

# Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism Related Needs (ASGARN)

FY25 1st Quarter Meeting  
September 10, 2024

Victoria M. Rodríguez-Roldán, J.D.  
Coordinator of State Autism Strategy



# Meeting Guidelines 1

## **Goal 1:**

To create a safe, positive, and inclusive environment for the advisory group, participants, staff, and the public.

## **Goal 2:**

Create a safe space for diversity of contributors, thoughts, and ideas.



# Meeting Guidelines 2

- **Assume positive intent** on the part of advisory members, moderators, participants, and staff.
- **Listen actively.** Allow others to complete their thoughts, listening to listen, and not listening to respond.
- **One speaker at a time**, prioritizing those who haven't spoken yet.
- Default to **“both / and” thinking** instead of either/or thinking.
- **Members and public**, please wait for the appropriate open forum section to speak.



# Roll Call

## **Governor Appointed:**

Adam Shafer Jones  
Christy Russell  
Devan Southerland  
Emily Arker  
Lisa Wiederlight  
Nicole Christine LeBlanc  
Peggy Ann Pugh  
Roger Thibaudeau

## **Coordinator Appointed:**

Elizabeth Benevides  
Gregory S. Robinson  
JaLynn Prince  
Jess L. Wilcox Cowing, PhD  
Lydia X.Z. Brown, JD  
Melissa Rosenberg  
Nancy Forsythe, MA, EdS.  
Nikki Stokes  
Rachel Leah Kraus, LCSW-C  
Ryan T. Roddey, PhD  
Trevor Byrd  
Yoreidy Vasquez-Tavarez, PhD,  
ABPP

## **MGA Appointed:**

Del. Julie Palakovich Carr  
Del. Michele Guyton

## **Ex-Officio**

Ami Taubenfeld  
Fatima Salem  
Rachel London  
Raymond Marshall  
Rebecca Rienzi

## **Government designee:**

Carmen Brown  
Courtney Thomas-Winterberg  
Janet Furman  
Anne Blackfield  
Victoria Rodriguez-Roldan, JD



# Open Remarks by Chair



# Leadership Transitions



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# Autism Strategic Plan

- Status update
- Strategic plan phases
  - Strategy
  - Workplan
- Review process



# Introduction

- Background
- A note on language
- Why this strategic plan is important
- How this strategic plan was developed
- Plan Structure
- Vision statement
- Mission statement





# Guiding Principle 1

People with autism should be able to live and thrive in their chosen communities.

- Education
- Employment
- Transportation
- Housing



# Guiding Principles 2

Autistic people and their caregivers should be safe and healthy in their homes and communities.

- Safety
- Health care and caregiver supports



# Guiding Principle 3

People with autism should lead lives with the greatest degree of self-determination possible.

- Adult Guardianship
- Community integration
- Cultural competence and inclusion



# Current ASGARN vacancies

## Ex Officio

- Representative from the Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

## Governor's Appointment

Qualified candidates encouraged to apply with the [Governor's Office of Appointments](#)

- Physical therapist
- Pediatrician



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# Upcoming Meetings FY25

2 December 10, 2024 4:30 PM - 6:00 pm

3 February 11, 2024 4:30 PM - 6:00 pm

4 June 10, 2025 4:30 PM - 6:00 pm



# ASGARN Comments



# Public Comments



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# Closing Remarks





# Contact Us



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