

Elder and Disability Justice Coordinating Council (EDJCC) Committee Membership 2025

Stakeholder Committee Membership

Tony Anderson, *Association of Regional Center Agencies*

Tony Anderson entered the field of developmental services in 1987 and began his career as a direct support professional in homes, day programs, and schools. He has served as a social worker and later became the Executive Director of a community non-profit that served over 120 people with developmental disabilities. He worked in the leadership for the Napa County Department of Health and Human Services and was appointed Deputy Director by Governor Gray Davis, responsible for Policy, Planning, and Governmental Relations at the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. He joined The Arc California in 2003 and served as Executive Director and principal lobbyist for the association. In this capacity, he served on numerous state and national boards and commissions and was the national President for the executive directors of the association. In 2017 he became the Executive Director of Valley Mountain Regional Center serving 20,000 people with developmental disabilities and their families in Amador, Calaveras, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne Counties. Today Mr. Anderson is the Associate Director and lobbyist for the California regional centers (ARCA) responsible for organizational leadership and strategic partnerships, community engagement in policymaking, and policy advocacy. Tony received his BA in Research Psychology and an MA in Organizational Development from Sonoma State University

Akiles Ceron, *San Francisco Adult Protective Services*

Akiles Ceron, MSW is the Adult Protective Services (APS) Program Director for the City and County of San Francisco, CA. He earned his Master's in Social Work from California State University Long Beach. He has been a public servant for 25 years, working in various capacities within the APS program. He has been an instructor for three APS Regional Training Academies, training on Working with the Self-Neglecting Client and on Elder and Dependent Adult Financial Abuse, and he developed the in-person training on Consistency in Findings for CA APS programs. He has participated in the California Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) and their Protective Services Operations Committee (PSOC), and its Consistency Workgroup since 2010. The workgroup develops and maintains the CWDA's APS guidelines to supplement regulations, and has developed guidance on Consistency in Case Documentation, Consistency in Findings, and Consistency in Outcomes, among other topics in California APS. Nationally, he has participated as a subject matter expert on national guidelines, understand self-neglect, reporting abuse, financial abuse, and workload in APS, as well as being a Board member of the National Adult Protective Services Association. Additionally, since 2017 he has led the San Francisco APS program through various researcher-practitioner partnerships with various universities that have led to innovations in practice that promote consistency and outcomes that result in harm reduction to older adults and adults with disabilities.

Leza Coleman, *California Commission on Aging*

Leza Coleman, the Executive Director for California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association (CLTCOA), was introduced to the world of elder justice and self-determination as a volunteer Long-Term Care Ombudsman, where she honed her advocacy skills supporting residents and their families in achieving the highest levels of care. Inspired to ensure dignity and respect for all residents, Leza obtained her administrator's license and joined the leadership team to open an assisted living facility committed to person centered models of care. Not satisfied to serve seniors in a single community Leza took on the leadership of CLTCOA in 2012, where she supports, resources, and magnifies the work of the thirty-five local LTC Ombudsman programs in California. She now serves as a board member for the California Elder Justice Coalition, the Village Movement California, California Health Advocates, as well as on the policy committee for the California Association for Long-Term Care Medicine and the California Aging and Disability Alliance. Leza has been active in multiple statewide legislative efforts and is passionate about working on statewide efforts to promote "aging well" in California.

Sherry Johnson-Alvarez, *Parent Advocate*

Sherry Johnson is a mother of a young adult with Autism. Sherry has been in public service for more than 15 years, working specifically in the social services field. Her journey with having a child with a developmental disability has led her to advocate for underserved individuals that lack access to necessary services.

Daniel Kroos, *San Francisco Police Department*

Daniel Kroos currently works for the San Francisco Police Department and is assigned to the Special Victims Unit where he works on cases that include elder abuse, child abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence, and fraud.

Jamie Jensen, MSW, PhD., *California Commission on Aging*

Jamie Jensen, MSW, PhD, is a dedicated social work educator and advocate with over 20 years of experience serving rural and Tribal communities. She is the Chair of the Social Work Department at Cal Poly Humboldt, where she focuses on culturally responsive practices in social work education and mentoring the next generation of helping professionals. Dr. Jensen has a diverse professional background that includes roles as a dementia care educator, medical social worker, and program evaluator, with a particular emphasis on supporting aging populations, caregivers, and Indigenous communities. As the founder of The Full Life Institute, Dr. Jensen has championed efforts to promote healthy aging and compassionate end-of-life care in rural areas. She has also contributed to multiple statewide initiatives, including her current service on the California Commission on Aging. A published author and sought-after presenter, Dr. Jensen combines academic expertise with practical experience to address complex social issues, highlights the importance of community-driven solutions and collaboration to improve outcomes for vulnerable populations.

Jamie Levine, *Elder Law and Advocacy*

Jaime Levine is the Executive Director and Managing Attorney of Elder Law & Advocacy (EL&A). With over two decades of experience in elder law, Jaime has helped over 10,000 seniors and supervised attorneys who have worked on tens of thousands of additional cases. At EL&A, Jaime is committed to maximizing the organization's impact on seniors and ensuring that they have access to the legal services they need. He is responsible for overseeing all aspects of strategy, legal advocacy, finance, fund development, and technology at EL&A. He also leads a team of attorneys and staff members across several offices and clinics. Implementing technology has been a key focus of Jaime's work at EL&A. He has adopted cloud-based communications platforms to improve services for clients and has helped the organization transition to virtual services seamlessly.

Liz Logsdon, *Disability Rights California*

Elizabeth (Liz) Logsdon is the Managing Attorney of the Investigations Unit at Disability Rights California (DRC). DRC's Investigations Unit addresses the abuse and neglect of people with disabilities in all settings, including long term care facilities, state hospitals, developmental centers, community-based settings, jails, and immigration detention facilities. The Investigations Unit pursues non-litigation systemic advocacy solutions with a focus on public policy. Liz joined DRC in July 2018 after working for Disability Rights Tennessee, the Tennessee P&A, for over five years. Liz obtained her law degree from Vanderbilt University Law School in 2011 and holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Central Florida. Liz lives in Los Angeles.

Sandra L. Longnecker, *Riverside District Attorney's Office*

Sandra L. Longnecker is a Senior Investigator with the Riverside District Attorney's Office. Sandra serves as the sole investigator for Elder Abuse and assists in prosecution of many types of cases, conducts briefings, and training in Elder and Dependent Abuse. Sandra is also a part of the C.A.R.E. Teams which is a multidisciplinary team.

Vivianne Mbaku, *Justice in Aging*

Vivianne is the Director of Equity in Elder Justice with Justice in Aging. Vivianne joined Justice in Aging in April of 2019 in the Los Angeles office working on Elder Abuse issues. She leads a cross issue team that ensures our work on elder justice issues is grounded in advancing equity for older adults of color, LGBTQ older adults, immigrant older adults, those with limited English proficiency, and others. Before joining Justice in Aging, Vivianne was a Staff Attorney for the Utah State Courts Self Help Center and practiced consumer and public benefits law with Utah Legal Services. Vivianne was also a member of the Utah State Bar Modest Means Committee which aimed to make affordable legal representation more widely available. Vivianne also completed an appellate clerkship with the Honorable Senior Justice Petra Jimenez-Maes of the New Mexico Supreme Court. After her clerkship, Vivianne moved to Los Angeles to practice public benefits law at Inner City Law Center in Los Angeles. Vivianne is a 2012 graduate of the University of Utah's S.J. Quinney College of Law and earned a B.A. in Politics and Latin American Studies from Scripps College. Vivianne is admitted to practice law in California.

Jennifer Moore Ballentine, *Coalition for Compassionate Care of California*

Jennifer Moore Ballentine, MA, has more than 20 years' experience in palliative care education and policy, program design and evaluation, and nonprofit leadership. As CEO of the Coalition for Compassionate Care of California, she leads a team dedicated to improving care for people with serious illness and those who care for them. CCCC is California's go-to organization for information, advocacy, and education on advance care planning, palliative care, and the POLST program. Jennifer's previous positions include executive director of the Cal State University Shiley Haynes Institute for Palliative Care; Vice President, Hospice Analytics; Executive Director, Life Quality Institute; and Director of Professional Programs, Colorado Center for Hospice and Palliative Care. She participates in national initiatives to improve the quality and delivery of palliative care and has served as a member of the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine Roundtable on Quality Care for Persons with Serious Illness since 2017; National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization Palliative Care Council, since 2018; Patient Quality of Life Coalition, since 2017; and C-TAC Regulatory Council, since 2020. She is a widely published author (peer-reviewed and trade publications) and in-demand speaker. She earned an MA in End-of-Life Studies, with graduate honors, from Regis University, Denver; a Professional Advancement Certificate in Gerontology from University of Colorado–Colorado Springs; and a BA, Phi Beta Kappa, from Oberlin College.

Alicia Morales, *Adult & Long-Term Care Division Santa Cruz County*

Alicia Morales has worked in adult services for more than 26 years. Currently, she serves as the Public Guardian and the Director of the Adult and Long-Term Care Division in the Human Services Department of Santa Cruz County. Alicia began her career in Los Angeles County as an Adult Protective Services (APS) worker where she later went on to develop and deliver one of the first APS induction training programs. Alicia worked in Alameda County in various capacities, including probate conservator and Superior Court Investigator. Prior to leaving Alameda County, she served as the Director of the Division of Aging and Adult Protection. In that role she oversaw the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) as well as the elder justice programs within the Social Services Agency. She has served as the President of the California State Association of Public Administrators, Public Guardians and Public Conservators (CAPAPGPC) and co-chair of the Protective Services Operations Committee (PSOC), in addition to other leadership roles and her participation in several subcommittees. Alicia earned a BA in Psychology from University of California, San Diego, and an MA in Psychology from Pepperdine University.

Lisa Nerenberg, *California Elder Justice Coalition*

Lisa Nerenberg has been a leader in the field of elder abuse prevention for over 35 years. She is currently the Executive Director of the California Elder Justice Coalition and an instructor at City College of San Francisco, where she teaches classes in gerontology, elder abuse, and ageism. She was the founding director of the San Francisco Consortium for Elder Abuse Prevention, which piloted the nation's first elder abuse multidisciplinary team and other widely replicated services. She has presented at hundreds of professional forums, testified before Congressional committees, served on governmental advisory boards, and written extensively about elder abuse, undue influence, elder justice, public health approaches to

combating elder abuse and health disparities, and related topics. Her recent book “Elder Justice, Ageism and Elder Abuse” offers a framework for promoting individual rights and social justice in aging policy and programs. Her earlier work “Elder Abuse Prevention: Emerging Trends and Promising Strategies” describes what the public, government, agencies, and advocates can do to prevent abuse, treat its effects, and ensure justice. Lisa received Masters’ degrees in Social Work and Public Health from the University of Minnesota.

Marty Omoto, CA Disability Action Network

Marty’s goal is to improve the quality of life by protecting and strengthening services and supports for people, including those who are developmentally disabled, have mental health needs (with traumatic brain and other injuries), veterans with disabilities, seniors, physically disabled individuals, family members, workers, community organizations including the Asian-Pacific Islander, Latino and African American communities, and others across California. Marty’s publication, California Disability Community Action Network (CDCAN) Disability Rights News, initiated in 1987, is now distributed electronically to over 65,000 people with announcements and reports on hearings and legislative sessions. Marty’s life and passion for social justice have been deeply influenced by his family, his Japanese American ethnicity, and providing care for his developmentally disabled sister for over twenty years. Growing up during the internment of Japanese Americans during the war and, later, amidst the California farm workers’ movement in the grape fields of Salinas, Marty experienced, first-hand, the importance of issues for which he advocates: fairness, justice, access, and the opportunity to improve one’s quality of life.

Carla Perissinotto, M.D., University of California, San Francisco

Dr. Carla Perissinotto is an Associate Professor in the Division of Geriatrics, Department of Medicine at University of California San Francisco School of Medicine. She is Board Certified in Internal Medicine, Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine. Carla is dedicated to working in both community and academic settings. Her main work is in UCSF Care at Home--which provides medical care to home bound older adults, and in embedded Geriatrics consult practices. From 2008-2017, Carla served as a primary care and consulting Geriatrician at the Over60 Health Center in Berkeley. In 2017, Dr. Perissinotto was appointed as the first Associate Chief for Geriatrics Clinical Programs at UCSF. Given the growth of clinical programs, the associate chief oversees and manages our both our inpatient and outpatient clinical programs which include Care at Home, Geriatrics consultation in the outpatient setting, and the new Acute Care for the Elderly (ACE) unit at Moffitt-Long Hospital, Orthopedic CO-Management programs and programs which are in development. Dr. Perissinotto graduated from the Tufts University School of Medicine in 2006. She works in San Francisco, CA and 3 other locations and specializes in Geriatrician, Internal Medicine and Hospice and Palliative Medicine. Dr. Perissinotto is affiliated with UCSF Medical Center Mount Zion, Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, and UCSF Medical Center Parnassus.

Renita Polk, County Welfare Director’s Association (CWDA)

Renita Polk joined CWDA as Deputy Director of Aging, Disability, and Older Adult Services in May 2024. In this role, Renita supports county human services departments in the development and implementation of policies impacting older adults, as is responsible for

budget and legislative advocacy relating to aging and disability policy. Prior to joining CWDA, Renita served as Assistant Director for the Office of Direct Care Workforce at the California Department of Aging. Before this she was a principal budget consultant for the California State Senate and a California Council on Science and Technology fellow in the California State Assembly. Renita earned a Bachelor's degree from Cedar Crest College, and a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Scott Pirrello, *San Diego District Attorney's Office*

Scott Pirrello is the head of Elder Abuse Prosecutions for the San Diego District Attorney's Office and has been a prosecutor for 18 years. Since 2009, Scott has been assigned to the Family Protection Division prosecuting a variety of Family Violence cases including Elder Abuse, Domestic Violence, and Child Abuse cases. Scott now focuses exclusively on prosecuting all varieties of Elder Abuse including physical, financial, sexual, and neglect cases and the vulnerable victims that come with them. Scott has 49 jury trials to his credit and is an expert in Elder Fraud, Elder Abuse enforcement, prosecution, and on the multi-disciplinary team approach to Elder Abuse prevention evidenced by his involvement co-chairing the San Diego Elder Protection Council; Elder and Dependent Adult Death Review Team; and the CDAA's Elder Abuse Committee. Scott also was instrumental in 2021 in creating the first of its kind San Diego FBI Elder Justice Task Force in collaboration with the FBI, APS, US Dept. of Justice, and San Diego local law enforcement to combat, investigate, and prosecute Elder Abuse Scams.

Bertha Sanchez Hayden, *Bet Tzedek Legal Services*

Bertha Sanchez Hayden serves as a Directing Attorney at Bet Tzedek Legal Services. Bet Tzedek is a nationally recognized premier legal services firm in Los Angeles, California. Ms. Hayden currently oversees Elder Justice/Caregiver Direct Services & Access to Justice Programs. Ms. Hayden has dedicated her career in legal services to serving older and dependent adults and their caregivers navigate elder law issues. Ms. Hayden often speaks at local, statewide, and national conferences on complex issues of decision-making and service delivery models. She currently oversees (3) high traffic pro per programs in the areas of: Conservatorship (Guardianship), Elder Abuse/Dependent Adult Restraining Orders, and Decedents' Estate. Ms. Hayden recently served as a delegate at the World Congress on Adult Capacity. In 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom appointed her to the Professional Fiduciaries Advisory Committee where she currently serves as chair. In 2023, Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero appointed Ms. Hayden to Judicial Council Probate and Mental Health Advisory Committee. Ms. Hayden is also currently chair of the Elder and Disability Justice Coordinating Council (EDJCC) Conservatorship Subcommittee.

Tom Scott, *CA State Association of Public Administrators, Public Guardians and Public Conservators (CA PA|PG|PC)*

Tom Scott is the Deputy Director for Policy and Administration for the California Community Action Partnership Association (CalCAPA). CalCAPA exists to support Community Action Agencies and CSBG Entities to strengthen communities and enforce a unified Community Action presence in California. Prior to CalCAPA, he served as Regional Administrator, Region 9, Pacific Rim for the U.S. General Services Administration. Key responsibilities included

oversight of programs and functions that reside in the region; provided leadership and advice on regional policy development; support and promotion of the Administrator and Administration's goals and objectives in the region and oversight of emergency response operations and activities in the region. He has served as the State Executive Director for the National Federation of Independent Business in California and prior to that was the State Executive Director of California Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse for approximately 20 years. Tom has an extensive background in both the private and public sectors. He has worked at all levels of government including positions in Los Angeles County, the California State Senate, and multiple positions in the federal government. Tom earned a B.A. in Political Science from California State University, Long Beach and an M.P.A. in Intergovernmental Management from the University of Southern California.

Valerie Smith, Santa Clara Department of Aging and Adult Services, Adult Protective Services

Valerie Smith, LCSW, is a Program Manager in the Adult Protective Services (APS) program for the County of Santa Clara, Department of Aging and Adult Services. Valerie has worked in aging and adult services for over 20 years, and previously worked with adults experiencing mental health conditions. She has a master's degree in social work (MSW), is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) and is part time faculty at the San Jose State University School of Social Work. She has a deep knowledge and respect for elder and vulnerable adult populations and has spent her career advocating for social justice. Valerie has participated in the California Welfare Directors Association's Protective Services Operations Committee, serving as co-chair and chair from 2017-2019 and participates in various sub-committees. She has been a presenter at various conferences and trainings and has written and implemented various program improvements and enhancements to the APS program.

Jason Sullivan-Halpern, California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Assoc.

Jason Sullivan-Halpern, the Director of the California Long Term Care Ombudsman Association (CLTCOA), joined the organization in November 2022 with over a decade of relevant experience working in the nonprofit and human services sectors. Prior to CLTCOA, Jason managed complex volunteer-based programs supporting vulnerable adults and low-income families for several nonprofit organizations in Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area, including the Solar Community Housing Association (Davis), California CareForce (Roseville), Sacramento Tree Foundation (Sacramento), and Catholic Charities of the East Bay (Oakland). He also served as Programs Chair of the Board of Directors of the Directors of Volunteers in Agencies (DOVIA) chapter in Sacramento and volunteered with the East Bay Naturalization Collaborative in Oakland. Jason obtained his B.A. in Philosophy & Political Science from UC Davis in 2014. He studied law at The Pennsylvania State University and received his J.D. with concentrations in Advocacy and Public Interest Law cum laude in 2021. During his time at Penn State, Jason was Editor-in-Chief of the Penn State Journal of Law & International Affairs and President of the PSL Public Interest Law Fund. He also represented survivors of domestic violence in emergency hearings at the Clearfield County Court of Common Pleas while working with MidPenn Legal Services, a nonprofit legal aid provider.

Janie Whiteford, *California IHSS Consumer Alliance (CICA)*

Janie Whiteford is a long-term advocate for issues affecting seniors and persons with disabilities where she had the opportunity to work with these populations at both Silicon Valley Independent Living Center, Valley Medical Center, and a small private practice. After retirement, she became very involved with CICA, a statewide organization she was instrumental in developing and where she is currently the President of the Executive Committee. She also represents CICA in many other non-profit organizations and State Committees addressing the needs of seniors and persons with disabilities. Having acquired a significant disability 35 years ago has given her an intimate perspective on the issues affecting many people with disabilities. Janie has three children, seven grandchildren and currently lives with her husband in the Bay Area.