

**Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities
Disability Employment Workforce Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes**

Date of meeting: Monday, April 24, 2023

Start time: 12:00pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members Participating Remotely	
1	Kathy Petkauskos (Chair) – Director, Work Without Limits at UMass Chan Medical School
2	Oz Mondejar – Senior Vice President of Mission and Advocacy, Spaulding Network (MGB)
3	Representative Mathew Muratore – Massachusetts House of Representatives
4	Carl Richardson – ADA Coordinator, Massachusetts State House
5	Chris White – CEO & President, Road to Responsibility, Inc.
Members Not Present	
6	Gyasi Burks-Abbott – Self Advocate Faculty, LEND Program, Boston Children's Hospital

Action Items		Person Responsible
1	Sending thank you note to Joe Reale	Kathy and Imene
2	Reach out to Joe regarding MRC marketing strategy regarding DETC	Imene
3	Next Disability Employment subcommittee quote	Rep. Muratore
4	Update the Grid regarding S. 4102 - Savings Penalty Elimination Act with information shared by Rep. Muratore	Imene
5	Locate employer and person with disability to participate in our sig event to speak about DETC	Kathy and Oz
6	Confirm Becky from Disability:IN May presentation	Oz Mondejar

Welcome, Roll Calls, and Introductions

- Introductions of Commissioners, program director, Chair Garlick's staff, guest speaker Joseph Reale from the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC).

- Inspirational quote "Give me a job and you instantly get me involved. If you give me a job then the rest of the stuff will get solved. Put me to work, you would think that by now I'm allowed. I'll do you proud.", provided by Oz Mondejar.

MA Disability Employment Tax Credit (DETC) Presentation:

- Joe works with the team at MRC to implement DETC, what we are doing, understand it, and its impact. It is similar to the federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit, creates same type of incentive but for MA. It was made available by Governor Baker.
- Presentation questions/answers:
 - The "or" 30% is of the employee's gross wages.
 - "Subsequent years" is indefinitely, there is no indication that the credit is going away.
 - Quantitatively to measure the impact? MRC has a handful of individuals with disabilities who have applied for the tax credit form so far. We should come up with unique identifying numbers to share with the department of revenue.
 - MRC is seeking ways to qualify individuals automatically. For example, when they are deemed eligible for MRC services. Also, considering reaching out to the MA Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development to create mechanism to make them qualified at the state level for DETC.
 - What's MRC marketing strategy? It is not defined yet. Our Commission would be happy to help.
 - How will employers know about this outreach? MRC can let their current employers know. The Department of Revenue is responsible for notifying employers.
 - Oz asked Joe if he could send the RFP for marketing the program, he may have folks interested.
 - Is this open to people who aren't consumers to MRC? Yes, it is wide open. MRC's sister agencies, provider agencies, etc. automatically gain access to the certificate application process.
 - How is disability defined in this particular law? It is very broad and will take any sister agencies definitions of it. If someone receive services from state agencies or vendors in MA, or on an educational plan, or receiving SSI or SSDI, they are eligible. MRC doesn't want to shut the door on candidates.
 - Businesses don't need to be headquartered in MA but do need to be doing business in MA.
 - Companies can file an amended return and go back a number of years.
 - For additional questions: Joe Reale cell # is 617-594-8841 or DETC@mass.gov

- Next steps would be to find a technical way to automatically certify folks and find ways for more people to tread on the website as well.

Review of Workability Report Priorities (Continued):

- Kathy mentioned a lot of our subcommittee conversations have been around legislation. She suggested collecting the information and have a process to communicate with the legislation and budget subcommittee to share what will be pursued to free up this subcommittee to focus on non-legislative priorities. Members agreed with this method.
- Rep. Muratore checked with Senator Markey's office and the federal SSI Penalty Elimination legislation was filed by Senator Brown last session but hasn't been filed this session. If the commission wants to send a letter to Senator Markey's office expressing our interest in it, they'd be happy to accept it.
- How can the Commission help support the outreach with MRC on DETC? Commission could get a contact for DOR.
- Oz would like a focused plan on what the subcommittee is going to do to support employers, there's an opportunity for our work to be employer focused.
- Kathy would like the Commission to have a dedicated page for employers to share resources such as the DETC etc.
- Oz shared he's less knowledgeable o the legislative piece but there's an opportunity to refresh folks on this credit.
- Rep. Muratore mentioned Chambers of Commerce Restaurant Association of MA (RAM), AIM, to share the DETC news.
- Chris would like to have an employer at our signature event who has benefited from the DETC and a person with a disability to speak about this.
- Kathy would like to have a standing agenda for this subcommittee to provide input to the signature event from an employment perspective. What are some key topics we would like to include.
- Imene provided an update on the signature event prep.
- May meeting- recommendation #4, can a similar benchmarking tool be established for MA small businesses?
- Becky from Disability:IN will be joining to level set members' knowledge of the DE&I, a national disability inclusion benchmarking tool for Fortune 1000 companies.
- We can explore highlighted recommendations from the Grid at our next meeting.
- For our next subcommittee meeting, after the Disability:IN presentation, we will share thoughts about what information should be included for a webpage or other piece of work with the intended audience of employers. Another agenda item will include update on, and input into the Commission's signature event.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Disability Employment Subcommittee will be held on:

Monday, May 22 at 12:00 pm. Disability: IN presentation

Adjournment