the LA Developmental Disabilities Council

Brenton Andrus, LaDDC Deputy Director, gave a brief agency [update](#).

- Upcoming Meetings:
 - Membership Committee meeting at the LaDDC Office – October 7, 2025 – 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
 - Quarterly Council & Committees meeting at the Bluebonnet Library, Baton Rouge – October 29, 2025 - 10:00 am – 6:00 pm
 - Legislative Ad-Hoc meeting at the American Red Cross Building, BR – October 16, 2025 – 10:00 am – 3:30 pm.
 - Quarterly Full Council meeting at the Bluebonnet Library, BR October 30, 2025 – 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

- Meetings are open to the public and can be attended virtually. Visit the [LaDDC's website](http://www.laddc.org/news) for more information and sign up for meeting announcements at www.laddc.org/news
- General Information:
 - Council's Five-Year Planning for FFY 2027-2031 is underway.
 - Five Year Planning Committee met in August to develop Goals and Objectives.
 - Draft plan can be found at [Action Plan Draft](#)
 - Council will vote to approve plan at its October meeting.
 - Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) action plan
 - Begins October 1, 2025 and ends September 30, 2026 – [Action Plan Final](#)
 - Most projects continue in FY26 except for the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) trainings and awareness campaign.
 - Two new projects are starting with LSU:
 - HER Health Project: This project will make and distribute easy-to-read, picture-supported materials to help women with disabilities learn about their health.
 - HEART Project: This project will create a sex education program that is clear, easy to understand, and works for everyone. It will help middle and high school students with disabilities learn about growing up, relationships, and staying healthy.
 - Partners in Policymaking
 - Free training program for people with I/DD and parents of young children with I/DD.
 - You will learn about disability topics, how laws are made, and how to tell your story to help make your community better.
 - Applications for the 2026 class are open until September 30th.
 - Learn more and apply here: Partners in Policymaking: [LaDDCPiP](#)
 - 2024 Annual Report - Summary report of FY24 activities: [FY24 Report](#)
 - Signup to receive communications and alerts from the Council and LaCann via their website <http://www.laddc.org/> or visit their Facebook and X pages.
 - The floor was opened for questions and comments. There were no questions or comments.

10. Updates from the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs

Jamar Ennis- GODA Executive Director, gave an update for GODA.

- GODA is preparing for the annual GOLD Awards. All interested parties for nominations should contact the office at disability.affairs@la.gov Information for nominations for both can be found: [GOLD Awards](#) and [ART Awards](#).
- GODA is tracking their budget from the Disability Trust Fund and how money funds that trust. They are working on collecting accessibility fines from all parishes to assist with this.
- Jamar Ennis was elected President of the Special School District.
- Liam Doyle has been appointed to the Louisiana Social Workers Board and the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council.

11. Public Questions/Comments:

Madam Chairperson opened the floor for any public questions or comments.

- Rikki David asked about the sheriff's offices following laws concerning accessible parking and getting local sheriff's offices to penalize vehicles illegally parking in handicapped areas. Jamar Ennis responded with ongoing solutions that are in the works.
- Ashley Allen discussed a Texas app that addresses reporting of illegally parked vehicles in accessible areas. Maybe it is a possibility for Louisiana to look into something similar.
- There was a question in the chat room for Brenton Andrus from LADDc: Who at LSU is developing the sexual health curriculum and the integrative community studies program? He responded with ICS program and the Education Dept.

12. Adjournment:

Ashley Allen made a motion to adjourn. Barry Mealy seconded the motion. Roll call was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn the meeting passed without any objections, abstentions, or discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:54 AM.