

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

Date of Meeting: Thursday, April 17, 2025

Time: 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Virtual

This is a meeting of the **Workforce Supports Subcommittee** of the permanent Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. This subcommittee will collect data and analyze initiatives that address the workforce crisis for people who provide services to individuals with disabilities.

| Members Participating Remotely | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Andrew Levrault (Chair) – Deputy General Counsel, Disabled Persons Protection Commission |
| 2 | Representative Kay Khan – Former Massachusetts House of Representatives |
| Members Not Present | |
| 3 | Angela Ortiz – Executive Director, MA Health Council |
| 4 | Chris White – CEO & President, Road to Responsibility, Inc |
| Additional Commissioners Participating Remotely | |
| 5 | Charlie Carr – Disability Policy Consortium |
| 6 | Representative Denise Garlick – Former Massachusetts House of Representatives |
| 7 | Regina Marshall – Advocates |
| 8 | Representative John Marsi – Massachusetts House of Representatives |
| 9 | Representative Lindsay Sabadosa – Massachusetts House of Representatives |

| Action items | | Person responsible |
|--------------|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Collaborate with Disability Employment members on Employment and Providers supports panel (ongoing) | Co-Chairs, Imene |
| 2 | Reach out to Mass Ability for June event | Andrew |
| 4 | Reengage with Human Services Research Institute Valerie Bradley | Imene |

Agenda

1. Welcome and Roll Call
 - o Postponed to May meeting, no quorum.
2. Immigrant workers' rights and resources for workers, Lauren Goldman Moran, Chief of the Fair Labor Division at the MA Office of the Attorney General

Overview of the Fair Labor Division

- Part of the Public Protection Bureau at the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office
- Handles civil and criminal enforcement of state labor laws, though most enforcement is civil. Prioritizes restitution for workers and penalties for employers.
- Encourages collaboration with other AGO divisions and state agencies.
- Focus areas include:
 - Wage theft (e.g., nonpayment, minimum wage violations)
 - Earned sick leave
 - Child labor protections
 - Labor trafficking
 - Retaliation related to any of the above
 - The "Right to Know" law about workplace rights

Enforcement and Reporting

- Complaints come from a variety of sources: workers, unions, community organizations, schools, coworkers, and consumers.
- Strong emphasis on community engagement and outreach, including multilingual events and presentations.
- Reports may be filed anonymously and are often supported by community partners, legal aid, and health providers.

Immigrant Worker Protections in Massachusetts

- Massachusetts law protects all workers regardless of immigration status.
- Workers are protected from retaliation, especially when:
 - Reporting unpaid wages (protected under the Wage Act)
 - Facing discrimination (covered by different state regulations)

Key Workforce Considerations

- Direct care workers, including PCAs and providers in day programs, are often immigrants or women of color and face specific vulnerabilities:
 - Power dynamics and lack of union representation (though PCAs are now unionized)
 - Complex employer-consumer relationships (e.g., consumer-employers in PCA model)
 - Wage and hour concerns, especially around overtime and work expectations
 - Fear of immigration enforcement impacting willingness to seek support
- Organizations like **Matahari Women Workers' Center** support and organize private home care workers:
<https://matahari-justice.squarespace.com/mission>

Outreach Updates

- AGO and community partners are actively working in the field to increase education and enforcement in industries like construction, where threats and retaliation are common.
[AGO Press Release – Construction Industry Enforcement](#)
- Commissioner member raised the need for greater sensitivity among state agencies toward workers who serve people with disabilities but may be ununionized, independent, and fearful of interacting with official systems.

Resources Shared for Immigrant Workers & Reporting

- **AGO Fair Labor Hotline:** 617-727-3465
(Available M–F, 10am–4pm; anonymous reporting allowed)
[File a Complaint Online](#)
 - **Community Engagement Requests:**
[Request AGO Speakers or Presentations](#)
Email: AGOCCommunityEngagement@mass.gov
 - **Workers' Rights & Immigrant Resources:**
 - [General Resources for Immigrants](#)
 - [Workers' Rights Overview](#)
 - [Advisory on Wage & Hour Rights](#)
 - [Anti-Retaliation Fact Sheet](#)
 - [Preventing Child Labor Exploitation](#)
3. Update on the youth and young adults with disabilities, job coaching, and inclusive employment pathways event
- our [Disability Employment](#) and [Workforce Supports](#) Subcommittees event will focus on youth and young adults with disabilities and inclusive employment pathways. The event, “Elevating Youth Voices: Disability, Employment, and Inclusive Workplaces”, will bring together young people, job coaches, PCA providers, employers, and policymakers to explore transitions into the workforce and share real stories of success and struggle.
 - Reached out to:
 - Elyse Forbush, she/her, Sr. Director of Business Development, [JVS](#)
 - Jocelyn F. Gordon M.S. J.D., Executive Director PCA Workforce Council
 - Federation for Children with Special Needs, Youth Engagement Coordinator
 - Partners for Youth with Disabilities Youth Services Director
 - Riverside Community Care, Vice-President, Community Living Services Division
 - Reach out to MassAbility for independent living center
 - Arc of MA
4. Adjournment
- Motion to adjourn.

- Motion approved.

Next meeting dates:

- May 15
- August 28
- November 13