



Interagency Committee on  
Employees with Disabilities

**June 9, 2022, Meeting Minutes**  
**Meeting Conducted via WebEx**

**Members**

Ex-Officio Members	Name	Present	Phone	Absent
<b>Co-Chair, Human Rights</b>	Jim Bennett, Director	X		
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Donna Hardy</i>	X		
<b>Co-Chair, Human Services</b>	Grace Hou, Secretary			X
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Ryan Croke</i>	X		
<b>Attorney General</b>	Kwame Raoul, AG			X
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Judith Levitan</i>			X
<b>Central Management Services</b>	Janel L. Forde, Director			X
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Patricia Santoya-Marin</i>			X
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Mark Mahoney</i>	X		
<b>Civil Service Commission</b>	Timothy D. Sickmeyer, Chairman			X
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Andrew Barris</i>	X		
<b>Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities</b>	Kimberly Mercer-Schleider, Director	X		
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Margie Harkness</i>	X		
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Mariel Hamer-Sinclair</i>			X
<b>Lt. Governor</b>	Juliana Stratton, Lt. Governor			X
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Victoria Villalpando-Sanchez</i>	X		
<b>Secretary of State</b>	Jesse White, Secretary			X
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Bill Bogdan</i>	X		
<b>State Comptroller</b>	Susana A. Mendoza, Comptroller			X
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Kevin Derrig</i>	X		
<b>State Treasurer</b>	Michael Frerichs, Treasurer			X
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Rosemary Laudani</i>	X		
<b>Veterans Affairs</b>	Peter Nezamis, Interim Director			X
<i>Designee</i>	<i>Matt Eddington</i>			X
<b>Employees with Disabilities</b>				
Department	Name			
Human Services	Matt Abrahamson			X
Human Services	Nathan Painter			X
Human Services	Rahnee Patrick			X
Dept of Employment Services	Elizabeth Grace			X
Central Management Services	Glenn Minks			X
<b>Other Attendees</b>	Name			
DoIT	Vickie Simpson	X		

Human Services	Lurdes Aceves			X
Central Management Services	Barbara McDonald			X
Central Management Services	Mayra Magana	X		
Central Management Services	Brandon Singer			X
Central Management Services	Chris Bond			X
Human Rights	Chet Pinski	X		
Human Rights	Bryant Dunbar	X		
State Treasurer	JJ Hanley	X		
Human Services – DDD (Recorder)	Casey Burke	X		
	Adam Flores	X		
	Jayden Epps	X		
	Morgan Lyn	X		
	Caronina Grimble			X
	Betsy Buttell	X		
	Alex Bautista	X		

**1. Call to Order**

A. Director Bennett called the meeting to order at 11:05am on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**2. Roll Call, Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

- A. Donna Hardy conducted Roll Call
- B. Quorum established

**3. Approval of Minutes: April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

- A. Jim Bennett entertained a motion to approve
- B. Motion to approve minutes: Kimberly Mercer-Schleider
- C. Motion seconded: Bill Bogdan
- D. Jim Bennett accepted motion and second to approve minutes – none opposed

**4. Co-Chair Remarks**

- A. Director Bennett
  - i. August 4<sup>th</sup> will be a live meeting
  - ii. Collaboration discussion
    - II. Cynthia Flores, Deputy General Counsel / Deputy Chief Compliance Officer, Governor’s Office
    - III. Jim Bennett and Donna Hardy met with Cynthia Flores last week to discuss Governor’s Office convening of a new group of Disability Accessibility Coordinators (DAC) and Reasonable Accommodations (R.A.) leaders across the state to address accessibility and training concerns. They meet quarterly and are more externally focused, while ICED is more internally focused on State employees. However, there are some overlapping goals, specifically Goals 1 and 2 for 2022.
    - IV. Agreement on shared participation in each other’s meetings
    - V. Next Disability Accessibility Coordinators meeting is June 15<sup>th</sup> meeting – Vickie Simpson serves on both

- VI. Seeking recommendations of candidates to serve on ICED for cross committee representation
  - VII. Cynthia Flores shared Model Employee Manual
    - a. Currently with General Counsel and Disability Access Coordinators
    - b. Will help move some of our goals along.
      - i. JJ Hanley Question – extent / scope of handbook review.
      - ii. Jim Bennett – understanding is the handbook is finalized and out to General Counsel of each commission but unsure of distribution to Constitutional Offices / Handbook is the start of developing R.A. standards across enterprises and welcomes feedback
      - iii. Recommendation is for ICED membership to review and suggest any changes or improvements.
      - iv. There are at least three standing committees on this topic – need to align resources and passion
      - v. Jim Bennett will follow-up on distribution scope
- B. Ryan Croke
- i. Slides on Marshall Fellowship will be sent to Donna to share with Committee
  - ii. Mike Scott, “accessibility guru”, left DHS, hired by DoIT to serve as Chief Accessibility Officer to accelerate shared goal of advancing accessibility of digital content
  - iii. Outbreaks of COVID continue in 24/7 institutional settings (SODCs & Psychiatric Hospitals) / Goal to protect staff and residents in care
  - iv. DRS/FCS – continue efforts to ensure benefits and accessibility to remote environments
  - v. Eager to hear how productivity / customer experience have been impacted by hybrid work schedules for any DHS services / programs
    - II. Ryan has found Benefits Case Workers (Medicaid, Food programs, etc.) are more productive / effective
    - III. Jim Bennett: IDHR willing to share remote work plan
    - IV. Ryan Croke: DRS Director Patrick has indicated that affording remote and hybrid work can help maintain and increase employment of persons with disabilities
    - V. Jim Bennett: Alex Bautista has led negotiations on IDHR side and is willing to share
    - VI. Kimberly Mercer-Schleider, Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICDD) fully supports continued remote/hybrid work / even as some have returned in office
      - a. ICDD has adjusted to remote work schedule and advocates for its continued use
      - b. Understands the challenges of front facing positions
      - c. Abrupt shift back to on-site would cause a huge disruption to those with a disability. Hybrid has help maintain connection and productivity.
  - vi. Jim Bennett: ICED should formalize recommendation on this & take vote at August meeting
    - II. Ryan to work with Alex on language, discuss at next meeting and will then pass along to enterprise Level

## 5. New Business

- A. Donna Hardy: Annual Report
  - i. Final draft of the ICED 2021 Annual Report is ready – requesting for review and any substantive changes with feedback due COB 6/10/22
  - ii. Goals were achieved, specifically increasing membership of State Employees with a Disability and maintaining and sustaining meeting participation
  - iii. A Committee Survey was created to gauge interest and needs of Committee members. This survey was critical and led to the implementation of a Speaker Series to educate and train members on relevant topics and concerns of PWD.
  - iv. Clarifying membership – official designee versus attendee/participant has been noted in Annual Report
- B. Morgan Lyn: ICED Website
  - i. Screen share of new website
  - ii. Illinois moving to Adobe Enterprise Management (AEM) System – major upgrade / increased capability
  - iii. Need to raise profile of this site. Information has been converted but much info needs to be archived / updated / added (Need to add pictures & videos)
  - iv. Annual Meetings list included – hopeful to add forms & other components
  - v. Looking to have three meetings to review content & present content back to full committee
    - II. Donna: Looking for additional volunteers to help reimagine the website
  - vi. Vickie Simpson: Suggested we include a link to ICED website on all State of Illinois Employee Portals / share info with CIOs. This could also be an avenue to get the word out about the PSA that ICED is working on.
  - vii. Jim Bennett: As we begin to work with other disability focused groups, we should add a page for coordination. There's a lot of work happening out there, and we need to ensure coordination of efforts and services across the various groups. Would like to create a go to resource page for the state.

## 6. Old Business

### A. ICED Goals

PSA (Betsy Buttell, Chair)

*Goal 1: Create a Public Service Announcement (PSA) / Training video for all state agencies and employees on the topic of Reasonable Accommodations. Video will include both Co-Directors of ICED discussing employee rights, the process for requesting accommodations and how to file a complaint.*

Committee full of great ideas and expertise:

- Working now to determine length of video; also determining if it should be a series of videos. There's an abundant content to choose from.
- Shout out to Bill Bogdan for putting together an extensive amount of resources and content to review and pull from
- Would like to have testimonials from state employees who have requested any type of R.A.
- PSA can range from 1 minute to 5 minutes or longer. Mark Mahoney is timeline manager working with IOCI
- Given all the information received to date, working on preparing storyboard, adding human element, getting key pieces attached including creating hashtags, etc.

- Victoria from Lt. Gov Stratton's office has done a phenomenal job with the Lt. Governor's social media and we're looking forward to utilizing her expertise on this PSA.
  - Jim Bennett: Next two subcommittee reports may inform some of the questions on number of videos / should pull information from Cynthia Flores on how Governor's Office could partner with them.

Reasonable Accommodations (Glen Minks, Chair (absent) – Chet Pinski provided update)  
*Goals 2 & 3: Convene leaders in charge of Reasonable Accommodation (RA) requests/programs throughout state to review RA process and determine best practices and accountability. Convene leaders of EEO to garner ideas on specific needs or topics that should be addressed state-wide.*

- Requesting all agency forms related to R.A. There is one for applicants and agencies. Those should be sent to Glen for review by the subcommittee.
- Discussed ADA Coordinators / Officers training and process
  - 6/21 Great Lakes ADA Center Training
  - List of EE Officers and ADA Coordinators were compiled and sent to Glen by Chet to help gather/solicit additional information that can be used to support the subcommittee's work
- Matt Eddington will research information from the private sector and Jayden Epps from the education sector on R.A. best practices and provide that information to the subcommittee for review & discussion.
  - Vickie Simpson had a question on R.A. Guidance document sent to General Counsels:
    - Jim Bennett asked Betsey Madden, IDHR's General Counsel to share a status update.
    - Betsey informed Committee that she believed the Model Employee Manual was sent to all HR departments and the Governor's GC shared that information with other GCs throughout the state. The manual is a template that agencies can use for their Employee Manuals.
    - Betsey further stated she's not sure if there's a specific RA form but there may be a policy on RA. She would forward to Director Bennett & Donna Hardy to share with the Committee.
    - Vickie clarified that she received the manual and it's not exclusively on RA.

Collaboration (Director Patrick, Chair (absent) Mark Mahoney provided update)  
*Goals 4 & 5: Collaborate with the Employment Economic Opportunity for People with Disabilities (EEOPWD) group to determine where we can work together to create model programs for employing people with disabilities. Expand Trainee Program for people with disabilities by continuing to work with CMS to employ more people with disabilities.*

- Met with EEOPD Workforce Development Committee regarding collaboration with the subcommittee. They discussed how they can educate agencies on the Disabled Hiring Program.
- People with Disabilities (PWD) hiring numbers are down in State Government over the last few years. They will need to find out why. There is an Annual Survey that Chet is familiar with that is sent out to employees. The participation rate has gone down substantially. They're looking to regroup and work on improving survey. A small working group is looking at that now.

- Had virtual Career Fair – over 250 individuals checked in
  - Topics included state hiring process, successful opportunity disability program, soft skills, and many others.
  - Great participation from State agencies including CMS, IDHR, IDHS, IDOT, Corrections, Revenue, Liquor Commission, etc.
  - Overall event was very successful with great participation.
- Hiring process – On the Personnel Labor call it was announced that we will have a fully electronic hiring process by July 1, 2022! This will increase opportunities for more people and increase accessibility to more communities. This will bring the State of Illinois into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## 7. Old Business

- A. Nominations Committee (Jim Bennett)
  - i. No nominees currently
  - ii. Working with Cynthia Flores from Governor’s Office. Also, Vickie Simpson, since she serves on this committee, we will be asking her to help us find some great talent.
  - iii. We are always seeking recommendations for people to serve on this Committee. If they can’t serve on the Committee maybe there’s a subcommittee, they can serve on.
- B. Annual Awards Ceremony (Donna Hardy)
  - i. Ceremony is 10/6/22, live and in person in Chicago
  - ii. Searching for venue – hopeful for announcement at next meeting
    - II. Seeking committee membership for speakers, theme, flyers, brochures
    - III. Donna will send nominations for employee of the year, state agency of the year and state legislator of the year
    - IV. Kimberly Mercer-Schleider & Adam Flores have been instrumental in prior nominations
- C. Marshall Fellowship Exchange Program (Slides shared by Ryan Croke)
  - i. Purpose: German Marshal fund of US was created 75 years ago as a way to build a permanent bridge between US / Europe
  - ii. Marshall plan was gesture of good will from US on rebuilding Europe after WWII
  - iii. Every year for 50 years, Europeans and Americans have engaged in the exchange
    - II. 2022 (3/16-4/10): 12 Americans, 17 Europeans met in Washington DC
    - III. Americans visited European sights (Brussels, London, Ankara, Istanbul, Bratislava & Berlin)
    - IV. Pictorial highlights
      - a. Berlin monument created in 2014 recognizing murder of 300,000 People with Disabilities (PWD) in Nazi Germany
      - b. April 2<sup>nd</sup> Bratislava Slovakia (neighbor of Ukraine) – employees welcoming refugees (more than 400,000 at the time)
      - c. Slovakian refugee waiting area – incredible support for Ukrainian refugees
      - d. Berlin – encountered Ukrainian refugees on the street, using sign language to communicate
      - e. Catherine Naughton, Director of European Council on Disability (Brussels) – dedicated to bringing together Disability Rights Organizations within Europe / discussed shared initiatives
- D. Upcoming Town Hall (Morgan Lyn)

- i. Virtual - Week of July 25<sup>th</sup>
- ii. Lead by Karen Tamley
- iii. Would like to showcase ICED agencies
- iv. Seeking development of discrimination related content

**8. Public Comment**

- A. None

**9. Next Meeting**

- A. 8/4/22 live but with virtual option
- B. 555 West Monroe, Chicago - 7<sup>th</sup> floor (Green conference room)
  - i. Unknown Springfield location

**10. Adjournment**

- A. Jim Bennett requested motion to Adjourn
- B. Motion to Adjourn: Drew Barris
- C. Motion Seconded: Margaret Harkness
- D. None opposed
- E. Meeting adjourned at 12:09pm on June 9, 2022