



Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities

Website: dhs.wisconsin.gov/gcpd ○ PO Box 2659, Madison, WI 53701

Approved GCPD Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 14, 2025, from 2:05 PM to 4:35 PM

GCPD Members Present

- Rhonda Staats, Margaret Kristan, Nancy Leipzig, Justin Koestler (Lt. Governor's Office), Daniel Idzikowski, David Morstad, Dan Laatsch, Tiffany Payne, Dan Witt, Sarah Kuehn (DVR), Ramsey Lee, and Ben Barrett (CPD).

GCPD Members Absent

- Cindy Bentley, Ashley Mathy, Eva Kubinski, BJ Ermenc, Patty Zallar, Elizabeth Watson and Colleen Larson.

Guests

- Chuck Fehl (SOB), Rebecca Rabatin (IndependenceFirst), Greta Surprenant (CDHH), Jonathan Petermon (CDHH), and William Crowley,

DHS Support Staff Present

- Zachary Davenport, Lisa Sobczyk and Angela Brenna.

ASL Interpreters and Captioner Present

- Amy Simonsen, Maria Kielma, and Margo Lucas.

GCPD Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Call to Order and Welcome

- Dan Laatsch, GCPD Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:06 PM. Introductions and rollcall were conducted. The meeting was made available via Zoom and phone with Meeting ID: 161 1786 1716.

Review and Approve the May 14, 2025, Quarterly Meeting Agenda

- David Morstad made a motion to approve the May 14, 2025, Quarterly Meeting Agenda. Tiffany Payne seconded the motion. Motion carried.



Review and Approve the January 2025 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

- Ramsey Lee made a motion to approve the January 30, 2025, Quarterly Meeting Minutes. Tiffany Payne seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Comment on Issues Affecting People with Disabilities (2:15 – 2:35 PM)

- No public comment received.

Liaison Updates

- Sarah Kuehn, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD)
 - Sarah shared Information about [Community Integrated Employment](#). Competitive integrated employment (CIE) is work in which an individual with a disability is paid no less than the customary rate earned by other employees performing similar work in an environment where they regularly interact with people both with and without disabilities and have access to the same benefits and advancement opportunities as their peers without disabilities.
 - Sarah shared that the 2017 Wisconsin Act 178 requires the Department of Health Services (DHS), Department of Public Instruction (DPI), and Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to coordinate services that ensure individuals with disabilities have access to competitive integrated employment opportunities.
 - Sarah invited GCPD to review and provide input the biennial 2026-2027 Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) Plan and collect stakeholder input.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** Sarah Kuehn will send DHS Support Staff the WI Act 178 Competitive Integrated Employment Plan prior to the open meeting for GCPD input.
 - Sarah also shared that there will be an open meeting to provide input on May 27, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM. Meeting Details: [State Fiscal Year \(SFY\) 2026-2027 Competitive Integrated Employment Plan](#)
- Sarah reported that three main objective areas in their plan remain largely unchanged, with only minor wording adjustments. A significant development is



the creation of joint guiding principles for CIE, where all departments now share 12 agreed principles, eliminating silos. They maintain three umbrella targets:

- Increase Awareness: The goal is to promote CIE opportunities for people with disabilities, with a consistent approach from previous plans. An updated technical assistance guide is now available for teams' assisting adults with disabilities, which outlines responsibilities and funding. They aim to set specific targets for increasing CIE across the state using baseline data from a joint data system.
- Align Agencies: Focus is on addressing service provider capacity issues. A workgroup called the Service Capacity and Quality Workgroup is tasked with tackling these challenges across DVR and long-term support programs, given the common service providers used by all agencies.
- Youth Focus: The aim is to prepare students for careers through K-12 Career Pathways, emphasizing work-based learning and connections to support services. Efforts will focus on career and technical education opportunities, including youth apprenticeships.
- Nancy Leipzig inquired about the increase in Wisconsin CIE numbers. Sarah explained that data is sourced from DHS, DPI, and DVR, with a joint database for tracking co-enrollment in programs. Additionally, DPI received a federal research grant to implement services for justice-involved youth with disabilities, aiming to enhance CIE outcomes. The five-year grant involves DVR as a partner, with a goal to secure permanent funding by 2029.

- Colleen Larson, Wisconsin Technical College System
 - Absent. No updates provided.
- Eva Kubinski, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
 - Eva Kubinski was absent but will send updates later.

Discuss Recommendations from Engage for Change

- Members discussed several key recommendations from Engage for Change to enhance the impact and efficiency of the GCPD. These recommendations focus on clarifying roles, increasing action orientation, and fostering collaboration with



other councils. By implementing these recommendations, GCPD aims to be a more influential advocate for Wisconsin's disability community. Tiffany Payne shared the recommendations that were discussed during the Engage for Change Summit (see letter from David Morstad.) See discussion items and decisions below:

- **Clarify GCPD's Roles Through Collaboration, GCPD United Councils Workgroup**
 - Define GCPD's purpose in collaboration with other councils.
 - **MOTION ITEM: David Morstad made a motion for GCPD open United Councils representation to general GCPD members, not to exceed three liaison members in addition to Executive Committee representation. Also, GCPD additional liaison should not be somebody who is already serving from one of the other councils. Margaret seconded David's motion. Motion carried.**
 - Streamline information sharing and understand key priorities of collaborating councils.
 - Schedule Executive Committee meetings after GCPD United Council meetings to act on items learned.
 - Action Item: DHS Staff Angela Brenna will invite full membership to the United Councils and change the dates to monthly.
 - GCPD will take a more prominent role in planning and presenting unified messages across councils through drafted letters, legislative meetings, and position statements.
 - **MOTION ITEM: David Morstad made a motion to grant the Executive Committee the authority to act on items from the United Councils Workgroup on behalf of GCPD without needing a vote for approval in the interest of expediency. Dan Witt seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
 - Plan and schedule an annual Advocacy Day-Legislative Listening Session beginning in January 2026 in Madison to take place during a quarterly meeting. Action Item: Add agenda item to Executive Committee Meeting.



- **Revise GCPD State Plan:**

- Revise GCPD State Plan to reflect recommendations. Add agenda item for Executive Committee.

Reports from GCPD Committees and Workgroups

- **Transportation**, Ramsey Lee and Dan Laatsch
 - Ramsey Lee and Dan Laatsch provided updates from the Transportation Workgroup. See attached Transportation Workgroup Notes.
- **Employment**, Nancy Leipzig:
 - No updates. GCPD members decided to sunset Employment Workgroup to make room for United Council work on the workplan.
- **Falconer and Blakeley Awards**, Tiffany Payne
 - Tiffany shared that the Awards Ceremony will be at the Third Quarterly Meeting in Madison at the Concourse on August 27, 2025.
 - The Awards Workgroup has sent out solicitation emails for nominees.
 - DHS Staff support reported no nominees received yet.
 - Dan Laatsch mentioned the need for a photographer and asked if anyone attending the meeting in person has photographic skills they are willing to share or knows someone who's willing to photograph no charge.
- **United Councils**, Dan Laatsch
 - Dan Laatsch shared updates. See attached United Councils Workgroup notes.

Council Updates

- **Council on Physical Disabilities (CPD)**, Ben Barrett
 - CPD is working on updating their Emergency Preparedness Toolkit.
 - CPD Executive Committee is May 23, 2025. They will be addressing how to proceed following the Joint Finance Committee's decision to eliminate funding for a position within DFI. This decision pertains to the



implementation of WI 2023 Act 267, which requires the development of the ABLE program by August 2025.

- Statutory Council on Blindness (SCOB), Chuck Fehl provided updates from SCOB on behalf of Patty Zallar
 - Chuck shared that Patty Zallar submitted the SCOB letter to Joint Finance Committee (JFC) through public comment form last week. The letter the letter of support referring GCPD's Joint Finance Committee (JFC) letter.
 - Chuck also shared that the SCOB's Quarterly meeting is on June 9th. SCOB plan to focus on gathering the information on mental health. The individuals who plan to attend:
 - Denise Jess, who is executive director for Wisconsin Council for the Blind & Visually Impaired, plans to share some Blind and Visually Impaired mental health data information.
 - Jill Renken, who is executive director for Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging, plans to provide a presentation about Social Isolation & Loneliness.
 - Helen Sampson, who is public policy strategist for Bureau of Aging and Disability Resource (BADR), plans to present about social isolation & loneliness presentation grant.
- WI Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CDHH), Greta Surprenant
 - Greta Surprenant shared that she will be the CDHH Representative on GCPD, replacing BJ Ermenc. (Still waiting on confirmation from Secretary's office.)
 - Greta Surprenant shared that CDHH will hold a full council meeting on June 6. This year, their priorities include:
 - Transportation
 - Housing
 - Healthcare
 - Employment



- Greta shared that to enhance understanding, CDHH aims to provide comprehensive references on stenographic CART captioning, highlighting its necessity and requirements. They are also committed to adding captioning to videos and collaborating on emergency preparedness to ensure up-to-date accommodations for individuals with various types of hearing loss mentioned in official documents.
- Greta shared that CDHH:
 - Plans to establish a task tracking process and documentation to ensure timely completion of all tasks.
 - Submitted a letter to the JFC advocating for funding for Independent Living Centers, the ODHH Service Fund, and the permanent third Program Policy Analyst within the Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
 - Expanded council membership to include five organizational liaisons, representing HLAA, WAD, and DeafUnity, with the potential addition of the Center for the Deaf-Blind Persons and WisRID.
- Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD), Ashley Mathy/Cindy Bentley
 - No update.
- WI Council on Mental Health
 - DHS Staff Angela Brenna shared that Nicole Ravens, CMH member is interested in becoming a member. More information to follow.
- State Council on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse
 - Vacant position. No update.

Discuss 2025 GCPD Quarterly Meeting Dates

- GCPD will have an in-person meeting in Madison at the Concourse Hotel on August 27, 2025.
- Fourth Quarter Teleconference Meeting will be on October 29, 2025, from 2:05 PM to 4:35 PM.



Review Action Items from Meeting

- Sarah Kuehn will email Angela (DHS Support) a copy of the CIE bi-annual plan, Angela will email plan to GCPD Members for review and input. It will include ways to submit feedback.
- DHS Staff Angela Brenna will invite full membership to the United Councils and change the dates to monthly.
- DHS Staff Angela Brenna will add two agenda items to the Executive Committee Meeting Agendas Items
 - Advocacy Day Legislative Listening Session planning to the Exec and Quarterly Meetings going forward.
 - Revise GCPD State Plan
- DHS Staff Angela Brenna will send out a fourth quarter calendar save the date and meeting information.

Adjourn

- Rhonda Staats made a motion to adjourn. Ramsey Lee seconded. Motion carried.
- Meeting adjourned at 4:21 PM