



Andy Beshear
Governor

Jaime Link
Education and Labor Cabinet Secretary

Public Policy Committee **Minutes**

February 15, 2024
9:00am – 10:00am
Zoom
Meeting ID: 859 4707 5457

Members Present: Chair, Diana Merzweiler, Allison Johnson on behalf of Gretta Hylton, Jeff White, Katie Wolf Whaley, Amy Luttrell and Andrew Johnson

Additional Members Present: Cora McNabb and Leslie Hoffman

Staff Present: Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR) Administrator, Nanci Howard, KYOVR Administrative Specialist, Pepper Caudill and Division Director - Department of Workforce Development, Holly Hendricks

Guest(s) Present: Dr. Luv'Tesha Robertson

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review:

Administrator, Nanci Howard welcomed everyone to the meeting and screen shared the [agenda](#) before turning the meeting over to Chair, Diana Merzweiler. Introductions were held for Allison Johnson who is newly attending the meeting on behalf of Council Member, Gretta Hylton.

Project NEON Update:

Administrator, Nanci Howard provided a brief update of the 2024 Project NEON Award for the group. She explained that she was scheduled to further discuss and develop a plan for the 2024 Project NEON Award this upcoming Friday, February 16, 2024 and would have additional information to share with the group after that time. There was discussion whether the committee could develop a list of desired technical supports to go over with a Project NEON Subject Matter Expert (SME) at a later time, and it was determined that this could be done if the committee chose to pursue this.

Review of Public Policy Checklists:

Chair, Diana Merzweiler provided a brief history of her understanding of work that had been done by the committee during the 2024 year. Member, Andrew Johnson gave a debriefing of his review of the [CIE State Policy Definitions pdf](#), which was screen shared with the committee. There was discussion of other states that have policy language which is consistent with Federal definitions and how this relates to Kentucky. It was decided that the recommendation of the Committee would be for Kentucky State to adopt the Federal definition of "competitive integrated employment". Diana reminded the

committee that they should have all recommendations queued up to deliver to Senator Carroll for the next legislative sessions. Diana stated that the committee would develop a full definition to be worked on via email amongst the committee members between now and their next meeting; resulting in a consensus at the next meeting to bring the fully developed definition to the Council for vote to bring forward to Senator Carroll. Diana stated she would work directly with Andrew to word smith a draft definition which would then be sent to Nanci for dissemination to the other committee members for additional edits. Member, Jeff White gave a debriefing of his review of the [Policy Review Checklist for SCL](#) which was screen shared to the group. There was discussion amongst the group regarding this matter and waiver services. Diana shared with the group an update of the Advocacy & Education Committee's work which aligns with this matter. There was discussion regarding the challenges of dissemination of resources that are developed. Diana requested that Jeff compile a list of the resources that have already been developed and provide that to Nanci for dissemination to the remainder of the committee. There was a brief discussion of whether fee structures are impacting provider capacity and if recommendations for revisions should be developed by the committee.

Future Policy Review Discussion and Suggestions for Additional Agencies to Review:

Chair, Diana Merzweiler requested that committee members consider a list of agencies and programs that need to be reviewed this year and email those to Nanci. She also stated that the committee would review and discuss the OVR Provider Contract at the next meeting. The meeting ended.

Future areas of focus:

- It was decided that the recommendation of the Committee would be for Kentucky State to adopt the Federal definition of "competitive integrated employment". Diana reminded the committee that they should have all recommendations queued up to deliver to Senator Carroll for the next legislative sessions. Diana stated that the committee would develop a full definition to be worked on via email amongst the committee members between now and their next meeting; resulting in a consensus at the next meeting to bring the fully developed definition to the Council for vote to bring forward to Senator Carroll. Diana stated she would work directly with Andrew to word smith a draft definition which would then be sent to Nanci for dissemination to the other committee members for additional edits.
- Diana requested that Jeff compile a list of the resources that have already been developed and provide that to Nanci for dissemination to the remainder of the committee.
- Chair, Diana Merzweiler requested that committee members consider a list of agencies and programs that need to be reviewed this year and email those to Nanci.
- The committee will review and discuss the OVR Provider Contract at the next meeting.

Next Meeting Date:

Public Policy Committee:

Thursday, March 21st, 2024

9:00am-10:00am EST

[Zoom Link](#)

Employment First Council:

Friday, April 12th, 2024

1:00pm – 3:00pm

Hybrid Format

Location: TBD

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