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**MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT**

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

*Meeting held through Zoom and in person at the Department of Rehabilitation’s Central Office. Meeting was held via teleconference within the meaning of Government Code Section 11123.5.*

**Subcommittee Members:** Kathleen Alonzo (Virtual), Stephanie Crist (Virtual), Alan Cruz (Virtual), Jennifer Fischer (Virtual), Harrison Lane (Virtual), Michelle O’Camb (Virtual), Paula Tobler (Virtual), Sarah Turner (Virtual), and Scarlett vonThenen (Virtual)

**CCEPD/DOR Staff Members:** Maria Aliferis-Gjerde (Virtual), Erica Carter (In-person), and Zak Ford (Virtual)

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Lane called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and a quorum was established.

1. **Approval of August Meeting Minutes**

Motion/second (Tobler/O’Camb) to approve the meeting minutes. Motion passed on a 7-0-1 vote. (Yes – 7: Crist, Cruz, Fischer, Lane, O’Camb, Tobler, Turner), (No – 0), (Abstain – 1: vonThenen)

1. **Presentation on** **“Impact of the Direct Support Professional Workforce Shortage” Report and Employer Roundtable Project**

Teresa Anderson, Executive Director at the California Policy Center for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (CPCIDD) presented on her organization’s recent “Impact of the Direct Support Professional (DSP) Workforce Shortage” report and current project involving employer roundtables.

Report Overview:

* The DSP workforce shortage is harmful to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) as it is the single greatest barrier to inclusion and independence for people with IDD.
* For many people with IDD, the workforce shortage serves to drastically limit opportunities for employment, choice of where and with whom they live, social activities, the type of services they receive, and overall access to their communities.
* There are several factors that contribute to the on-going DSP workforce shortage.
  + The main factor is the historically low wages paid in relation to the high levels of skill and responsibility required for the job.
  + Other factors include staff burnout, high turnover rates, inadequate training for both new and experienced DSPs, and limited resources for enriching levels of support for the individuals they support.
  + Additionally, awareness about the profession is lagging so it is often overlooked as people are entering the workforce or seeking employment.
  + Finally, low reimbursement rates limit service providers’ ability to compete in the labor market and pay a competitive wage such that they could consistently attract and retain DSPs.

Current project involving employer roundtables:

* CPCIDD received a grant from Ability Central to further work in understanding and reducing barriers to employment for people with IDD. The project provides opportunities for them to do the following:
  + Test/Evaluate the National Retailers Foundation Rise Up Curriculum in adults with IDD seeking employment.
  + Host roundtable discussions:
    - Employers
    - Supported employment providers
    - Individuals/family members
  + Develop resources and informational materials.
* The organization is currently in the process of holding roundtable discussions with employers and has held roundtables with a variety of employers from small private employers to large public employers.
* Once complete, the report will be shared with the CCEPD and made public.

Across both projects, employers shared challenges with communication channels and concerns surrounding providing adequate accommodations.

Member questions and comments:

* Some skillsets, although different, crossover into the aging population.
* The legislature currently doesn’t have much of an appetite from raising DSP wages.
* In certain industries there are union concerns with low wages and taking away union member work.
* Soft skills, especially around communication, are important.
* Employers need a safe space to ask questions.
* There might be crossover opportunities with the state as a model employer.
* Job retention is a large concern and needs to be addressed.

1. **Discussion on Job Coaching Project**

CCEPD staff member Ford provided a brief overview of updates to the job coaching policy recommendations framework. Policy recommendations will be developed in the three areas:

* Improving job coaching training and supported employment career pathways
* Developing a job coaching online employer resource
* Implementing and aligning job coaching services across systems and programs

An initial draft of policy recommendations will be presented and discussed in the October subcommittee meeting. Policy recommendations will be finalized by the CCEPD’s Full Committee in February of 2026.

1. **Update on Subcommittee Priorities**

* Federal and State Updates (Zak Ford and Maria Aliferis-Gjerde)
  + The CCEPD continues to watch federal budget and policy conversations for impacts to state programs.
  + Aliferis-Gjerde serves on the Interagency Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (IACA) People with Disabilities Subcommittee and asked if members have stories to share on apprenticeships.
* Member Roundtable Reports
  + Department of Developmental Services (DDS): Crist reported the department is updating their employment services and a workgroup meeting will be held October 8.
  + State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD): vonThenen reported the SCDD is in process of developing its next five-year state plan covering years 2027-2031. The plan will guide their direction and work and reflect the priorities of stakeholders, including self-advocates, family advocates, and professionals.

1. **Agenda Items for Future Meetings**

Other than items raised among previous agenda items, no new items were raised.

1. **Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

1. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 3:52 p.m.