

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

Date of meeting: Monday, August 28, 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	Representative Mathew Muratore – Massachusetts House of Representatives
3	Chris White – CEO & President, Road to Responsibility, Inc.
4	Gyasi Burks-Abbott – Self Advocate Faculty, LEND Program, Boston Children's Hospital
Members Not Present	
	Carl Richardson – ADA Coordinator, Massachusetts State House
	Oz Mondejar – President, Mucho Gusto Consulting

Action Items		Person Responsible
1	Reach out to Joe Bellil from Easter Seals on MA as a State Employer status update	Kathy
2	Reach out to Bill McAvoy from the Supplier Diversity Office Bill.Mcavoy@mass.gov	Kathy

Welcome, Roll Calls, and Introductions

1. Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions
2. Inspirational Quote provided by Carl Richardson: “Just because a man lacks the use of his eyes doesn’t mean he lacks vision” by Stevie Wonder.
Quote was deferred to the November meeting since Carl was absent today.
Imene to provide January quote.

Kathy- asked members if they’d like to share one of the subcommittee’s quote at the next full commission meeting. All agreed.

Kathy provided an update on guest speakers for the upcoming subcommittee meetings.

3. Annual report discussion

- Report will include:
 - Summary of activities: meetings, guest speakers.
 - Subcommittee's recommendations: high level, high priority areas related to benefits as a barrier to employment for people with disabilities and employer engagement.
 - Fiscal Year 24 goals

4. Discuss FY24 goals:

- State as a Model Employer goal
 1. the state of MA is an employer and would lead the way in their practices around disability inclusion, hiring, retention, accommodating, promoting, advancing employment opportunities of persons with disabilities.
 2. There was a Disability Task Force from June 2009 linked below: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/strategic-plan-to-make-massachusetts-a-model-employer-for-people-with-disabilities/download>
 3. Educate this subcommittee on what the status is of MA as a model employer initiative.
 4. Reach out to Joe Bellil from Easter Seals to speak about MA as a state employer initiative status update.
- Small businesses education and engagement goal
 1. Gathering data on how many small employers there are in the state, how many people do they employ, what are some industries that may need more employees?
 1. Creating a tool to collect that data. For example: where do small businesses get their information from: local, Statewide network?
 2. Hold a forum or panel presentation for small businesses: MA Restaurant Associations, Chambers, retailers Associations of MA. What industries are most in need of workers?
 1. Reach out to Bill McAvoy from the Employment Advocacy Group and/or Joe Bellil on presenting about the Suppliers Diversity Office.
 3. Apprenticeships and employment
 - ➔ From the Annual report: By December 31, 2024, identify and facilitate at least one opportunity (e.g.,

event, speaking engagement, information dissemination) to engage and educate at least 100 small and medium businesses/employers on the value of including people with disabilities in the workplace, available community resources, and recognition of effective employer practices.

- **Benefits**

1. Invite Mass Ability (formerly known as MA Rehabilitation Commission) to present on the benefits cliff.

➔ From the Annual Report: By December 31, 2024, formulate strategies that will decrease or eliminate the impact work income has on public benefits.

5. Imene provided an update on the Commission's October National Disability Employment Awareness Month celebration events.
6. Links shared during the meeting:
<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2023/08/06/opinion/ssi-benefits-asset-limit/>
7. Adjournment

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Disability Employment Subcommittee will be held on:
Monday, Nov 13 at 12:00 pm.