



**Interagency Committee on Employees with Disabilities**

James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph, Room 2-025, Chicago  
 100 S. Grand Avenue East, Harris Building, 2nd Floor, Room 2SW, Springfield

**Meeting Minutes: Wednesday, June 7, 2017**

**1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

- Call to Order at 1:35 p.m.
- Roll Call (Committee Members and Meeting Guests)

<b>ICED Committee Members</b>				
Agency	Member or Designee	Attended	Location	In Person
Illinois Department of Human Rights	Janice Glenn, Acting Director, ICED Co-Chair	X	CHI	X
	Abdi Maya, Designee	X	CHI	X
Illinois Department of Human Services	Francisco Alvarado, Designee	X	CHI	X
Illinois Attorney General	Michelle Harden, Designee	X	SFLD	X
Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs	Greg Dooley, Designee	X	SFLD	X
Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities	Margaret Harkness	X	SFLD	X
Illinois Secretary of State	William Bogden	X	CHI	X
Illinois Comptroller	Kevin Derrig	X	CHI	X
<b>Meeting Guests</b>				
Illinois Department of Human Rights	Ngozi Okorafor	X	CHI	X
Illinois Department of Human Services	Martha Younger White	X	CHI	X
Illinois Department of Human Services	Christina Pean	X	SFLD	X
Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity	Randy Buschulte	X	SFLD	X
Illinois Department of Revenue	John Nelson	X	SFLD	X

- Consideration and Approval of Minutes, April 2017  
 Draft of minutes were distributed, read, and approved by members.

• New Business

**State of Illinois EEO/ADA Coordinator Survey on Reasonable Accommodations**

IDHR Co-chairs Dimas and Glenn propose working on developing a short information-gathering survey geared to State of Illinois EEO/ADA Coordinators on methods for meeting reasonable accommodations requests for the annual report.

Comments:

Christina P. expressed concern in finding qualified vendors who are willing to work “without pay” due to state budget.

Bill B. commented that in the past ICED had talked about the idea of working with property control equipment purchased for accessibility equipment and using for example, color-coded tags to distinguish it with other types of equipment.

### **ICED Annual Awards Ceremony**

ICED Co-Chairs Dimas and Glenn propose organizing an Awards ceremony in October to commemorate National Employees with Disabilities Awareness Month and to have the event in Chicago.

Suggested categories: include:

- 1 - Outstanding State Agency: agency that has made extraordinary achievements in hiring, retention or advancement of employees with disabilities.
- 2- Outstanding State of Illinois Employee with Disabilities: employee who has made some significant contributions to or demonstrates core value of their organization.

Comments:

John N. considered that it would be nice to alternate award location between Chicago and Springfield.

Margaret H. suggested doing a quick survey/poll to see where people want the award held.

Kevin D. thought it would be a good idea to bring the awards ceremony to Chicago due to exposure.

Christina P. suggested doing this awards at the same time as Disability Awareness Day, ADA Celebration or Deaf Awareness Day.

Francisco A. liked the idea of October, mentioned it was great to establish a programmatic theme for the event that goes along with ICED's identify, and doing something in Springfield during the Spring when legislators are in session.

Margaret H. mentioned that initially, the event was tied to legislators being in Springfield during the Spring because of the award that was given to them.

Bill B. also mentioned that the event was held in May because of legislator awards, but stated it would be interested in doing something in October. He agreed that having the event in Chicago would help with exposure and being able to promote employment/state employment with people with disabilities.

A signup sheet was passed around for anyone wishing to be a part of the working group organizing the event and developing the nomination forms.

### **ICED Internship Update**

The ICED Internship Subcommittee previously assisted non-state sponsored internship programs in placing students with State agencies. Subcommittee members would meet with State Agency Directors to discuss programs and ask them to host a student at their respective agencies. The ICED Internship Subcommittee had been pushing for CMS to designate an ICED Intern Option for future postings. A meeting with CMS Director Hoffman was held in 2016 with previous ICED Coordinator (IDHR Designee Susan Allen) and ICED Co-Chair Janice Glenn to discuss the Option. However, CMS held that it was not possible to satisfy ICED's request for this Option due to current restrictions with collective bargaining and Rutan procedures. Due to this official response, the ICED Internship Subcommittee will no longer meet to discuss the Intern Option. However, ICED members are encouraged to submit information on internships, and anyone wishing to promote a particular internship or work program are welcome to submit a request for public participation to present on these programs at any upcoming ICED meeting.

Comments:

Martha Y.W. expressed concern and disagreement with the decision that has been made to cease the Internship Subcommittee's efforts stating that it would not cost the State any money to place interns that are being subsidized through another program. She also gave an example of successful student participant that eventually found state employment through the Subcommittee. She mentioned she obtained approval through DHS to bring in interns and hire them.

Ngozi O., on behalf of Director Glenn, reiterated that the meeting held with CMS Director Hoffman expressed concerns over required Rutan and Collective Bargaining restrictions for agencies under the jurisdiction of the Governor's Office.

Martha Y.W. mentioned that she didn't want ICED Internship Subcommittee efforts to go to waste, and that efforts needed to continue given that she knew of other state agencies such as DCFS who were making caveats to their postings such as only hiring interns from their Advisory Committee. She also mentioned that ICED had the ability to offer legislation to make this designation happen.

Bill B. mentioned that through legislative efforts, ICED membership was expanded to include constitutional officers. It took the Subcommittee two years to make the change. Although the Internship program has been successful without a special designation, now with constitutional officers, the hope was to build on internship program efforts.

Ngozi O, reiterated that ICED Co-chairs are in full support of ICED but with regards to the Intern Option, CMS Director Hoffman has raised some real concerns related to agencies under jurisdiction of the Governor; and while Constitutional officers may have a different climate to deal when it comes to hiring, that is not currently the case with certain agencies who currently have to deal with these restrictions.

Bill B. mentioned that those restrictions have existed forever and that the Subcommittee has still been able to "hire" 75 people successfully over the last 10 years under the ICED Intern Program.

Margaret H. agreed that those barriers exist for everyone, interns or not. She stated that it's something ICED has been pushing back on forever, but CMS falls back on their standard response saying it's not possible due to Rutan. She stated that if ICED accepted that, then there would be no opportunity to get persons with disabilities in. She stated that there is a need for an alternate process and insisted that the Committee needed to continue to push the matter.

Given the meeting with CMS Director Hoffman and his answer to the Subcommittee's request for the alternate title, IDHR Designee asked members what the next steps would be for the Subcommittee and what it would work on?

Martha said that a Subcommittee is needed because for the last two years CMS and other state agencies have indicated barriers against the Option but agencies like DHS-DRS have always found a way to hire interns.

Director Glenn stated that in the meeting with Director Hoffman, he was candid about the current situation and she respects his position. She asked Martha Y.W. how the Subcommittee was able to "hire" 75 people successfully without the proper Option or designation? Martha stated they've done it differently each year initially asking the Governors' office to send letters to State Directors.

Francisco clarified that in the past couple of years, DHS was able to successfully hire interns with disabilities because they had the capacity, as an agency, to work with CMS in going through the proper procedures for posting internships. That was an agency effort. Since the ICED Intern Subcommittee is under a State Committee (ICED), it does not have any authority to hire. He recommended that ICED members continue working with CMS,

(within their respective agencies), and follow proper procedures for bringing interns with disabilities into State employment. He reiterated that his understanding of Director Hoffman's comments was that ICED is not an entity that is a position to set up an Internship program due to existing restrictions so perhaps ICED can focus on promoting existing opportunities that have already been approved.

## **Other Business**

### **State of Illinois Annual Disability Survey**

IDHR Designee proposed working with State EEO/AA Officers on reviewing the existing survey to see if there are any edits that can be made in to help improve the survey that all State of Illinois employees must take every year, in order to better identify any needs that employees with disabilities currently have. A signup sheet was passed around for anyone interested in participating in this working group.

### **Disability Video Project Update**

Chelsea Jones of Southern Illinois University joined the meeting via phone to give an update to the video project that ICED has been previously involved in. Released videos on the [Disability Works website](#) in May and these videos are specific to disability topics good for individuals with disabilities who are seeking employment. They also have 14 videos for employers. Total of 40 videos have been done, 34 videos include traditional closed captioning and are currently working on 6 ASL-specific videos. The ASL videos will be released soon. The videos are also available via YouTube and are able to be embedded on websites. Videos were funded through Employment Disability Initiative.

### **Presentation: "New Assistive Technologies Aiding Employees with Disabilities", Presenter: Mike Scott, Illinois Department of Human Services, Rehabilitation Technology**

Francisco introduced Mike Scott who spoke to members about Information Technology Accessibility Act. While Assistive Technology is not a "magic bullet" for assisting employees with disabilities, it does serve as a bridge that helps employers/employees meet in the middle. It has been more than 10 years since the law was passed and part of the responsibilities under the Act is to revise the technology standards. Currently efforts to do are underway. A technical group is helping to draft updated standards, which will be published by July 18<sup>th</sup>. Mike asked the committee to get involved by getting information and commenting on the IITAA website. [www.dhs.illinois.gov/IITAA](http://www.dhs.illinois.gov/IITAA) or helping out with outreach efforts or training on how to procure assistive technology as part of the implementation aspect. For more information, please email [Mike.Scott@illinois.gov](mailto:Mike.Scott@illinois.gov).

## **Announcements**

ADA Celebration coming up on July 20, 2017 at the James R. Thompson Center 10am- 3pm

There will be an opportunity for Springfield to participate in workshops via videoconferencing

The celebration will have an art component and an exhibitor resource fair, free for state agencies on a first-come, first-served basis.

ABLE Program: Presenter from the State of Illinois Treasurer's Office covered the ABLE program modeled after the 529 College Savings Program. This program is for persons with blindness or disabilities covered under Title 2 or 16 of the Social Security Act. ABLE allows for a wide range of expenses, as long as they are related to the person's blindness or disability, including expenses for education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, assistive technology and personal support services, health, prevention and wellness, financial management and administrative services, legal fees, etc. This program is an investment tool that was approved at the federal level in the fall of 2014. There are now 17 states who are a part of the overall ABLE Alliance. Individual beneficiaries must be disabled (defined as being entitled to benefits based on blindness or disability under Title II or XVI of the Social Security Act, or have a "disability certification" filed with the Treasury Secretary) AND must have been disabled before age 26. Sign up is available online. Questions can be directed to: 888-609-8683. More information at: [www.illinoistreasurer.gov](http://www.illinoistreasurer.gov)

**Business from the Public**

No requests for public participation requested.

**Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 2:53pm.

**Mission:**

*The purposes and functions of the Committee are: (1) to provide a forum where problems of general concern to State employees with disabilities can be raised and methods of their resolution can be suggested to the appropriate State agencies; (2) to provide a clearinghouse of information for State employees with disabilities by working with those agencies to develop and retain such information; (3) to promote affirmative action efforts pertaining to the employment of persons with disabilities by State agencies; and (4) to recommend, where appropriate, means of strengthening the affirmative action programs for employees with disabilities in State agencies.*