



Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: February 17, 2026, at 1:30PM
Place: Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
Tuesday | February 17, 2026 | 1:30PM
Hybrid Meeting (In-Person & Remote) and YouTube Livestream
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCh_wjAthLJTQf-KMgMGv1Yw

The Commission conducted this public meeting in a hybrid format, with both in-person and remote participation and livestream access via YouTube, in compliance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18–25, and the extended temporary provisions. This technology provided an adequate alternative means of public access to the Commission’s deliberations. All documents and presentations related to this agenda are available on the MCAD website.

Commissioners Present:

Chair Sunila Thomas George
Edward Mitnick (remote)
Jeremy Scheiner
Steven Locke (remote)

1. Call to Order

Chair Thomas George called the meeting to order at 1:33PM. Roll call attendance was conducted, confirming all Commissioners were present.

Roll Call Vote:

<i>Chair Thomas George</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Edward Mitnick</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Jeremy Scheiner</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Steven Locke</i>	<i>Aye.</i>

2. Approval of Minutes from December 2, 2026

The minutes from December 2, 2025, were reviewed. Chair Thomas George moved to approve the minutes as drafted. Commissioner Mitnick seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously by a vote of 4-0. The Chair clarified that the new per diem Commissioners were allowed to vote even though they are new Commissioners.

Roll Call Vote:

<i>Chair Thomas George</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Edward Mitnick</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Jeremy Scheiner</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Steven Locke</i>	<i>Aye.</i>

3. Commissioners' Update – Welcome new Commissioners

The Chair welcomed the new per diem Commissioners and stated they will be tremendous assets to the Commission. The Chair opened the floor for Commissioners to introduce themselves and make remarks:

Steven Locke: Commissioner Locke brings extensive experience in employment and discrimination law. He previously served as General Counsel at the MCAD from 2001 to 2005 and then went on to serve as General Counsel at Brandeis University for 19 years. Commissioner Locke looks forward to returning to work with the Commission in this role.

Edward Mitnick: Commissioner Mitnick began working with the Commission 35 years ago and later had the honor and privilege of being appointed as a hearing officer. He continued to serve the Commission through train-the-trainer sessions over the years. It is an honor and privilege for him to serve as a Commissioner and to fulfill the statutory obligations of the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination in eradicating discrimination throughout the Commonwealth.

Jeremy Scheiner: Commissioner Scheiner expressed his deep gratitude for the opportunity to serve as a Commissioner at the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination and to act as a new steward of the Commission. He thanked the Attorney General's Office for entrusting him with this appointment, as well as the Chair and staff for warmly welcoming him to the Commission. Commissioner Scheiner previously served as Director of Training, Recruitment, and Legislative Affairs at the Commission from 2017 to 2020. After serving at the MCAD, Commissioner Scheiner went to work at the ACLU. He found the work to be both familiar and deeply meaningful. Now returning to the MCAD as a Commissioner, he looks forward to working with staff and constituents to eradicate discrimination throughout the Commonwealth.

Chair Thomas George thanked the new Commissioners, the Governor's Office and the Attorney General's Office for these esteemed appointments and reminded that we are waiting for one more appointment to bring the total per diem Commissioners to four.

4. MCAD Draft Procedural Regulations – Public Comment Period Extension

Chair Thomas George heard from number of individuals asking to extend the public comment period. The holidays between December and January made it difficult for stakeholders to review the proposed regulations and provide meaningful comments. Before opening discussion, the Chair offered brief comments about the proposed regulations.

The Chair thanked all participants for their engagement in the MCAD's three public hearing comment sessions. She acknowledged that there may have been some confusion regarding certain proposed regulatory changes and noted that it was not entirely clear whether the misunderstanding stemmed from the proposed regulations themselves or from the anticipated launch of MCAD's new portal and online platform. The Chair recognized that practitioners may feel uncertain about these changes.

She emphasized that the Commission remains fully open for business five days per week, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and will continue to assist anyone who comes to any MCAD office to file

a complaint. Staff will be available in person to help with registering for the new portal, filing complaints, and assisting *pro se* complainants who may require accommodation for language access and/or disabilities.

The Chair then addressed MCAD’s newest regulatory change, specifically the creation of the Preliminary Investigations Unit. She noted that the goal of this unit is to provide investigators with additional time to explore complaints and allegations by interviewing complainants, identifying comparators, ensuring respondent contact information is accurate, and assisting *pro se* complainants in navigating the new portal.

Finally, Chair Thomas George expressed hope that extending the proposed regulation public comment period will allow stakeholders to review the changes with a fresh perspective, particularly with respect to how the new regulations will enable the Commission to operate more efficiently, improve accessibility, and better fulfill its mission in a timely and effective manner.

Commissioner Mitnick asked what the proposed extension would be.

Chair Thomas George explained that the original 60-day public comment period was consistent with prior extension practices. However, due to the holiday season and the feedback received during the three public hearings, she determined that an additional extension was warranted. She therefore proposed extending the comment period through March 31, 2026.

She noted that this extension would more than double the typical public comment period for proposed regulations but would provide stakeholders with sufficient time to engage in a thoughtful and intentional review. This additional time, she explained, would allow comments to reflect consideration of the regulations as a whole, rather than focusing solely on the proposed changes. She further emphasized that the extension offers an opportunity for stakeholders to revisit the regulations with a clearer understanding of their intent.

Commissioner Mitnick moved to approve extending the comment period to March 31, 2026. Commissioner Locke seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

<i>Chair Thomas George</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Edward Mitnick</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Jeremy Scheiner</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Steven Locke</i>	<i>Aye.</i>

The motion passed unanimously 4-0

4. Statement from the Chair on Investigating Commissioner Assignment

As the Commission is in a transformation period, going from three full-time Commissioners to one full-time Chair and 4 per diem Commissioners, which will affect the Commission’s processes, the Chair made the following brief statement. Due to the high volume of matters currently under investigation and in the interest of efficiency, and as the Commission’s only full-time Investigating Commissioner, I have delegated authority to the Acting Chief of

Investigations to review and approve certain investigative actions, including the execution of certain investigative dispositions.

5. Other Business

No additional matters were raised.

7. Next Meeting Date

Once the fourth per diem Commissioner is appointed, next and future meeting dates will be announced.

8. Adjournment

The meeting concluded at 1:54PM. A motion to adjourn was made, by the Chair and seconded by Commissioner Mitnick, and approved unanimously by a vote of 4–0.

Roll Call Vote:

<i>Chair Thomas George</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Edward Mitnick</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Jeremy Scheiner</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Steven Locke</i>	<i>Aye.</i>

Meeting adjourned 1:54PM



NOTICE OF MEETING AND AGENDA

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25, and the extended temporary provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law (most recently extended on March 28, 2025), notice is hereby given of a meeting of the **Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination**. The meeting will take place:

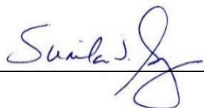
Tuesday | February 17, 2026 | 1:30PM
HYBRID MEETING - USING YouTube

Please note that the Commission will conduct this public meeting in person and remotely utilizing collaboration technology. Use of this technology is intended to ensure an adequate, alternative means of public access to the Commission's deliberations for any interested member of the public. If there is any technical problem with the Commission's remote connection, an alternative conference line will be noticed immediately on www.mass.gov/mcad.

All documents and presentations related to this agenda will be available for review on the MCAD website.

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes – December 2, 2025 **VOTE**
3. Commissioners' Update – Welcome new Commissioners
4. MCAD Draft Procedural Regulations – Public Comment Period Extension **VOTE**
5. Statement from the Chair on Investigating Commissioner Assignment
6. Other Business - Reserved for matters the Chair did not reasonably anticipate at the time of posting.
7. Next Meeting Date
8. Adjournment

I certify that on this date, this Notice was posted as "MCAD Public Meeting Notice and Agenda (February 17, 2026)" at www.mass.gov/mcad emailed to regs@sec.state.ma.us. Posted to Website: February 12, 2026 at 12:30 PM.



Chairwoman, Sunila Thomas George

This meeting is open to all interested individuals. If there are any questions pertaining to accessibility and/or further assistance is needed, please email ruthy.barros2@mass.gov.



Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: December 2, 2025 at 2:00PM
Place: Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
Tuesday | December 2, 2025 | 2:00PM
REMOTE MEETING & YouTube Livestream
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCh_wjAthLJTQf-KMgMGv1Yw

The Commission conducted this public meeting through remote means, with livestream access provided via YouTube, in compliance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, §18–25, and the extended temporary provisions. Use of this technology ensured adequate alternative means of public access to the Commission’s deliberations. All documents and presentations related to this agenda are available for review on the MCAD website.

Commissioners Present:

Chairwoman Sunila Thomas George
Commissioner Jean-Francois

1. Call to Order

Chairwoman Thomas George called the meeting to order at 2:09 PM. Roll call attendance was conducted, confirming all commissioners were present.

Roll Call Vote:

<i>Chairwoman Thomas George</i>	<i>Aye.</i>
<i>Commissioner Jean-Francois</i>	<i>Aye.</i>

2. Approval of Minutes from August 27, 2025

The first agenda item concerned approval of the minutes from the Commission’s August 27, 2025 meeting. Commissioner Jean-Francois stated she had reviewed the minutes and requested a correction regarding the legislative review discussion. She explained that the minutes incorrectly indicated agreement to amend the Commission’s position on legislation relating to extension of the statute of limitations. She clarified that she did not agree with amending the position and recalled that the Commissioners had not reached agreement, instead leaving the matter unresolved for later consideration. Chair Thomas George agreed that no agreement had been reached and that the minutes required correction.

Discussion followed among the Commissioners and counsel concerning how best to amend the minutes. It was clarified that neither agreement to oppose nor agreement to amend the legislative recommendation had been reached, and therefore the correct reflection was that the Commission took no position on that bill and agreed to revisit the matter at a future meeting. The Commissioners further agreed that the final paragraph of that section should be revised to reflect

the absence of agreement while leaving the remainder of the legislative committee recommendations intact.

Chair Thomas George moved to amend the minutes so that they reflected that the Commissioners did not reach agreement on a position concerning the bill and that the matter would be taken up at a later meeting. Commissioner Jean-Francois seconded the motion. The motion to amend passed unanimously. Following amendment, the Commissioners voted to approve the August 27, 2025 minutes as amended, and approval was granted by a unanimous vote of 2–0.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairwoman Thomas George

Aye.

Commissioner Jean-Francois

Aye.

3. Commissioners' Update

Commissioner Jean-Francois reported that she had no updates. Chair Thomas George also reported no formal updates but took the opportunity to thank staff for their significant efforts over the preceding months. She referenced work done to prepare the agency for upcoming operational and procedural changes, including revisions to procedural regulations, development of new investigative processes and templates, and continued work on testing and implementation of the new Case Management System (CCMS). She echoed the Executive Director's recent message of appreciation to staff and expressed gratitude for their dedication and teamwork during a period of substantial transition and modernization, particularly as the holiday season approached.

4. Executive Director's Update

Executive Director Michael Memmolo announced that Randall Lui joined the agency as Chief Financial Officer on September 8th, bringing extensive experience in state finance and operations. Mr. Lui is overseeing finance, IT, training functions, and management responsibilities related to the Springfield office.

Executive Director Memmolo next provided an update concerning federal contracts. He explained that federal funding currently represents approximately twenty percent of the agency's operating budget, although state support has increased significantly in recent years. He reported that the HUD contract ended June 30 and the EEOC contract ended September 30. Agency staff nevertheless exceeded EEOC contract performance goals, resulting in an upward modification providing approximately \$40,000 in additional funds for the agency.

However, outstanding payments remain unpaid. The agency has received only approximately twenty-five percent of the funds owed under the EEOC contract and has not yet received funds owed under the HUD contract. Executive Director Memmolo stated that the outstanding combined balance is approximately two million dollars and expressed optimism that funds would be received before the end of the state fiscal year.

He further reported that new federal guidance regarding HUD's substantial equivalency standards may make agencies with broader protections than federal law ineligible for future HUD contracts. Because Massachusetts law protects additional classes not covered under federal

fair housing law, MCAD may become ineligible for HUD funding beginning in Fiscal Year 2027, potentially resulting in a loss of approximately one million dollars annually. Although EEOC funding has not yet been similarly affected, Executive Director Memmolo noted that the EEOC also relies on substantial equivalency standards, and future impacts cannot be ruled out.

Executive Director Memmolo then provided operational updates. He reported that the agency is nearing announcement of the opening of its Fall River satellite office, with technology installation and testing underway and public opening anticipated in early 2026. He also recognized the work of Chair Thomas George and supervisory staff in securing a recent consent decree in a Commission-initiated complaint addressing gender stereotype discrimination in public accommodations.

He concluded his report with an update on the Case Management System project, noting that the agency has entered the critical phase of end-to-end testing. A smaller testing team began work earlier that day, with broader staff participation and external stakeholder testing planned. Training is scheduled for January 2026, with internal implementation anticipated in February, followed by public education efforts to assist users in transitioning to the new system. He emphasized the significant effort invested by staff and vendors in the project and expressed confidence in successful deployment.

Commissioner Jean-Francois commended staff for their work, noting her experience with similar projects and recognizing the time, effort, and complexity involved. She acknowledged that challenges may arise but emphasized that progress achieved thus far represents a substantial accomplishment.

5. Executive Director's FY26 Part A

The Commission next considered approval of the Executive Director's Fiscal Year 2026 SMART goals. Both Commissioners indicated they had no questions or proposed revisions. Chair Thomas George moved to approve the SMART goals. The motion passed unanimously. Following discussion, the Commissioners also voted to authorize the Human Resources Director to enter the approved SMART goals into the state performance management system. To maintain clarity in the record, the Commissioners consolidated approval and authorization into a single amended vote, which passed unanimously in a vote of 2-0.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairwoman Thomas George

Aye.

Commissioner Jean-Francois

Aye.

6. MCAD Draft Procedural Regulations – Ready for Public Comment Period

The Commission then addressed draft procedural regulations proposed for release for public comment. Chair Thomas George noted that significant work had been completed by the Office of General Counsel and agency staff to update regulations to improve efficiency, align procedures with technological developments, and reflect operational changes. Commissioner Jean-Francois expressed concerns regarding timing and the role of future Commissioners, questioning whether major procedural changes should proceed before new Commissioners are appointed. She emphasized concerns regarding elimination of the investigating commissioner review layer and

whether incoming Commissioners should have an opportunity to weigh in.

Chair Thomas George clarified that the vote concerned release of draft regulations for public comment rather than final adoption, and that statutory and administrative changes had already reshaped the structure and functions of the Commission. Extensive discussion followed regarding the evolving structure of the Commission, efficiency considerations, workload distribution, and procedural reforms intended to reduce bottlenecks and improve case processing. The Commissioners discussed how appeals review would function under the new structure and how public feedback would inform future Commission deliberations.

After discussion, Chair Thomas George moved to release the draft procedural regulations for public comment. Commissioner Jean-Francois seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, allowing the regulations to proceed to the public comment phase with a vote of 2–0.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairwoman Thomas George
Commissioner Jean-Francois

Aye.
Aye.

8. Other Business

No additional matters were raised.

9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date will be determined at a later date.

10. Adjournment

The meeting concluded at 3:18 PM. A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved unanimously by a vote of 2–0.

Roll Call Vote:

Chairwoman Thomas George
Commissioner Jean-Francois

Aye.
Aye.

List of Documents and Other Items Used

1. Notice of Meeting and Agenda dated December 2, 2025
2. Minutes from August 27, 2025
3. FY26 Executive Director SMART Goals
4. Final Draft Procedural Regulations