

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

**Date of Meeting:** Thursday, January 29, 2026

**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                                | Chris White – Road to Responsibility, Inc              |
| 2                                | Rachel Kaprielian – Triangle, Inc.                     |
| 3                                | Leo Sarkissian – The Arc of Massachusetts              |
| Members Not Present              |  |
| 4                                | Angela Ortiz – MA Health Council                       |
| 5                                | Representative Vanna Howard – House of Representatives |
| 6                                | Rep. Jay Livingstone – House of Representatives        |
| Additional Commissioners Present |  |
| 7                                | Hon. Denise Garlick                                    |
| 8                                | Lexi Semanchik – Treasurer’s Office                    |

| Action items   | Person responsible                   |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Reach out to Undersecretary Cutler regarding health and human services apprenticeship pathways   | Chris (all set for February meeting) |
| 2 Reach out to Executive Office of Economic Development Assistant Secretary Vega regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Statewide workforce development and partnership strategies to address disability service workforce shortages and</li> <li>▪ Explore community-based workforce models serving BIPOC communities to understand local recruitment and retention approaches.</li> </ul> | Chris (two emails sent)              |
| 3 Lurie Disability Center nationwide direct care workers survey results and findings (spring 2026)   | Imene                                |
| 4 Explore a panel of 2-3 peer states (Indiana, New Jersey, Maryland, North Carolina) to share strategies addressing workforce shortages in disability services. (Imene – SAME, Leo – The Arc.)   | Leo & Imene                          |

|   |  |     |
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| 5 | Develop proposal for a panel on the profile of WS staff, including workforce size, lived experience and working conditions, workplace stressors, compensation and value, and opportunities for career pathways and professional development (internal and external). | All |
|---|--|-----|

1. Welcome and Roll Call
  - Motion to approve minutes
  - Motion approved Chris and seconded by Rachel
  
2. Association of Developmental Disabilities Providers [2025 Workforce Metrics Survey](#)  
Presentation by President / CEO Stephanie Costa and Vice President Mandy Nichols
  - Overview
    - 132 organizations represented within ADDP.
    - ADDP works closely with other human service trade associations, including the Association for Behavioral Healthcare, Children’s League of Massachusetts, Providers’ Council, and The Arc of Massachusetts.
    - This is the fourth workforce survey conducted since 2023.
    - 102 organizations submitted data (77% participation rate).
    - Survey questions were designed to ensure consistency over time for comparison.
    - In September 2025, new questions were added to assess the potential impact of federal policy changes and rising health insurance costs on providers and their workforce.
  - Services Included in the Survey
    - Adult Long-Term Residential (ALTR)
    - Shared Living (SL)
    - Adult Foster Care (AFC)
    - Day Habilitation (DH)
    - Community-Based Day Supports (CBDS)
    - Supported Employment (SE)
  - Purpose of the Survey:
    - To quantify workforce challenges.
    - To benchmark provider workforce conditions over time.
    - To identify areas for improvement in addressing workforce shortages.
    - Staff availability continues to be the primary barrier to service access.
  - Key Findings
    - Vacancy Rates Vary by Provider:
      - 35% of providers reported vacancy rates under 10%.
      - Nearly 65% reported vacancy rates between 10% and 40%.
    - Overall Vacancies Declined:
      - Overall vacancy rate declined from 19% to 15%.
      - ALTR vacancies decreased from 19% to 16%.
      - CBDS vacancies declined from 20% to 14%.
    - Hardest positions to fill:

- LPN vacancy rate declined from 36% to 28%.
- Clinician vacancy rate declined from 21% to 19%.
- DSP vacancy rate declined from 19% to 15%.
- Day Program Waitlists
  - Waitlist declined from over 2,700 individuals in 2023 to approximately 1,800 in 2025.
  - CBDS vacancy rate declined from 20% to 14%.
  - SE vacancy rate declined from 14% to 11%.
  - Day Habilitation vacancy rate declined from 16% to 13%.
  - Approximately 1,700 individuals remain waiting for day services, indicating ongoing service constraints three years post-pandemic.
- Rising Health Insurance Costs:
  - 90% of providers reported increased health insurance costs.
  - Average increase of 11% after plan adjustments.
- Discussion:
  - Acknowledged progress in overall vacancy reduction from 19% to 15%.
  - Immigration policy changes and affordability pressures were identified as ongoing concerns impacting workforce stability.
  - Massachusetts is experiencing a net population decline for the first time in a decade, which may require sustained wage growth to attract and retain workforce talent.
  - Continued interest in collecting comprehensive and longitudinal data; potential consideration of adding new survey questions in future iterations.

### 3. Election of Subcommittee Chair/Co-Chair

- Rachel Kaprielian Co-Chair and Leo Sarkissian Co-Chair have been voted in as new Co-Chairs of this subcommittee

### 4. Discussion for future topics and action items:

- Consider hosting a panel featuring 2–3 comparable states (e.g., Indiana, New Jersey, Maryland, North Carolina) to discuss workforce strategies and lessons learned.
- Explore the JVS cohort model for DSP recruitment and consider whether a broader “reboot” of workforce pipeline efforts is needed.
- Examine pathways for training individuals to become Personal Care Attendants, including apprenticeship models.
- Invite discussion on apprenticeship pathways in human services and strategies to engage younger workers in the field.
- Learn more about community-based initiatives impacting BIPOC communities, including models such as Roxbury-based programs.
- Explore input opportunities through NASDDDS (National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services).
- Review the role of Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs) within the broader workforce and LTSS system.

- Develop a proposal for a panel on the profile of Workforce Supports (WS) staff, including workforce size, lived experience and stressors, compensation that reflects the value of the work, and career pathway and professional development opportunities (internal and external).

5. Adjournment

**Next meeting dates**

- April 30, 2026
- May 21, 2026
- \* Monday, August 31<sup>st</sup> 2pm-3pm
- November 19, 2026

**Meeting Materials:**

- January 2026 Meeting Minutes