



News from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

John R. Kasich, Governor

John L. Martin, Director

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[See our new **DD Service System Guide!**](#)

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October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

This year's theme is "Because We Are EQUAL to the Task."

The U.S. Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) has developed "31 Things you can do in your workplace and your community during the month of October" to celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)."

[Click here to view the "What you CAN do!" NDEAM daily calendar](#)

1. Jobs Summit Spotlights Disability Employment Awareness

Smart for Business, Smart for People, Smart for Ohio's Bottom Line

The *DisAbility Jobs Summit* at the Greater Columbus Convention Center today is in its second day of the two-day conference hosted by the [Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency](#) (OOD) -- formerly named the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC). It is the organization's goal to make this annual Summit a key statewide event for job seekers, businesses, and partners in Ohio's government and business sectors who work together in a mutually beneficial relationship. It is also an exciting and appropriate kick-off to National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

NDEAM began in 1945, when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month."

This second annual conference gathers nearly 800 attendees, 28 exhibitors, and numerous sponsors and employers for a clearly focused agenda driven by input from individuals served within the state's DD system. Seminar and panel discussion topics include an overview and status report on the Employment First initiative, A panel of Ohio Business Leadership Network Employers, Customized Employment, and alternatives to a college degree including certifications in various areas of interest.

Presenting to a standing-room-only session at the conference was Kristen Helling, Project Manager/Community Employment Advisor, and DODD's lead person on the Employment First initiative. She provided an overview of the first year of the initiative's implementation in a [presentation](#) underscoring employer engagement across the state. Interest in the initiative's efforts was evident based on attendee input during session presentations.

In welcoming comments yesterday, OOD Executive Director Kevin Miller observed, "I have what we call an 'attitude of gratitude.' As we go around the state working to open up more and better employment opportunities, the individuals we serve inspire us and lift us up in this work. We recognize and applaud their work in advocacy and self-advocacy."

Recognition awards for employers who have pioneered a culture of inclusive community employment for people with disabilities throughout the state were presented to employers who collectively represent thousands of individuals with DD who work at Giant Eagle, Kroger, Cincinnati Children's Hospital, and Wal-Mart, to name a few. Miller noted,

"Why are you getting these awards? Because you're teaching us. You're teaching us how it's done. We just listen...and get out of the way. And the dedicated employees you gain through your support and training are the reason your efforts are so successful."

Specific initiatives that have developed competitive employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities also were recognized and applauded for their efforts. Among them were: "Bridges to Transition" (Ohio Association of County Boards); "Recovery to Work" (Ohio Department of Youth Services); and Project SEARCH (Cincinnati Children's Hospital). Bridget Gargan, OACB Executive Director, commented, "Bridges to Transition is a program that our staff strongly believes in, and it involves a lot of paperwork!" She continued,

"But what makes Bridges to Transition so important to us, is that every piece of paper is connected to a person. Just as an example – one of those pieces of paper recently allowed an individual to communicate with an iPad – and when we saw her using it, it meant so much to all of us."

Awards presented

Also in conjunction with the DisAbility Jobs Summit, OOD presented the annual *Denise Joanne Weisenborn Service Award* today to Mary Ramirez-Cook of Cincinnati, honoring non-employees of OOD who provide outstanding service to Ohioans with disabilities, and the *Ben Bonanno Disability Advocate Award*, honoring outstanding advocacy accomplishments by non-employees of RSC, to William Bauer, Ph.D., of Marietta. The award recognizes a person whose advocacy efforts have significantly improved employment possibilities for Ohioans with disabilities.

*More about the DisAbility Jobs Summit, including photos, at:
Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency
More about Disability Employment efforts around the state see the Pipeline Posts section in this issue.*

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2. Synergy Conference Blends Talents of ... Everyone

‘Synergy’, the annual conference for DD professionals, advocates, and self advocates jointly-sponsored by PAR (Professionals, Advocates, Resources) and OSDA (Ohio Self Determination Association) welcomed more than 600 attendees over the course of the three-day event, October 2-4 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Dublin. “Titles don’t matter here,” said PAR Executive Director Steve Oster, during the opening remarks. “Everyone is equal at this conference. Everyone.”

Supporting that concept, table seating easily intermingled people with disabilities, professionals in the DD field, family members, and friends. Conversations were casual and enthusiastic...

“I’m a Project STIR graduate!”... “So am I!”
“Where are you from?” ... “How come I haven’t seen you here before?”
“Do you have this (cell phone) app? I use it all the time.”
“Why don’t you talk to your service coordinator about that?”

With 27 sessions offering multiple hours of training, there was something for everyone. “We’re all here to learn something. It’s about partnering with each other, and collaborating – it’s not about who’s in charge,” said Dana Charlton, OSDA Executive Director. Attendees were learning from each other and finding ways to make more progress toward improved community-based services, employment options, and choices and independence in residential options.

Sessions included a panel discussion by the collaborative ‘Imagine Project’ Leaders regarding ISP planning, as well as national and local perspectives on the Employment First initiative from Dr. Theresa Grossi, the national Director of Community Living and Careers, and Kristin Helling, DODD Project Manager for Employment First. DODD Director John Martin stepped up to the podium on Day Two commenting,

“The Synergy conference has come to be one of my favorites to attend each year, and it’s because I know it’s always going to be about you – what those of you in our service system see as your needs and interests. And what you want us to be doing on your behalf at the state level. That’s what I come here to learn more about, and then move the system forward from there.”

The conference also is known for the exciting ESDY Awards (‘S’ and ‘D’ as in Self Determination) -- many of which are a surprise to the awardees. A few are captured below, and more are at www.ohiosda.org and www.PAR-Ohio.org.



Mairose, Stinziano – two of the many honored by PAR/OSDA.

Left: Southwest Ohio self advocate Diana Mairose is awarded an ‘Individual of the Year’ award for her many efforts in the areas of advocacy and community inclusion, including a video at www.ohioemploymentfirst.org. Mairose was presented the award by Megan Manuel, Superintendent of the Warren County Board of DD.

Right: State Representative Michael Stinziano is awarded a ‘Legislator of the Year’ award for his support of the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities, including the training and advocacy program, ‘Project STIR.’ Stinziano personally signs certificates congratulating individuals completing the program, and attends participant-run meetings to stay in touch with the constituency.



A surprise was served to ... Pete Moore (left) and Willie Jones, as they were each recognized for their contributions to the state’s developmental disabilities community through the Ohio County Board Association’s ‘A Good Life’ program.



Pete and Willie agreed that through their work as facilitators they, too, had found “... A Good Life ... and a couple of nice matching shirts.”

Listening to individuals during the sessions and breaks, and while visiting vendors at the many information tables in the lobby, it was clear that the PAR/OSDA Synergy conference had fostered the desired energy. Walking out the door at the end of Day Two, one conference participant remarked, “When I come here next year, I’m going to have a job. I’m going to have a job and I’m going to tell everybody about it.”

*For more information about Project STIR: www.ohiosda.org; www.PAR-Ohio.org
Click here for additional *conference information*.*

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Provider Spotlight

3. Recognizing Excellence in a Statewide Service System

County of Summit DD Board Superintendent Tom Armstrong Honored

During late September, which celebrated Direct Support Professionals Week, hundreds of service providers gathered at the annual ViaQuest Inc. conference in Columbus to celebrate 16 years of person-centered motivational efforts under the theme, “From Leaders to Legends.” Representatives of County Boards of DD, provider agency partners, state agencies, and about 500 ViaQuest staff honored many service achievements, including those of designated 2013 Conference Honoree, Tom Armstrong, Summit DD Board Superintendent.

Armstrong -- whose career in Ohio’s developmental disabilities community spans 40 years -- might well say, “Sixteen years? That’s a good start.”



Photo courtesy, Summit DD Board

Retiring Summit County DD Board Superintendent Tom Armstrong not only was recognized for his years of service to Ohioans with developmental disabilities at the ViaQuest event, but also at the PAR/OSDA conference (see [article this issue](#)). He said,

“Nobody does it on their own. I’ve been fortunate to work with many talented staff people all around the state. It’s been quite a journey.”



Having facilitated change throughout his career, Armstrong offered advice to remain positive and committed to one’s Mission. “Prepare yourself for change and be part of it. This system doesn’t succeed without innovation and change.” This year he announced his retirement from the Summit County position after 13 years as Superintendent. Current Lucas County Board of DD Superintendent John Trunk has been named as his successor.

Service providers such as ViaQuest, who recognize and reward outstanding service delivery within Ohio’s developmental disabilities community, help to promote overall system excellence in areas such as home health, hospice, nursing and clinical services, and day and residential services. DODD Director John Martin recently stated that efforts such as these, in tandem with progressive legislation and funding, will help to support a more stable employment environment for direct care staff professionals in the process.

More information at [provider selection handbook](#)

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4. “Steady U” Initiative Aims to Reduce Incidence of Falling

“STEADY U Ohio” is a comprehensive falls prevention initiative led by Governor John Kasich and the Ohio Department of Aging, along with other state agency partners including DODD. Launched last month, a new website at www.steadyu.ohio.gov offers many resources, and includes links to additional helpful information.

The initiative, supported by state government and business partners to strengthen existing falls prevention activities, coordinates a statewide educational campaign to spotlight the prevention of falls in care planning for all Ohioans, and especially those who are elderly or have disabilities.



Key components of ‘STEADY U Ohio’ include the following ...

- *Creating a One-Stop Resource for Falls Prevention:* Many falls-prevention initiatives and resources exist in Ohio, but the state lacked a central point to manage those resources. The new website at www.steadyu.ohio.gov is Ohio’s key source of falls prevention information.
- *Expanding ‘A Matter of Balance’ Education and Exercise Program:* The *number one* cause of falls among senior citizens is poor balance. The *fear of falling* also increases the risk, and many older adults acknowledge a fear of falling. STEADY U will expand an evidence-based education and exercise program, *A Matter of Balance*, to all 88 Ohio counties. Locally led by trained volunteers, the classes aim to reduce the risk of falls by helping the at-risk population *increase their activity level and reduce their fear of falling*.
- *Promoting Falls Risk Assessments:* The initiative will help nursing homes evaluate lighting and other environmental factors to identify and address risks. The risk assessments will be made a core part of the state’s home- and community-based Medicaid waiver programs.
- *Developing a STEADY U Toolkit:* Health care providers will be given a toolkit they can use to conduct the falls risk assessments.
- *Partnering with Businesses to Create ‘Fall-Free Zones’:* Working with businesses, STEADY U will help businesses become ‘fall-free zones’ by identifying and addressing hazards that could cause slips, trips, and falls.

Partnering with state agencies to target and educate high-risk populations on the subject of preventing falls, the DODD Major Unusual Incident (MUI) Unit is working to update and promote online resources at [Health & Welfare Alerts](#) and work with service providers directly to reduce the incidence of injuries due to falling.

Contact: scott.phillips@dodd.ohio.gov

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5. New National Resource Center on Justice and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

The U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance (DOJ/BJA) has awarded a two-year grant for \$400,000 to develop a national center on justice and intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The Arc's national organization has been awarded the grant, which is the first national effort of its kind to bring together both victim and offender issues involving people with I/DD 'under one roof.'

The goal of the grant project is to create a national clearinghouse for research, information, evaluation, training, and technical assistance for justice and disability professionals and other advocates that will build their capacity to better identify and meet the needs of people with I/DD.

CEO of The Arc of the USA Peter Berns observed, "In many instances, the individual's disability goes unrecognized, and the population is over-represented in the nation's criminal justice system – both as victims and offenders. When individuals with I/DD become involved in the criminal justice system as suspects or victims, they often face miscommunication, fear, confusion, and prejudice. This new center will play a critical role in improving first response and communication between people with I/DD. No similar center on this topic exists, nor are there sufficient resources to address the gap in expertise in the field."

The national center will include directories of expert witnesses, attorneys, forensic interviewers, and victim advocates, a database of relevant state laws, a library, and hands-on technical assistance and training. Additionally, The Arc of the USA will create a Justice and I/DD Certification program.

More information at <http://www.thearc.org/>; Contact Leigh Ann Davis, LDavis@thearc.org

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6. Ohio County Board of DD Levy Issues, November 5th

There will be levy issues in nine counties on the November 5 election ballots affecting Ohio's developmental disabilities community:

- *Clark County:* 1.75 mills, additional
- *Clermont County:* 0.75 mill, renewal
- *Coshocton County:* 2.8 mills, renewal (Hopewell School)
- *Lucas County:* 1.8 mills, replacement*
- *Marion County:* 2.95 mills, replacement
- *Madison County:* 1 mill, renewal
- *Morrow County:* 2.5 mills, replacement
- *Portage County:* 2 mills, renewal, AND .9 mill, renewal
- *Wood County:* 2.95 mills, additional

* Lucas County: Rolling two continuous levies into one and adding 1 mill, in a replacement levy totaling 1.8 mills. The issue will appear on the ballot as a single proposal.

Your vote is very important!

The Secretary of State's website at www.sos.state.oh.us/ contains a great deal of information about the November 5th election regarding voting in general, and including specific information for Voters with Disabilities.

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New! Pipeline Posts ...

Disability Employment Awareness Around the State

Ohio is embracing the culture of increased emphasis on community-based, competitive employment within developmental disabilities services, driven by Governor John Kasich's **Employment First initiative**. We share a few examples here, and more to follow in the October 23rd issue of Pipeline. *To submit ideas, send a short paragraph and a photo to sherry.steinman@dodd.ohio.gov by October 18.*

Fairfield County

In Lancaster (Fairfield County) Tim Heft enjoys his new job serving customers at 'Sweet Innovations' in the River Valley Mall. "I just want to help other people and get to know more new people," he said. Heft is one of eight employees of the new businesses, which recently hosted its Grand Opening. David Uhl, Fairfield County Board of DD Director of Business Development noted that Heft is one of three of the agency's clients working at Sweet Innovations. Uhl observes, "We're trying to provide some skills that are transferable. Maybe Tim likes his job, but maybe he doesn't want to work there forever. We'll try to give him some skills to go out and do something else, like customer service skills or money-handling transferable skills so he can go into the community and find a different job and use the same type of skills he's learned here." For more information, jboss@fairfieldddd.com



'Sweet Innovations' employee Tim Heft decorates a cookie at the store in Lancaster's River Valley Mall.



-Photo courtesy, Jess Lanning, Lancaster Eagle-Gazette

Athens County

The Passion Works art studio in Athens has landed a unique and 'official' work opportunity. Athens County Board Superintendent Eric Young notes that Passion Works' new, official OSU Buckeye Flowers are the result of a collaboration between three programs under the Atco Inc. non-profit umbrella: Passion Works art studio; PersonnelPlus, the community employment division; and the Atco workshop. He comments, "The OSU flower project is creating jobs for people who are enrolled in PersonnelPlus and for those who attend the workshop. It's also a great partnership with the community workforce. Passion Works is already a collaborative endeavor between artists with and without disabilities, and Atco Inc. is now also hiring workers without disabilities to work alongside people with disabilities to produce the

flowers. For more information: Passion Works Studio Coordinator, Wayne Savage (740) 592-3673, wayne@passionworks.org



See article at:
"Passion Works' license to create
official OSU Buckeye flower could
be game-changer"

The entire process to create one flower
involves at least ten steps, including
washing, painting, designing and
cutting, takes about three weeks.

Photo courtesy, Athens Messenger

The Medicaid Buy-in Fact Sheet has been updated!

Medicaid Buy-In for Workers with Disabilities (MBIWD or MBI) is an Ohio Medicaid program that provides health care coverage to working Ohioans with disabilities. MBIWD was created to encourage Ohioans with disabilities to work and still keep their health care coverage. The new fact sheet contains updated information as of May 2013. [Download Fact Sheet.](#)

The Annual Thanksgiving Issue of Pipeline - Publishing Nov. 20th

Again this year we invite *you* to tell us what *you* are thankful for. *You* includes individuals, families, providers, County Boards and all stakeholders within Ohio's DD community. Please submit items for consideration by Nov. 14th, to sherry.steinman@dodd.ohio.gov A short paragraph and a photo, if appropriate, would be best. *Here's last year's issue:* [Pipeline, November 21, 2012](#)

Pipeline Quarterly Preview...

Transformational changes in residential services around the state are the focus of a special edition of *Pipeline Quarterly*, publishing this month. The new residential services options partly result from DODD's "Grand Bargain," a major effort to modernize the ICF/IID* program. In response to input from the DD community, this agreement was negotiated with stakeholders to significantly increase individuals' opportunities to live in community-based settings. It includes a commitment by the field to convert up to 600 ICF/IID beds to waivers, and downsize up to 600 large ICF/IID beds to settings no larger than eight-bed homes. Read more in the new issue, reporting on summer 2013. Click on: [Pipeline Quarterly](#).

**ICF/IID: Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities*

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***PostScripts***

∞ Free conference! Tablet Technology, October 23 ∞

At this free one-day conference at the Columbus Hyatt Regency Hotel, learn how tablet technology -- iPads, e-readers, and other mobile technologies-- can assist people with disabilities. Experienced speakers will describe types of devices, how to evaluate users, applications and accessories, how to find funding,

and more. Users will explain how tablets enhance their lives. Displays will encourage hands-on tryouts. Sponsored by Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council and Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council. *Registration is required! For more information and registration, contact Sue Willis: axiscenter@aol.com, (614) 263-8076.*

Positive Exposure: Celebrating the Spirit of Difference

The Ohio State University Nisonger Center's Health Promotion and Healthcare Parity program has invited a unique gallery of photography, *Positive Exposure*, to Columbus for two events focused on improving attitudes toward and understanding of people who have a disability. *Positive Exposure* is a multimedia presentation that aims to redefine perceptions of beauty, and invite people to see individuals with genetic, cognitive, physical, and behavioral differences as vibrant and valuable members of society. Ohioans with an interest in the positive culture of the state's disabilities community are encouraged to take the opportunity to see this unique presentation on Sunday, October 20, at noon. On that day the founder, director, and photographer of *Positive Exposure* -- Rick Guidotti -- will visit the COSI Atrium and discuss the multi-media gallery that will be on display there. Guidotti also will present to medical students, faculty, and staff on October 21, at The Ohio State University College of Medicine's Prior Health Sciences Library, where a gallery of photographs will be displayed Oct. 21 – Nov. 27, 2013.

More at www.positiveexposure.org

More information at <http://nisonger.osu.edu/positive-exposure-06-2013>

Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Correction Conference, Oct. 10-11

The OJACC conference (see www.ojacc.org) will be held at the Crowne Plaza North Hotel in Columbus, October 10 - 11. The theme, 'Reducing Recidivism and Promoting Recovery,' encompasses many topics including a keynote presentation by Sarah M. Manchak, Ph.D., examining the patient-therapist relationship and its effects on psycho-social and criminal outcomes for offenders with serious mental disorders who are mandated to treatment. Also, a presentation on 'Reentry and Supervision' by Phil Florian and Dr. Janet Keeler (Cuyahoga County DD) will focus on individuals with DD who are involved in the criminal justice system. The presentation will outline the characteristics, challenges, specific interviewing techniques, and strategies/interventions for supporting individuals through this process. Information and registration at www.ojacc.org. Contact Cheryl (740) 420-6444; tctaylor@mac.com.

WALK NOW FOR AUTISM SPEAKS, October 13

Join 'Autism Speaks' on Sunday, October 13, at Huntington Park in Columbus, and walk to change the future for people with autism. *Walk Now for Autism Speaks* is a family-friendly event and helps to fund research that will lead to answers surrounding the many questions posed by Autism Spectrum Disorder. Contact Columbus@autismspeaks.org or call (216) 524-2842.

Next Chapter Book Club to Hold First-Ever Conference, October 18-19

The *Next Chapter Book Club* began in Columbus and now is an internationally-known book club for adults with developmental disabilities. Affiliated clubs meet at community-based coffee shops and cafes for an hour each week to enjoy each other's company and read aloud. (See *Pipeline Quarterly, Summer 2009*, p. 8) The *Next Chapter Book Club* and its parent organization, *Chapters Ahead*, are hosting a first-ever conference on literacy for adults with DD at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Chicago, October 18 -19. Registration is \$50 and can be completed at www.chaptersahead.org.

Contact: Dr. Tom Fish, (614) 685-8723, e-mail Thomas.Fish@osumc.edu.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! OAAS-APSE Conference, November 6-7

The Ohio Association of Adult Services (OAAS) and the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) conference will be November 6 - 7, at the Crowne Plaza North, 6500 Doubletree Ave., in

Columbus. To register for the conference go to: <http://bit.ly/14hb1SWT> Keynote speaker will be Tony Gentry, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Director, Assistive Technology for the Cognition Laboratory Department of Occupational Therapy at Virginia Commonwealth University. The *full Conference Agenda* will be available soon. Additional speakers will address the topics of increasing and supporting community employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual and physical challenges.

DHN ANNOUNCES: 15th Annual Ohio Housing Conference, Nov. 5-7

The 15th Annual Ohio Housing Conference, one of the largest statewide housing conferences in the nation, will be held November 5-7, 2013 in Columbus. Join the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) and Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing (OCCH) at the Conference, themed “Rising Towards Tomorrow.” *For reduced rates, register before October 4.* Information and registration at: [Click Here](#). DHN also has released the 2012 County Housing Plan Analysis & Summary. Read the report: [Click here](#).

SAVE THE DATE! Ohio SIBS Conference, November 8-9

The 13th annual Ohio Adult Sibling (SIBS) Conference is set for November 8-9 at the Columbus Airport Marriott Hotel. It’s an opportunity to meet and partner with other adult siblings and disability professionals for a uniquely informative experience. Learn useful information, strengthen advocacy skills, expand community inclusion, and connect with other siblings from around the state. Ohio SIBS serves as a unified voice and partner for Ohio adult siblings of people with developmental disabilities and their families. As the date draws nearer, go to www.ohiosibs.com for more information on the conference.

Will You Be ‘Up All Night for Autism’? November 9

“UP ALL NIGHT FOR AUTISM” is planned by the Autism Society of Ohio, November 9, at Dave and Buster’s Hilliard location, 11:00 p.m. – 3:00 a.m. (well, not quite ALL night!) A silent auction, raffle and more is also planned beginning at 9 p.m.. The evening also will include a DJ, photo booth, food, and free game play. For complete information click [here](#).

SAVE THIS DATE, TOO! OACB Annual Winter Conference, December 4-6

The Ohio Association of County Boards Serving People with Developmental Disabilities (OACB) Annual Conference will be December 4-6 at the Hilton Easton hotel in Columbus. It will celebrate the organization’s 30- year anniversary. More details as the year progresses.

And, Save This Date: March 4, 2014 Developmental Disabilities Awareness & Advocacy Day at the Ohio Statehouse

DODD Hotline for Reporting Abuse, Neglect, and other Possible Major Unusual Incidents

To report abuse/neglect and other MUI’s call toll-free **1-866-313-6733**. MUIs are to be reported to the local County Board of DD, however, it is understood that there may be times an individual, staff member, or family member may feel it is a conflict, or that, potentially, a County Board may be involved in the allegation. In those instances the hotline number is there to be used for reporting.

Pipeline feedback ... direct from you to the state ...

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