

Welcome to Meet the Expert With Clair Benitez

**Director- Office of Disability Services Coordination
Texas Health and Human Services (HHS)**

Hosted by COMMUNITY FOR PERMANENT SUPPORTED HOUSING

Clair Benitez

Director of Disability Services
Coordination (ODSC)

Assembling solution focused
strategies and cross-division
partnerships to improve
outcomes for people with
disabilities.

***Aiming to
improve
outcomes for
Texans with
disabilities.***



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Community Attendant Workforce Development Strategic Plan

Office of Disability Services Coordination (ODSC)

Clair Benitez, ODSC Director

What We Will Cover

1. Mission of ODSC
2. Organizational Structure
3. Guiding Principles
4. How ODSC Helps
5. Community Attendant Workforce Strategic Plan
6. DSW Taskforce
7. Progress & Momentum



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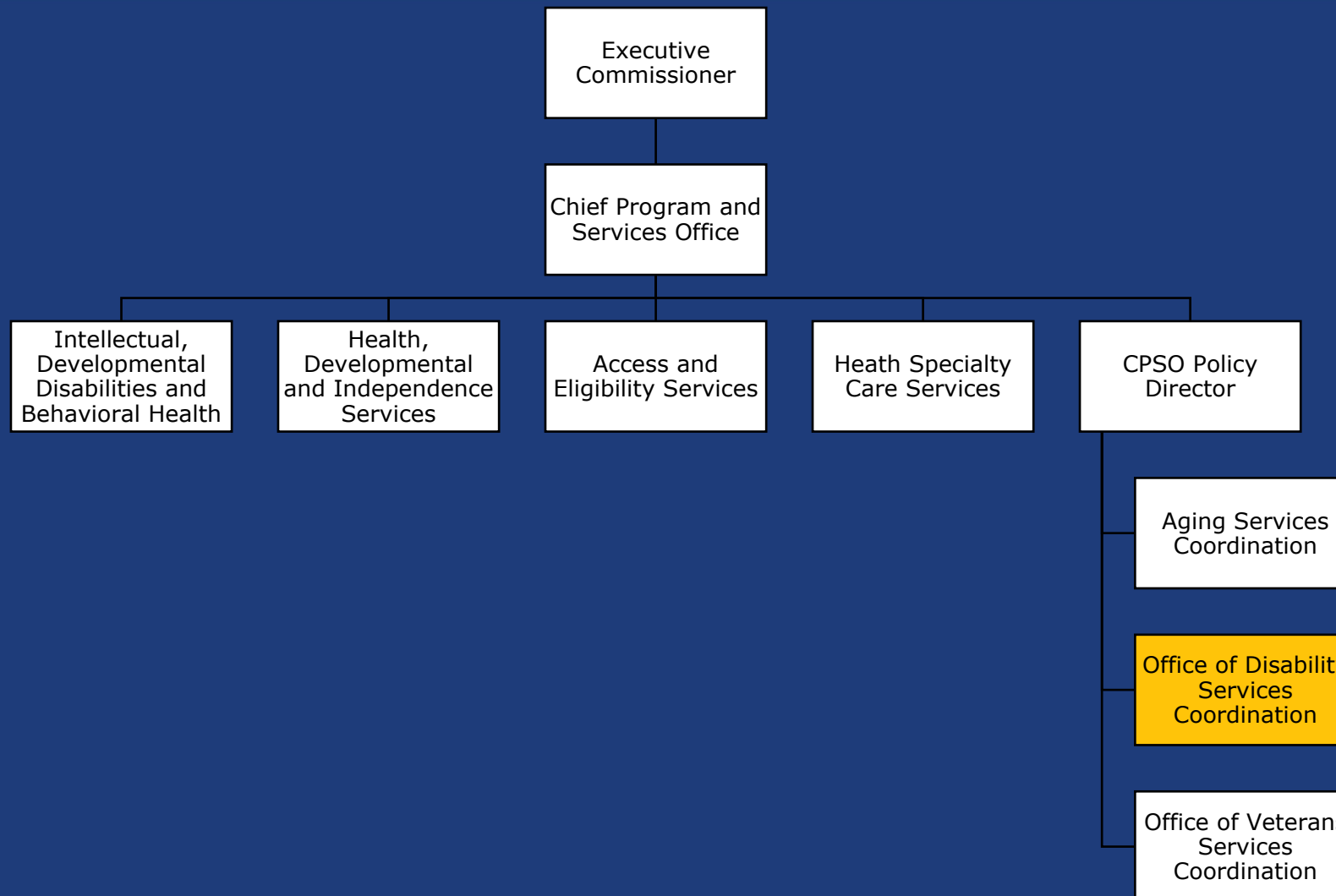
Office of Disability Services Coordination

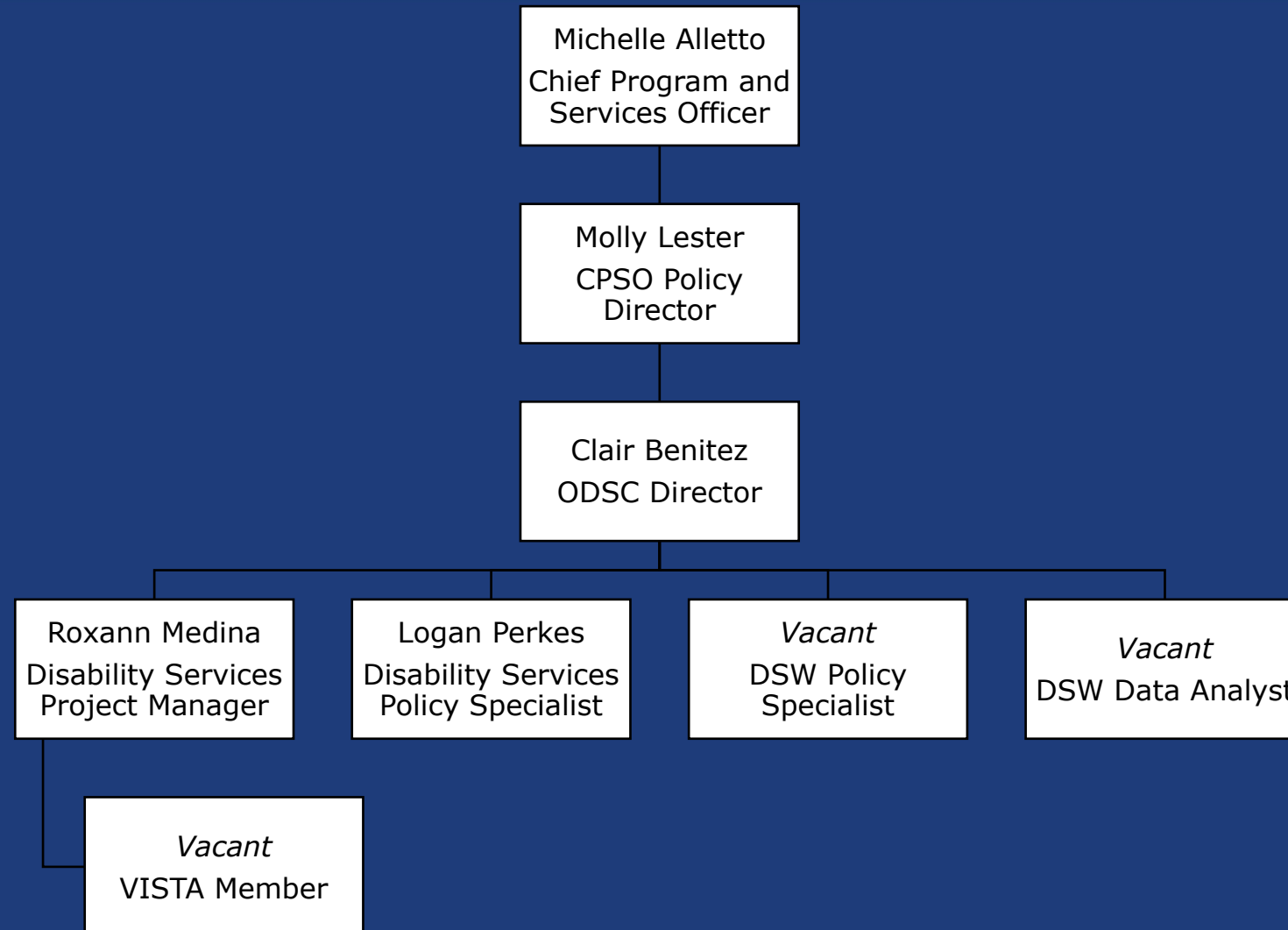
- Role of the Disability Listening Session
 - Disability Services Action Plan
- The Texas Health and Human Services Commission created the Office of Disability Services Coordination in January 2021
- Mission: To improve outcomes for Texans with disabilities through access to a seamless array of HHS services using solution-focused strategies and cross-division partnerships.



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ODSC within HHS





Guiding Principles

Person-Centered:

We will use person-first or identity-first language, planning and practices as we work on improving services and supports.

Collaborative Engagement:

We will collaborate with external and internal partners to have coordinated communication.

Cross-Disability:

We will incorporate voices from many communities.

Continual Learner:

We will strive to learn more about disability communities, their experiences, and innovations in care.

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How ODSC Helps

- **Connect:** We connect external stakeholders with the HHSC team members or programs that can best assist with an issue or answer questions. This ensures continuity of the user's experience and eases navigation of HHSC's programs, services, and supports.
- **Share:** We promote, partner, or share beneficial opportunities with our internal collaborators and external stakeholders within the disability community.
- **Engage:** We lead system level improvement projects and ensure that internal and external stakeholders can provide and seek input.



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Community Attendant Workforce Development Strategic Plan (Rider 157)

- Rider 207 & Rider 157
- The plan contains strategies and data relating to recruiting, retaining, and ensuring adequate access to the services of community attendants.
- Contains workforce data and information, feedback collected from stakeholders during a cross agency forum and online survey and HHSC's long term goals and recommendations.



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Community Attendant Workforce Development Strategic Plan (Rider 157)

- Definition of 'Attendant'
- Advocate & Assist individuals in Medicaid and non- Medicaid programs
- Critical role in supporting individuals in their homes and community settings, avoiding costly admissions to institutional care settings
- Rising Need
- Challenges: financial insecurity, lack of benefits/insurance, high levels of part time employment

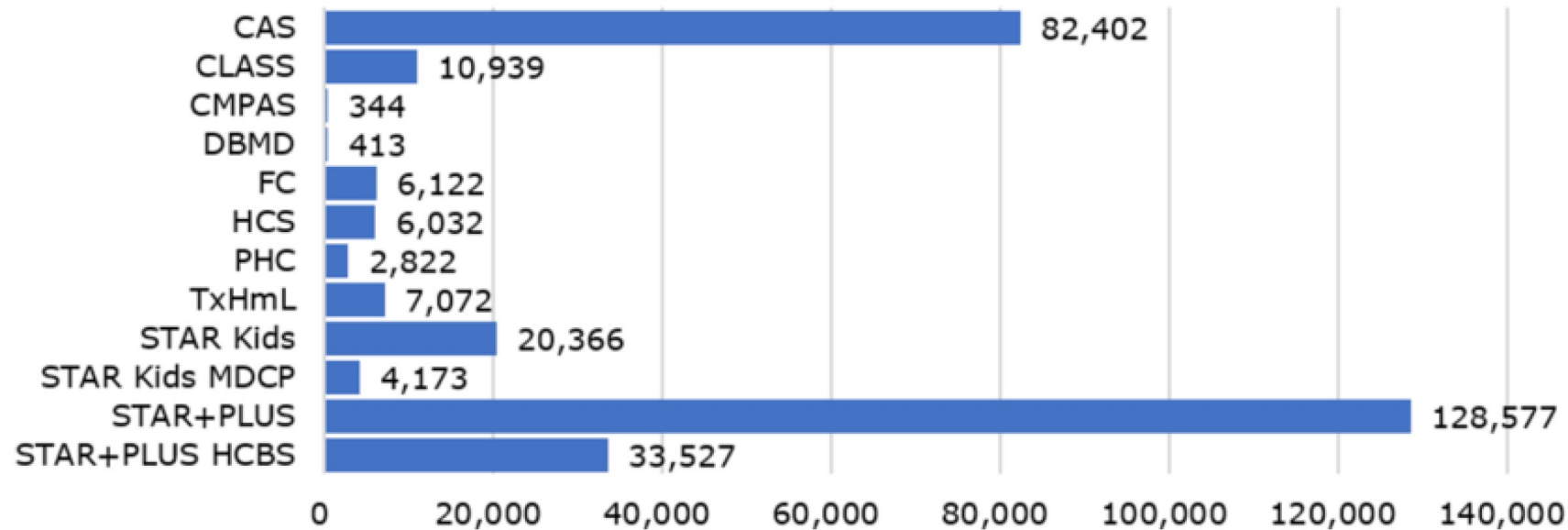


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Service Distribution



Figure 1. Number of People Who Receive Community Attendant Services by Program: FY 2019¹⁰



An attendant may be employed by a provider agency or directly by the person receiving care (or their representative). Whereas most community attendant services are delivered by provider agencies, some individuals may choose to receive their services through the CDS service delivery option.

Projected Demand



Table 2. Projected Demand for Community Attendants in Texas¹⁴

Calendar Year	Projected Texas Population	Projected Texas Population Age 65+	Projected Texas Population with a Disability	Projected Percent of Texas Population with a Disability	Number of Workers Needed to Maintain Current Ratio of 11 Disabled Persons per Attendant	Number of Workers Needed to Attain and Sustain a Ratio of 9 Disabled Persons per Attendant
2022	29,989,000	4,139,000	3,522,000	11.7%	320,000	391,000
2023	30,481,000	4,305,000	3,611,000	11.8%	328,000	401,000
2024	30,980,000	4,467,000	3,699,000	11.9%	336,000	411,000
2025	31,487,000	4,641,000	3,791,000	12.0%	345,000	421,000
2026	31,999,000	4,809,000	3,883,000	12.1%	353,000	431,000
2027	32,519,000	4,970,000	3,975,000	12.2%	361,000	442,000
2028	33,044,000	5,132,000	4,070,000	12.3%	370,000	452,000
2029	33,574,000	5,288,000	4,164,000	12.4%	379,000	463,000
2030	34,110,000	5,439,000	4,261,000	12.5%	387,000	473,000
2031	34,651,000	5,568,000	4,355,000	12.6%	396,000	484,000
Change 2022-2031	4,662,000	1,429,000	833,000	0.9%	76,000	93,000
Percent Change 2022-2031	15.5%	34.5%	23.7%	7.0%	23.8%	23.8%

Expenditures

The Community Attendant Workforce Development Strategic Plan also included data such as:

- Total expenditures
- Cost Comparison (Community vs. Institutional)
- Personal Attendant Base Wage
- Rate Enhancement Programs
- Turnover Data



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Financial Incentives



Table 10. Percentage of Providers Offering Benefits to Community Attendants: FY 2019 Cost Reports

Benefit Type	Attendants for CLASS, PHC, CAS, FC, STAR+PLUS PAS/HAB ⁴⁶		Attendants for DAHS	
	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
Medical Insurance	4.3%	17.0%	2.1%	11.3%
Dental Insurance	2.1%	6.8%	1.5%	3.1%
Vision Insurance	1.0%	4.4%	0.9%	2.4%
Mileage Reimbursement	5.1%	4.1%	1.2%	2.1%
Retirement	1.6%	3.4%	2.1%	2.7%
Paid Sick Leave	1.6%	6.5%	7.0%	25.0%
Paid Vacation	1.8%	8.4%	9.2%	54.0%
Total providers	1,260		327	

Cross Agency Forum

1. Provide a Living Wage
2. Reduce Administrative Burdens in Consumer Directed Services (CDS) Hiring Process
3. Workforce Development
4. Data Collection
5. Pursue Alternate Sources of Revenue



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Recommendations to Improve Process: CDS Survey



Table 13. Respondent Recommendations to Improve Process of Finding and Hiring a CDS attendant ⁶⁰

CDS Attendant Finding/Hiring Recommendation Category	% ⁶¹	n
1. Increase or allow greater flexibility with pay, benefits, or mileage reimbursement	47.3%	98
2. Provide more resources to help employers find/screen/hire quality attendants ⁶²	44.9%	93
3. Streamline or simplify paperwork and application process and/or make it online	6.8%	14
4. Reduce hiring restrictions ⁶³	6.3%	13
5. Improve issues with customer service ⁶⁴	4.8%	10
6. Increase public outreach/awareness of CDS option availability	1.4%	3

Recommendations for Improvement: CDS Survey



Table 14. CDS Survey Respondent Recommendations for Improvement of CDS Service Delivery Option⁶⁵

CDS Option Recommendation Category	% ⁶¹	n
1. Increase or allow greater flexibility with pay, benefits, or mileage reimbursement	40.2%	74
2. Address customer service issues with FMSAs and/or case managers ^{64,66}	25.5%	47
3. Provide more resources or training to help employers handle operational responsibilities	14.1%	26
4. Streamline or simplify paperwork and/or make it online	9.8%	18
5. Address concerns with EVV implementation or EVV costs	8.7%	16
6. Provide more resources to help employers find/screen/hire quality attendants ⁶²	8.7%	16
7. Address issues with the authorizations/approvals process	3.8%	7
8. Reduce hiring restrictions ⁶³	3.3%	6
9. Increase public outreach/awareness of CDS option availability	2.7%	5
10. Expand CDS option to more programs/services (e.g., in HCS)	1.1%	2
11. Other ⁶⁷	5.4%	10

HHS Long Term Goals

1. Sustain & Continue Investing in Wage Increases & Rate Enhancement Programs
2. Improve Data Collection
3. Convene a Workforce Development Taskforce
4. Increase Utilization of the CDS Option
5. Enhance Network Adequacy Standards
6. Value Based Payments in Managed Care

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DSW Taskforce

The DSW Taskforce aims to explore long-term recruitment and retention (non-wage based) strategies within the community attendant, personal care attendant and direct service workforce. The taskforce's challenge is to continue the momentum around the valuable workforce and to not wait on wage compensation as the only solution.

Meets periodically to discuss with a group of participants who assist with exploration of the strategies outlined in the Community Attendant Workforce Development Strategic Plan.



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Current Progress

- ✓ Launch a public relations campaign to increase awareness of the role of community attendant work and growing career opportunities
- ✓ Establish a Direct Service Workforce Taskforce and solicit membership
- ✓ Obtain Money Follows the Person Funds as potential capacity building projects to support DSW efforts
- ✓ Invite & Learn from E4 & PATHs programs
- ✓ Collaborated with Texas Workforce Commission to increase job search/matches for attendant positions
- ✓ Initiate Planning Phase for Community Survey



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Celebrate Momentum

84th Session
2015
Base Wage-
\$7.84 to \$8.00

85th Session
2017
Rider 207

86th Session
2019
Base Wage-
\$8.00 to \$8.11

86th Session
2019
Rider 157



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*Personal Attendant Base Wage as defined in (1 TAC) §355.7051



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Thank you

Contact Information:
HHSCOfficeofDisabilityServicesCoordination@hhs.texas.gov
[ODSC Webpage](#)

11/15/2021 Introduction to Independence Workshop

Join CPSH to learn housing options and resources for planning and accessing affordable housing, budgets, services, safety resources and more.



So much great information. Thank you very, very much.
-Parent

Introduction to Independence Workshop

Zoom workshop for families of people with disabilities to learn housing options and resources on the road to independence





Planning for affordable, safe housing



Affordable budgets and resources



Services, quality of life and more



Monday, November 15, 2021
6-9pm
[Register here](#)
Workshop fee: \$55





For more resources on affordable housing for people with disabilities visit our site at www.txcpsh.org



Thank you for joining us today



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