



## Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs

KATHY HOCHUL  
Governor

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Executive Director

### NYS Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs Advisory Council Meeting Summary September 22, 2022

Advisory Council Members Present: William Gettman (Chair), Veronica Crawford, Norwig Debye-Saxinger, Jason Hershberger, Jeremy Klemanski, Ronald Lehrer, Joe Macbeth, Tom McAlvanah, Kathy O'Keefe, Mary St. Mark, Jeff Savoy, and Euphemia Strauchn

Advisory Council Members Not Present: Walt Joseph, Glenn Liebman, Delores McFadden, Judith O'Rourke, Harvey Rosenthal

Justice Center Staff Present: Denise Miranda, Executive Director, Laura Darman, Executive Deputy Director, Christine Buttigieg, Director of Public Information, Michelle McCrum, Director of Business Analytics, Davin Robinson, Deputy Director Outreach, Prevention and Support, Susmita Saha, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Jody Signoracci, Assistant Director, Outreach, Prevention and Support

#### I. Justice Center Updates

##### Advisory Council Membership Changes

Veronica Crawford, a peer advocate at Care Design NY, was welcomed to her first meeting as an Advisory Council member. Denise Figueroa and Megan O'Connor resigned from the Advisory Council over the summer. Jeremy Klemanski announced that this would be his last meeting as well. All members were thanked for their service.

##### Staff In-Service

The Justice Center will be conducting a one-day staff-in-service training on November 1, 2022. The event will be held virtually. There will be a keynote speaker who is a victim advocate and former detective as well as different sessions including navigating challenging interactions, conducting effective medical interviews and time management. All advisory council members are welcome to participate in the training and a schedule of the training is attached to the email containing this meeting summary. If interested in attending, let Davin Robinson know.

##### New Justice Center Staff

Sidra Chaudhary joined the Justice Center in July as an Equal Opportunity Specialist. In this role she will focus on DEI initiatives to promote diversity, equity and inclusion. She will also co-facilitate the Justice Center workgroup on anti-racism.

##### Research

In August, the Justice Center met with researchers from Cornell University and the ZHAW School of Social Work in Switzerland to discuss the agency's role in investigating and preventing abuse in child welfare settings. Conversations with the team about how the Justice Center can help in this research project will be ongoing.

### Juvenile Detention Facilities

At the request of the NYC Administration for Children's Services, senior Justice Center staff visited the Horizons and Crossroads Juvenile Detention centers in NYC and attended town hall meetings with the Commissioner of ACS and facility staff to answer questions and address concerns.

### Justice Center Awards

The Justice Center Code of Conduct and Champion award ceremony was taped on September 28. Taping the ceremony makes it easier for the award recipients to participate – especially if they run into issues connecting or if something occurs at the last minute that prevents them from attending the ceremony. The link to the ceremony is [here](#). This is always an uplifting event and members were encouraged to watch it.

### Do Good, Feel Good Initiative

The Justice Center is interested in sharing volunteer opportunities for staff as part of our "Do Good, Feel Good Initiative." These opportunities will not only make meaningful contributions to the community but also foster camaraderie among Justice Center staff. This initiative will be kicked off by partnering with an Albany based provider, Northern Rivers Family of Services. Interested staff will have the opportunity to volunteer during their annual Halloween party on October 28th. There will also be an opportunity to contribute Halloween themed treats for the children and youth at Northern Rivers. Advisory Council members were invited to share opportunities they are aware of around the state.

## **II. Justice Center Abuse Business Analytics**

The Justice Center established a business analytics unit to drive improvement across all business units in the Justice Center. This unit also posts data sets on Open Data NY ([data.ny.gov](http://data.ny.gov)). These data sets include the number of reports received, criminal background checks processed and the number of Staff Exclusion Checks completed each month.

The business analytics unit has been working with all Justice Center business units to identify key performance indicators that can be used to measure work efficiencies and improve the overall health of the agency. The unit has also provided data and assistance to other Justice Center units concerning a variety of topics and initiatives including systemic reviews, retention and recruitment analysis and historical case mapping.

## **III. Committee Reports**

### *Legislation and Regulations*

The Committee will be meeting in November. The Justice Center is scheduling meetings with providers to receive feedback and suggestions to improve Justice Center processes and there may be future legislative proposals as a result of these meetings.

### *Workforce Issues*

The committee met over the summer to select the Code of Conduct winners. The Justice Center received over 90 nominations this year.

### *Abuse Prevention*

The committee met in September and was provided with an overview of a systemic review of professional boundary offenses in substance abuse programs. The Justice Center received a very positive response from the Office of Addictions Services and Supports and the report has been posted on the Justice Center website and the link to the report is [here](#). The committee completed a survey concerning

the usefulness of the Justice Center's prevention resources and that survey has been posted on the Justice Center website. The survey will be open until November 1, 2022.

*Investigator and Law Enforcement Training*

At the suggestion of this committee, the Justice Center has begun offering short trainings on different topics that can be useful for state oversight and provider agency investigators. The last session for 2022 will be held on November 17 and it will be on injuries of unknown origin. Registration will be open in October. Members of the committee are encouraged to attend if their schedule permits.

Planning is underway for next year's topics. The Justice Center is considering a training on effective medical interviews. The committee suggested training related to diversity, equity and inclusion and sensitivity awareness.

**Next Meeting  
January 26, 2023**