



Center for Public
Representation

CPR Newsletter | October 2024

Updates on Litigation, Initiatives and Staff

Following *Marsters v. Healey* Settlement, CPR Launches New Initiative: Bringing People Home

After the federal court approved the comprehensive Settlement Agreement in *Marsters v. Healey* on June 18, 2024, CPR launched its implementation initiative entitled *Bringing People Home*. The project will initially focus on implementing this Agreement, but soon will be expanded to include other efforts to promote integration, end unnecessary institutionalization, and allow people to come home to their families, neighbors, and communities. The project will engage people with diverse experiences and expertise, so that CPR's legal successes can be implemented with and by affected communities.

The Bringing People Home Coalition

In conjunction with the [Dignity Alliance](#), stakeholders, and people with disabilities, CPR organized six workgroups (ASAPs, Independent Living Centers, families and guardians, attorneys and advocates, behavioral providers, and cultural competency advocates) with unique expertise and direct experience, to advise and assist in the implementation initiative. CPR provided an initial orientation for all the workgroups, met separately with each to discuss preliminary data and start-up concerns, and will provide periodic updates, semi-monthly newsletters, ongoing trainings, and at least quarterly engagement opportunities for the workgroups and other interested stakeholders. We encourage anyone interested in this case, and CPR's broader Bringing People Home project, to sign up for updates at <https://marsters.centerforpublicrep.org/contact/>.

Update on the Implementation of the Marsters v. Healey Settlement Agreement – Year 1



On October 1, 2024, CPR, its co-counsel, and a number of state officials met for the first quarterly meeting required by the Agreement. Secretaries, Commissioners, and senior staff from all relevant agencies presented status updates on each program required by the Agreement. The Commonwealth shared an initial, abbreviated data report prior to the meeting which indicated that over 1,200 people had been provided in-reach and information, over 750 people with SMI were provided behavioral health care coordination and case management, and 720 people had enrolled in the MFP Demonstration during the three months since the Agreement was initially signed (April-June 2024). The Commonwealth will share new policies on informed choice, contractual requirements for ensuring cultural competency, and recent documents for each program as soon as possible, and follow-up meetings will be scheduled as needed during the next two months.

CPR Joins National Disability Organizations Calling for Access to Integrated Employment

In September 2024, CPR joined a national coalition of disability organizations in supporting the bipartisan “Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act” (TCIEA) (S. 533 / H.R.1263). TCIEA would expand individuals’ opportunities for competitive integrated employment, provide grants and technical assistance to support the transformation of segregated employment settings, and gradually sunset the federal subminimum wage program under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Read the letters sent to the Senate Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (HELP) Committee on [expanding integrated employment](#) and [ending subminimum wages](#).

CPR Partners on SDM Workshop for the Cambodian Community

CPR collaborated with the Monorom Family Support Program of the [Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association](#) (CMAA) on a [workshop for families](#) in Lowell, Massachusetts. The topic was Supported Decision-Making (SDM) and other alternatives to guardianship. This workshop was part of an [initiative](#) designed to increase access to SDM in linguistically, ethnically, and culturally diverse communities in the State.



This interactive hybrid workshop – with participants both on-line and in-person – was held on August 24, 2024. It represented the culmination of a series of planning sessions with community leaders and advocates at CMAA over a number of months to ensure that the training’s approach, format, and materials would meet the needs of the audience.

CPR Presents on Ensuring Effective Communication at National Conference for Judges and Court Officers

On August 28, 2024, CPR Staff Attorney Megan Rusciano presented alongside Judge Paula Carey, retired Chief Judge of the Massachusetts Trial Court, and Elizabeth Moran, Executive Director of The Arc of Colorado, at a plenary session of the [National Association of Presiding Judges and Court Executive Officers \(NAPCO\)](#) conference in Denver, Colorado. The presentation topic was



“Breaking Barriers: Ensuring Effective Communication for Individuals with Disabilities in Court.”

While effective communication is fundamental to ensuring that people with disabilities can meaningfully engage in every aspect of the judicial process, many courts still do not have the skills needed to address communication barriers and ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in court services, programs, and activities. The presentation aimed to educate judges and court staff on people with disabilities’ right to effective communication under the Americans with Disabilities Act. It provided practical tips and strategies courts could use, including recognizing the role of Supported Decision-Making, to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to the court system. Over 120 judges and court staff attended the presentation.

The presentation followed from a webinar that Rusciano and Moran held earlier this year for the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) on [“Ensuring Effective Communication for People with Disabilities”](#).

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