

Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services

Virtual via Zoom

Thursday, September 16, 2021

10:00 a.m.

AGENDA

---

Call to Order Eddie Williams, Chair

Prayer

Verification of Quorum Karen Freeman

Verification of Open Meeting Act Notice Eddie Williams

Approval of Agenda Eddie Williams

Approval of Minutes for the June 17, 2021 meeting Eddie Williams

**New Business:**

ADRS Operations Plan FY 2021 – 2022 Shay Cannon, Chief Financial Officer

ADRS Personnel Staffing Plan FY 2021 – 2022 Tracy Francisco, Human Resource Development Director

- Approval – ADRS Operations Plan FY 2021–2022 Eddie Williams
- Approval – ADRS Personnel Staffing Plan FY 2021–2022 Eddie Williams

Board Member Questions and Division Updates Executive Leadership Team

Commissioner's Comments Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw, Commissioner

**Announcements:**

Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services upcoming meeting date for **2021:**

- **Thursday, Dec. 2, 2021 – 10:00 a.m., Location: TBD**

Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services **proposed** meeting dates for **2022**:

- *Thursday, March 3, 2022 – 10:00 a.m., Location: TBD*
- *Thursday, June 16, 2022 – 10:00 a.m., Location: TBD*
- *Thursday, September 15, 2022 – 10:00 a.m., Location: TBD*
- *Thursday, December 1, 2022 – 10:00 a.m., Location: TBD*

Board Business/Discussion

Eddie Williams

Adjourn

Eddie Williams

## ***Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services***

*Board Meeting Minutes*

*Virtual Via Zoom*

*Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021*

### **Call to Order:**

Mr. Eddie Williams, Board Chair, called the regularly scheduled open public meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

### **Prayer:**

Dr. Graham Sisson, Jr., Executive Director of the Alabama Governor's Office on Disability (GOOD), opened the board meeting with prayer.

### **Verification of Quorum:**

Board members present: Mr. Eddie Williams, Board Chair; Mrs. Penny Foster, Board Vice-Chair; Ms. Michelle Glaze; Mr. Kevin Kidd; Mr. Mitch Strickland; Mr. Jimmie Varnado; and Mr. Charles Wilkinson. A quorum was declared.

### **Verification of the Open Meetings Act Notice:**

On August 13, 2021, Gov. Kay Ivey issued a subsequent state of emergency regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The proclamation addressed public meetings in Section IV, again allowing members of a governmental body to conduct meetings "by means of telephone conference, video conference, or other similar communications equipment."<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to the proclamation, on September 16, 2021, the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services' regularly scheduled board meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom and was open to the public. Interpreter services were provided via Zoom by Mr. Josh Brewer.

Mrs. Karen Freeman verified that the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services meeting for Sept. 16, 2021, was posted on the Alabama Secretary of State's website on August 23, 2021, at 9:39 a.m.

Meeting registration information for the public was provided on the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services' website at the following link: <https://rehab.alabama.gov/about/meet-our-board> with a deadline of September 10, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. CDST. Mr. Dave White, Governor's Office, Senior Policy Advisor joined the virtual board meeting.

At the conclusion of the board meeting, a summary of the meeting was posted on the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services' public website on September 16, 2021, before the close of business. The summary recounted the deliberations conducted during the meeting and the actions taken with specificity to allow the public to understand what happened.

<sup>1</sup> On July 6, 2021, Gov. Ivey issued a proclamation terminating the COVID-19 public health emergency first declared March 13, 2020. The Governor's First Supplemental State of Emergency, Section III, issued March 18, 2020, permitted members of a governmental body to participate in meetings - including establishing a quorum, deliberating, and taking action - by electronic means provided the meetings were conducted pursuant to the rules outlined in Section III and the provisions of the Open Meetings Act not modified. Gov. Ivey again issued a state of emergency on August 13, 2021, noting, "the COVID-19 virus persists in Alabama and the nation, and it continues to present a serious threat to public health." In addition to again allowing members of a governmental body to conduct meetings remotely, the new proclamation allows twenty-four hours instead of twelve for a governmental body to post a written summary, video, or audio of the meeting on its website.

### **Approval of Agenda:**

Mr. Williams asked for a motion to approve the agenda. The motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Jimmie Varnado and seconded by Mr. Mitch Strickland. The motion was approved.

### **Approval of Minutes for June 17, 2021 Meeting:**

The minutes from the June 17, 2021, meeting were mailed prior to the board meeting. Mr. Williams stated that if there were no corrections, the minutes would stand approved as presented. The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

### **New Business:**

#### **Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services Operations & Personnel Staffing Plan FY 2021 – 2022**

Mrs. Shay Cannon, Chief Financial Officer, reviewed the ADRS Operations Plan for FY 2021 – 2022, Executive Budget Office (EBO) Form #8. Mrs. Cannon expressed her appreciation to Mr. William Hansen, Unit Supervisor/Budget Accountant for his assistance in preparing the ADRS Operations Plan. Mr. Hansen is an invaluable member of the Budget team.

Ms. Tracy Francisco, Human Resource Development Director, reviewed the ADRS Personnel Staffing Plan for FY 2021 – 2022, Executive Budget Office (EBO) Form #9.

Mr. Williams moved to approve and adopt the ADRS FY 2021 - 2022 Operations Plan (EBO Form #8) at the spending level of \$219,370,808 and the ADRS Staffing Plan (EBO Form #9) at the staffing level of 863.50 full-time equivalent positions, and that the board give authority to the Commissioner and Chief Financial Officer to revise the Operations Plan within these spending and staffing levels. The motion to approve the ADRS Operations & Personnel Staffing Plan FY 2021 -2022 was seconded by Mr. Jimmie Varnado and the motion was approved.

### **Board Member Questions and Division Updates:**

The Executive Leadership Team members were provided an opportunity to answer any questions and give updates to their written reports.

### **Commissioner's Comments and Legislative Update:**

Commissioner Burdeshaw provided updated information on the following topics:

- Commissioner Burdeshaw reported longtime House Ways and Means, Chair, Representative Bill Poole, was recently appointed to become State Finance Director, by Governor Kay Ivey. He replaces Kelly Butler, who announced his retirement due to health concerns. Representative Danny Garrett, former vice-chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, will now move to the chairmanship role.

- The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services continues to operate under specific health and safety guidelines. The guidelines are updated to coincide with the most recent protocols from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Alabama Department of Public Health, and the Governor's Office. Over the past month, positivity rates among Alabamians and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation (ADRS) staff have increased. ADRS is experiencing approximately one new case per day among statewide staff, although the number of ADRS staff who are vaccinated remains much higher than the state average.
- Now that the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) Operations Plan for FY 2021 – 2022 is complete and has been approved, ADRS will continue budget planning by conducting budget projection meetings later this month for FY 2023. The Commissioner, the Chief Financial Officer along with budget staff, and the Human Resource Development Director will meet with each of the programs. These meetings will involve discussion on each division's staffing plans and any projected changes or developments in service delivery. There will be consideration for historical budgets and expenditure patterns. These meetings help lay the foundation for our June meetings when we will develop the following year's ADRS Operations Plan.
- The Examiners of Public Accounts recently contacted the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) and asked to schedule the department in its next round of compliance audits. These audits typically review financial and personnel-related areas, in addition to reviewing Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services compliance. Upon completion, the final report will be sent to board members for review.
- The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021 under Section 9817, (Pub. L. 117-2), provides qualifying states with a temporary 10 percentage point increase to the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for certain Medicaid expenditures for Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) incurred between April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022.
- It appears that the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) may receive a portion of the Governor's Emergency Education Relief II (GEER II) grant funding that is provided to states for emergency services for education-related entities to assist students who have been impacted by COVID-19.
- Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) Children's Rehabilitation Service (CRS), United Ability, and Children's of Alabama met the first of September 2021 to discuss how to fill the needs left by a recent vacancy. Cathy Caldwell, CRS Assistant Commissioner, and CRS Leadership have worked diligently with Children's of Alabama Pediatrics to meet the emergency, and emerging needs of CRS families.
- Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) has secured a Project Search site at Amazon in Bessemer. This will be the first Project Search site in an Amazon facility.
- AlabamaWorks 2021 Virtual Conference: "Building a New Normal" will be held on September 21 – 22, 2021. Dr. Richard Pimentel and the Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities state-wide awards event will be held Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021. The virtual conference is free to attend.

- October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), and everyone is invited to register for the virtual fireside chats. These chats will include Alabamians with disabilities sharing their inspirational journey to employment. Additional information will be sent to board members as the date draws near.

**Announcements:**

Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services meetings dates for **2021:**

- **Thursday, Dec. 2, 2021 – 10:00 a.m., Location: TBD**

Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services proposed meeting dates for **2022:**

- Thursday, March 3, 2022 – 10:00 a.m., Location: TBD
- ~~Thursday, June 16, 2022 – 10:00 a.m., Location: TBD~~
- Thursday, September 15, 2022 – 10:00 a.m., Location: TBD
- Thursday, December 1, 2022 – 10:00 a.m., Location: TBD

*The June 16, 2022 meeting date will need to be changed due to a scheduling conflict.* Mr. Williams requested the board members review the proposed meeting dates for 2022 and if there are additional scheduling conflicts, please reach out to Mrs. Karen Freeman at 334-293-7201 or [karen.freeman@rehab.alabama.gov](mailto:karen.freeman@rehab.alabama.gov).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

Minutes were taken by Karen Freeman.

Respectfully Submitted:



---

Jane E. Burdeshaw, Commissioner

Approved:



---

Eddie C. Williams, Chair