

Rest Home Task Force

Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2025
10:30 am - 12:00 pm

Date of meeting: Friday, January 24, 2025

Start time: 10:30 am

End time: 12:00 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Member Attendance & Votes		Present	Vote 1*	Vote 2*
1	Kiame Mahaniah – Executive Office of Health and Human Services (<i>chair</i>)	X	X	X
2	Judy Bernice – Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality, DPH	X	X	X
3	Scune Carrington – Private practitioner, BennuCare	X	-	X
4	Kim Clougherty – Department of Mental Health (DMH)	X	X	-
5	Emily Cooper – Executive Office of Aging & Independence (EOAI)	X	X	X
6	Tracey Cravedi – Hale House	X	X	X
7	Moses Dixon – Senior Connection	X	X	X
8	Pamela Edwards – Massachusetts Senior Action Council	X	X	X
9	Patricia Jehlen – Massachusetts Senate, Joint Committee on Elder Affairs	X	X	X
10	Patrick O'Connor – Massachusetts Senate	-	-	-
11	Ron Pawelski – Massachusetts Association of Residential Care Homes (MARCH)	X	X	X
12	Erin Quinn – Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA)	X	X	X
13	Thomas Stanley – MA House of Representatives, Joint Committee on Elder Affairs	X	X	X
14	Pavel Terpelets – Office of Long-Term Services and Supports (OLTSS), MassHealth	X	X	X
15	<i>Vacant – Appointee of House Minority Leader Jones Jr.</i>	-	-	-

* (X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

Proceedings

Undersecretary Mahaniah called the meeting to order at 10:30 am. He welcomed members and explained that EOHHS Secretary Walsh had appointed him as her designee to chair the Task Force. He informed members that the Task Force meeting is subject to the Open Meeting Law and that any votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll-call vote.

Vote 1 to approve the 1/10/2025 meeting minutes: Undersecretary Mahaniah requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Task Force's previous meeting on 1/10/2025. Senator Jehlen introduced the motion, which was seconded by Dr. Dixon and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above). Prior to voting, members proposed specific edits to the draft of the minutes that had been circulated to the group. These edits will be reflected in the final version of the minutes posted to the Task Force's Mass.gov webpage.

Undersecretary Mahaniah provided a summary of the group's first meeting, which included a detailed presentation from the Bureau of Health Care Safety & Quality at DPH on the licensing and regulatory structures, and data available on DPH-licensed facilities across the Commonwealth. He explained that during the discussion, members put forth a number of data requests that the DPH team will be working to address, flagging the compressed timeframe the Task Force was given to conduct its work.

Task Force member, Pavel Terpelets, Director of Institutional Programs at the Office of Long Term Services and Supports (OLTSS) within MassHealth, provided a detailed overview of the rate structure and payment mechanisms for rest home in the Commonwealth. In his presentation, Mr. Terpelets explained the roles of the various state agencies that support rate setting and payment for rest homes, including MassHealth, the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), and the Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA), the requirements for rest home cost reporting, and data on rest homes in Massachusetts, including bed and occupancy trends. For additional details, refer to the Rest Home Payment and Rate Overview presentation on the Task Force's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

At roughly 11:00 am, Kim Clougherty left the meeting and Scune Carrington joined.

In response to the presentation, members discussed a number of points, including:

- The challenges rest home administrators face, including disparities in the daily vs. monthly pay structure, increasing operating costs, and staffing shortages (*Tracey Cravedi*)
- The complex, statutory limitations on receiving federal reimbursements for rest homes, eg, the community setting rule (*Emily Cooper*)
- The need to update and streamline current reimbursement regulations and receive a final determination from CMS on the feasibility of receiving federal funding for rest homes. (*Ron Pawelski*)
- The need for additional discussion of administrator salaries, which for many rest homes is the largest reported cost category (*Scune Carrington*)
- The need to spend additional time clarifying the rates of rest home and nursing facilities, due to the complexity of the topic (*Senator Jehlen*)
- The salary disparities between non- versus for-profit facilities (*Moses Dixon*)

In closing, Undersecretary Mahaniah reminded members of the Task Force's Mass.gov webpage, where copies of meeting materials, such as approved meeting minutes, are posted for members of the public (<https://www.mass.gov/rest-home-task-force>). He noted that three additional Task Force meetings have been scheduled over the next two months, leading up to the 4/1/2025 deadline for submission of the Task Force's report.

In response to members' suggestions, it was agreed that for the Task Force's next meeting on 2/7/2025, in addition to a review of the Nursing Facility Task Force recommendations and a presentation from MARCH, a panel discussion with rest home administrators would be organized.

Vote 2 to adjourn the meeting: Undersecretary Mahaniah requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Senator Jehlen introduced the motion, which was seconded by Ms. Cooper and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Meeting Materials

1. Draft 1/10/2025 meeting minutes
2. Rest Home Payment and Rate Overview presentation
3. Proposed reorganization of remaining Task Force meetings