



# OPERATIONS MANUAL

**The Governor's Committee on  
Disability Issues and Employment  
(GCDE)**

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## Executive Order 87-08

[https://governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe\\_order/eo\\_87-08.pdf](https://governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/eo_87-08.pdf)

### *Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment*

It is the public policy of this state to promote full participation and equal opportunity for all persons, including those of disability. (A person of disability means an individual who has physical, mental, or sensory characteristics such as those listed under the "handicapped person" definition in regulation [28 CFR 41.31\(b\)](#) for implementation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, PL 93-112.) Yet, despite continued efforts and marked progress to achieve equity for the disability community, this social minority presently experiences one of the highest unemployment rates, has a disproportionate number of members living in poverty, and still cannot access most built structures or community activities. Although the disability minority in Washington numbers approximately 400,000 persons, it has a very low sense of group identity, and the abilities, capacities, interests, and concerns of persons of disability continue to be misunderstood or undervalued.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Booth Gardner, Governor of Washington, do hereby reaffirm the establishment of and need for the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, retitle it the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment, hereinafter referred to as the "Committee," reaffirm its administrative attachment to the Employment Security Department, and require the following:

1. The Committee, pursuant to this Executive Order, shall serve as a disability minority advocate. It shall identify for attention the issues and concerns pertaining to the rights and needs of all persons of disability and shall work to empower such individuals to take control over their own lives;
2. The Committee shall advise the Governor, Legislature, state agencies, the business community, organized labor, other public and private organizations, and the general public on disability issues and concerns, and make recommendations to address those concerns, with emphasis on increasing opportunities for independence and employment;
3. The Committee shall develop, conduct, and oversee the execution of policies, projects, activities, and other actions that will enhance access, opportunities, options, and equity for all persons of disability;

4. Annually, the Committee shall submit to the Governor a report with recommendations which shall address disability issues such as the following: the status of public and private sector employment opportunities; program and physical access; legislative priorities; selected state agency budgets; economic and social status of the disability community; and an overall state government rehabilitation/disability services overview;
5. In carrying out its duties, the Committee may establish such relationships with state agencies, especially those that serve the disability community, local governments, private industry, educational institutions, labor, and other private organizations, as may be needed to promote equal opportunity for persons of disability;
6. Each state department and agency shall provide appropriate and reasonable assistance and resources to the Committee, so that the Committee may carry out the purposes of this Order. Also, the Committee may secure, directly from any department or agency of the state, information necessary to enable it to carry out the purpose of this Order;
7. The chairperson and the members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Governor, and;
  - (a) At least fifty percent of new members appointed after the effective date of this Order shall be persons of disability. Up to ten percent of the full Committee membership may be family members of persons of disability and/or advocates;
  - (b) The membership shall be selected so as to represent a wide variety of physical, mental, or sensory disability characteristics. Geography, occupation, sex, age, socioeconomic status, other minority membership, and diversity of viewpoints will also be considered in making appointments;
  - (c) Selected governmental leaders and advocates, necessary to enable the Committee to carry out the work of this Order, may participate on the Committee as non-voting associate

members. The Governor shall appoint associate members; and

- (d) The Committee may establish advisory, work, and study groups as necessary to carry out the work of this Order.
8. The Employment Security Department shall continue as the lead agency in providing fiscal and administrative support to the Committee, including;
- (a) Seeking and securing additional support for the Committee from other state agencies; and
  - (b) Coordinating the fiscal and administrative support that all other agencies and sources provide to the Committee.
9. The Committee shall have the authority to accept support and assistance, or receive gifts, grants, endowments, or bequests, as may be made to or provided from state agencies or other public/private sources, for the use and benefit of the purposes of the Committee and to expend the same, or any income therefrom, according to attached terms.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have  
Hereunto set my hand and caused the  
seal of the state of Washington to be  
affixed at Olympia this 1<sup>st</sup> day of July,  
A.D., nineteen hundred and eighty-  
seven.

**BOOTH GARDNER**

Governor of Washington

## Mission Statement:

The Governor’s Committee on Disability Issues and Employment provides state level advocacy and leadership with the disability community to obtain equity in economic opportunity and community inclusion.

## Vision Statement:

An equitable Washington where people with disabilities experience full inclusion, full participation, and economic vibrance.

## Pro-Equity Anti Racism Statement:

In accordance with Executive Order 22-02, the Governor’s Committee on Disability Issues and Employment is committed to the vision of “everyone in Washington has full access to the opportunities, power, and resources they need to flourish and achieve their full potential...” as directed by the Governor. GCDE acknowledges the history of “systems that have been both intentionally and unintentionally built to reinforce privilege, opportunity and power for some but not all” (ESD PEAR statement, 8/30/22) and is committed to unraveling those systems to make changes that allow full equity for all Washingtonians.

## What do Staff and Committee Members Do?

- Advise on state policy affecting people with disabilities;
- Monitor and influence legislation on matters related to equity in opportunity and access for people with disabilities;
- Communicate with policy makers, state leaders, and the public about access and inclusion for people with disabilities;
- Through Community Outreach events, facilitate conversations and empower communities to identify already existing resources and build plans to fully meet the needs of people with disabilities;
- Recognize employers who demonstrate leadership in employing persons with disabilities through the Governor’s Employer Awards or other activities;



- Engage in state level activities that support employment outcomes for people with disabilities;
- Host the Youth Empowerment Program for youth with disabilities, growing the next generation of leaders;
- Oversee and award grants to promote accessibility per the [Accessible Communities Act](#).
- Conduct activities in a universally accessible environment and ensure effective inclusion and communication.

## Coordinating Committee

**Mission:** The mission of the GCDE Coordinating Committee (CC) is to provide leadership support to GCDE in partnership with the Chairperson and Executive Director.

**Role:**

- Provides direction in establishing priority policy areas;
- Reviews subcommittee work for mission and resource appropriateness and addresses any conflict in use of resources;
- Shares information with the CC and from the CC with members and assigned subcommittees;
- Plans and provides direction to General Membership meetings.

## Subcommittee Mission Statements

### Accessible Communities:

The Accessible Communities (AC) subcommittee supports counties in improving accessibility, inclusivity, and equal access to opportunities for people with disabilities by helping counties establish Accessible Communities Advisory Committees (ACACs) and providing them with funding and technical assistance.

#### **Activities:**

- Using funds accumulated in the State’s Accessible Communities Account, grants funds to county ACACs by reviewing grant proposals and making funding decisions;
- Acts as a resource for counties on the accessible communities act and in establishing ACACs.

### Community Outreach:

The Community Outreach subcommittee conducts outreach events to facilitate, encourage, and celebrate the local disability community developing action plans with community leaders to improve life for people with disabilities.

#### **Activities:**

- Develops and hosts activities to engage rural and/or underserved communities throughout Washington;
- Hosts leaders and the disability community to build effective relationships that achieve identified goals.

### Governor’s Employer Awards:

The Governor’s Employer Awards subcommittee increases opportunities, accessibility, employment, and career development for people experiencing disabilities by planning and holding an annual event recognizing employers and individuals who are leading the way toward inclusion for people experiencing disabilities.

**Activities:**

- Plans the annual Governor’s Employer Awards event or other activities;
- Solicits and considers nominations;
- Selects recipients for the awards.

**Membership:**

The Membership subcommittee ensures GCDE has highly qualified representatives of the disability community by recommending for appointment people diverse in disability, relationship to the disability community, viewpoints on disability issues, ethnicity, gender, age, and geographic residence. The subcommittee ensures that new GCDE Members are successful by providing a thorough new member orientation and mentorship program, and ensures that GCDE’s vision is fulfilled through the timely and active participation of all Members.

**Activities:**

- Reviews application materials and determines a list of applicants for further consideration;
- Interviews applicants;
- Works with GCDE leadership to create and submit a list of recommended appointments to the Governor’s Boards and Commissions Office.

**Youth Empowerment Program (YEP):**

Through an innovative leadership training program, the YEP subcommittee provide youth (aged 16-22) experiencing a disability with an opportunity to practice leadership skills, a sense of community, and a chance to develop lifelong friendships. We provide mentorship and a supportive environment for development of leadership, skills enabling youth with disabilities to rise and directly influence an inclusive society.

**Activities:**

- Plans and hosts a youth empowerment event;

- Solicits sponsorships and engages partners to create a vibrant program;
- Recruits youth for the event.

#### Legislative Workgroup:

The Legislative Workgroup works alongside the GCDE Executive Director and GCDE Chairperson to identify legislative priorities, positions and actions during legislative session. The Legislative Workgroup mobilizes GCDE members to influence legislative action through their respective personal legislators on issues of importance to people with disabilities. GCDE acknowledges the plurality of thought and complexity in our workgroup's diverse, cross disability, statewide presence; and welcomes healthy discourse.

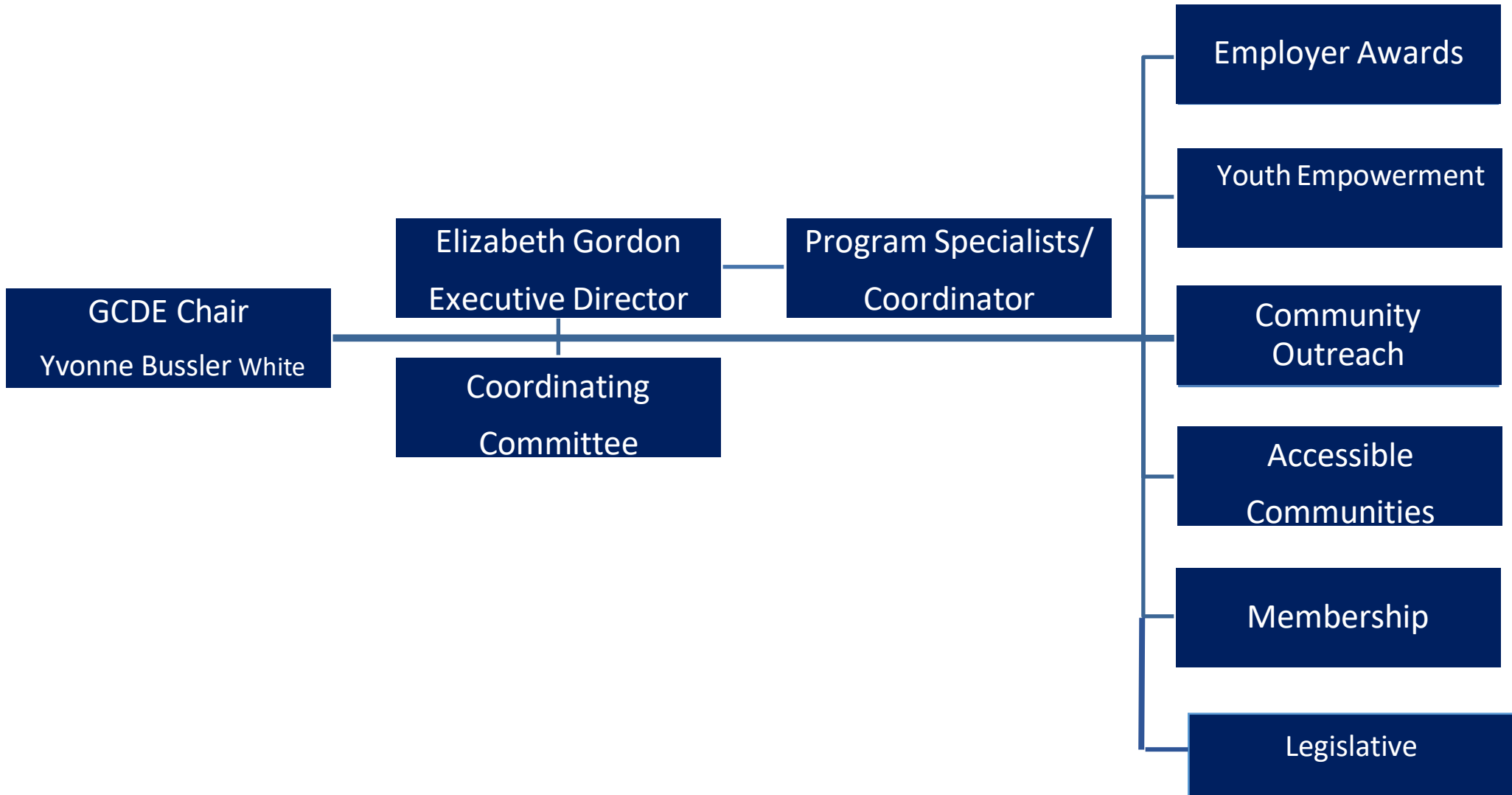
#### **Activities:**

- Establish legislative priorities for GCDE each legislative session
- Work alongside community partners to advocate and educate legislation directly impacting people with disabilities

#### **Other Projects:**

Annually GCDE evaluates its work to make sure our members' voices are heard and the issues that are most important to our members are reflected in our work. This evaluation may be formal or informal and includes all members recommitting themselves to the work. During that time, members suggest new projects and members vote to identify work for the year.

# GCDE Organizational Chart



## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

#### Member:

#### **Appointment:**

Members are appointed by the Governor. The usual term is 3 years, unless a member is appointed for a partial term. Members are appointed for up to 2 full 3 year terms.

#### **Qualifications:**

- Be a person with a disability or disabilities, family member of a person with disabilities, and/or an advocate/professional for persons with disabilities;
- Have experience working to ensure people with disabilities obtain equity and independence;
- Possess expertise, skills, resources, or life experiences that contribute to the activities of the GCDE;
- Have leadership experience OR lived experience that brings needed perspectives for GCDE to represent the disability community;
- GCDE intentionally includes historically under-valued communities who experience disproportionate barriers to employment and services, such as the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community, and the Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/ Questioning, Intersex, Androgynous/asexual (2SLGBTQIA+) community, recognizing that intersection between identities compounds access, equity and inclusion.

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Prepare for, attend, and actively participate in GCDE General Membership Meetings;

- Serve on GCDE subcommittee(s) and actively participate by taking on work tasks and contributing to discussions;
- Be responsive to GCDE communications;
- Serve as a resource, alerting GCDE to issues, connecting GCDE to programs and leaders;
- Help GCDE build community relationships to promote equity for people with disabilities in Washington state
- GCDE Members actively participate. Our work is critical, and each voice is needed. Members who need to reduce participation due to unforeseen life circumstances should inform staff and the GCDE Chair as soon as possible. Members who must miss a regularly scheduled meeting must inform staff in advance of their expected absence.

## Associate Member:

### **Appointment:**

Historically, the Governor appointed heads of state agencies that serve people with disabilities as Associate Members. Associate Members may appoint a delegate to attend meetings on their behalf. If the Governor elects not to take the role of appointer, this responsibility falls to the GCDE Coordinating Committee in partnership with the Executive Director.

As cross-disability advocates, GCDE Members and Associate Members represent complex issues and interests, seeking to achieve diverse objectives. The Committee works within a complex and intricate environment that includes relationships with elected officials, leaders of state agencies, and members of other boards and commissions, along with diverse constituents.

Partners are critical in supporting people with disabilities and in achieving equity for people with disabilities. GCDE may recommend extraordinary partners for appointment as an Associate Member.

### **Criteria for appointment shall include:**

- Statewide services are provided;
- The partner strengthens GCDE's mission and provides high quality services to the disability community;
- Associate Members provide services to the disability community beyond promoting their services to people with disabilities.



### Chairperson:

**Appointment:** By the Governor and serves at the Governor's pleasure for a three-year term with the possibility of a second three-year term.

### Role and Responsibilities:

The Chair leads GCDE to achieve goals and objectives that support equity for people with disabilities. The Chair oversees all Committee work, including GCDE's subcommittees and work groups, ensuring achievement of GCDE's goals and objectives. The Chairperson delegates day to day operations to GCDE staff. The Chairperson must be sensitive and respectful while prioritizing and balancing relationships with the goals of the Committee.

- Cooperates with the Employment Security Department, which houses GCDE, to select and supervise the Executive Director. Directs other GCDE staff to conduct the general business and operations of GCDE. Direction of union-represented staff is coordinated through the Executive Director;
- Liaises between GCDE and Employment Security Department, other agencies, the Governor's Office, and the State Legislature;
- Represents GCDE at governmental and private sector meetings, functions, and activities;
- Ensures GCDE's operating procedures are adequate to support general business and objectives;
- Conducts and presides at GCDE General Membership meetings, Coordinating Committee meetings, and other meetings, as needed;
- Appoints GCDE's Vice-Chairperson(s) and chairs of Subcommittees;
- Appoints GCDE Members to subcommittees in coordination with subcommittee Chairs;
- Appoints workgroup leaders as well as leaders of, ad hoc committees, special action committees, and/or special project groups, subject to the availability of resources and in alignment with the GCDE mission;
- Prepares or delegates correspondence to Committee Members and associates, citizens, governmental officials, and others.

### Subcommittee Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson:

#### **Appointment:**

Appointed by the GCDE Chairperson. Subcommittee Chair and Vice-Chairpersons are GCDE Members, Associate Members, or Chairs Emeritus. When no current GCDE Members are available to fill a vacant Chair position, the GCDE Chair may appoint a past GCDE Member or community volunteer who is familiar with the subcommittee work as an acting Chair until leadership capacity is built within the existing Members.

Subcommittee Chairpersons are appointed by the GCDE Chairperson.

#### Roles and Responsibilities:

- Plan, monitor, and evaluate the work of the subcommittee;
- Participate in the GCDE Coordinating Committee;
- Develop annual work plan including member roles needed for the work;
- Run meetings, coordinate agendas, and plan work in partnership with GCDE staff;
- Coordinate with GCDE Chairperson

#### Subcommittee Vice Chairperson(s)

- Vice-Chairperson(s) are appointed to provide leadership support to subcommittees by the GCDE Chairperson with input from subcommittee chairperson.
- Substitute as Chair when Subcommittee Chairpersons are absent.
- Participate in Coordinating Committee and other meetings when the subcommittee chair is not available.

- Assist with events, meetings, and other subcommittee activities
- If the chair position is open the vice chair will be considered for the position along with others.

## MEMBERSHIP OF SUBCOMMITTEES

### Coordinating Committee:

Standing Members include GCDE Staff, Chairperson; GCDE Vice-Chairperson(s); and Subcommittee Chairpersons. In addition, there are a minimum of two (2) At- Large Member positions who are nominated by GCDE Members at the last General Membership Meeting of the calendar year. Current Coordinating Committee Members recommend candidates to fill positions for the next year. At-Large Members are then appointed by the GCDE Chairperson for a one-year term, January - December.

### Subcommittees:

Each GCDE Member is appointed to subcommittee(s) by the GCDE Chairperson, considering the overall needs of all the subcommittees and each new Member's preference in appointment. Over time, Members may be reassigned to different subcommittee(s).

### Workgroup Leaders:

Workgroup Leaders are subcommittee Members, appointed by the Subcommittee Chairperson to carry out specific, time-limited projects. The Subcommittee Chairperson may also act as a workgroup leader. Community volunteers are eligible to be Workgroup Leaders.

### Membership Subcommittee:

Members may include the GCDE Chairperson; GCDE Vice-Chairperson(s); Membership Subcommittee Chairperson; Staff, and Membership Subcommittee Vice-Chairperson. In addition, At-Large Members of the Membership Subcommittee are appointed by the GCDE Chairperson on an as-needed basis.

### Ad-Hoc Committees:

The GCDE Chairperson may establish Ad-Hoc Committees to work on special projects, provide oversight, or carry out aspects of the work of the GCDE.

## STAFF FUNCTIONS

Under the direction of the Executive Director, staff support the following GCDE subcommittees:

- Coordinating Committee;
- Accessible Communities;
- Community Outreach;
- Governor’s Employer Awards;
- Membership;
- Youth Empowerment Program;
- Legislative;
- Ad Hoc Committees and Workgroups as assigned.

### Committee Support Activities:

Program Coordinators/Specialists staff committees, subcommittees, and workgroups. Staff work under the direction of the Executive Director in coordination with the GCDE Chairperson, subcommittee Chairperson, or workgroup leader. Examples of staff support:

- Meeting Preparation--scheduling, acquiring, or developing materials, communications, arranging presenters, locating meeting sites, creating virtual meeting invitations, arranging virtual meetings, and assisting with travel;
- Meeting Support--providing refreshments, providing alternative formats, organizing accommodations, providing technical assistance, and taking minutes;
- Follow-up Tasks—preparing and distributing minutes, publications, reports, and correspondence; planning and organizing workshops, conferences, and forums; performing research and analysis; drafting materials for committee review;
- GCDE staff also undertake duties outside of committee support activities, as directed by the Executive Director.

## GCDE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Subcommittee Chairs submit reports three (3) times per year to the Coordinating Committee the meeting prior to the gathering of the general membership.. Reports are brief and focused on keeping other Members up to date on subcommittee work. The Coordinating Committee report is included in meeting materials for General Membership meetings. GCDE staff may assist subcommittee Chairs with written reports as needed. Reports include the following:

- Date of Report;
- Subcommittee Name;
- Successful Outcomes since last report;
- Recent Activities;
- Next Steps;
- Ways GCDE Members can help; and
- Name of person submitting report.

## SUBCOMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Subcommittees develop a work plan for the year. The work plan includes the vision of the work and the roles that are needed. The Chair submits the workplan to the Coordinating Committee. The Coordinating Committee reviews work plans from all subcommittees.

Subcommittee work plans answer two questions:

- What difference will the project make/what problem will it address/solve?
- What role(s) members need to fill in order for the project to be successful. Include how many members need to sign up for the project.

## Meeting Access Policy

GCDE provides reasonable accommodations so everyone can fully participate.

### GCDE meetings will:

- Be held in accessible locations and facilities;
- Be held on accessible virtual platforms;
- Be facilitated for maximum accessibility;
- Be scheduled at time of day, day of week, and location that considers the needs of most people involved;
- Be fragrance free.

## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Members can request reasonable accommodations. Please let us know as early as possible. Staff will keep track of what members need so that reasonable accommodations are available without special request. Accommodations may include:

### Materials in Alternate Format

Materials may be provided in large print or Braille or other formats. Contact a staff person if an alternative format is needed. Most materials are provided electronically.

### Sign Language Interpreters

GCDE staff will schedule sign language interpreters for GCDE meetings and activities when members request them.

### Assistive Listening Systems/ CART and Videotext Displays

Assistive listening and transcription will be provided for meetings upon request.

### Fragrance Free Environment

Please refrain from using fragrances when attending in-person GCDE activities.

### Transportation

Members must contact GCDE staff for assistance and preapproval. Arrangements will be made for the least expensive mode of travel. Carpooling is strongly encouraged.

### General Assistance

Upon request, staff can assist in filling out forms, reading meeting materials aloud, and other reasonable individual preparation or support before meetings. This assistance increases programmatic access that allows full participation.

### Accommodations for GCDE Co-Sponsored Activities

GCDE works with co-sponsoring organizations to hold meetings in accessible locations, provide accessible materials, sign language interpreters, and other accommodations when GCDE has received prior notice that services are necessary, and if budget allows.

### Accessibility Mentoring and Support

As a leader in state disability issues, GCDE works with and encourages other organizations to hold meetings in accessible locations, provide accessible materials, sign language interpreters, and other accommodations when GCDE has received prior notice that such assistance is desired. GCDE provides training and mentoring of other organizations who make such requests as time allows.

### Community Input to GCDE

GCDE considers input and ideas from the community to shape our work.

- **Public comment:** Members of the public may share their thoughts, ideas, and concerns during periods of public comment at GCDE General Membership meetings, committee meetings, or work group meetings. Public comments will not be addressed at the meeting where they are shared but may be explored for further action at the next meeting of the governing body with which the idea was shared. Individuals who share input via public comment periods generally will not receive any response to that feedback other than having their comments noted in the minutes of the meeting during which they made the comments.
- **Subcommittee Membership:** Community members may join GCDE subcommittees work groups, or ad hoc groups. Community members have the same roles, responsibilities and voting rights as other subcommittee Members.



## Voting Policy

The following is the voting policy for general Members, Associate Members, and Members Emeritus:

**Members** may vote at/in General Membership meetings and all subcommittees that they are a member of.

**Associate Members** may vote at subcommittee meetings where they are a member of the subcommittee

**Chairs Emeritus** may vote at/in:

1. General Membership meetings; and
2. Subcommittee meetings where they are a member.

## Voting Process

GCDE makes decisions two ways:

- At GCDE meetings, and subcommittee meetings, a formal vote will be conducted. A formal vote includes a record of the person who makes the motion, the number of people who voted for the motion, the number who voted against a motion and the names of any people abstaining from the vote. Information on when members should abstain is in the abstention/conflict of interest section below.
- A leader such as the GCDE Chair or subcommittee Chair may decide after gathering input. The leader will ask the group for input and will facilitate an informal discussion. To ensure everyone's input is obtained, the facilitator may ask each Member of the group to weigh in individually, so all Members have an opportunity to speak about the issue. Leaders make final decisions and informal discussion and input will be taken at a public meeting. The decision also known as final action will be announced at the public meeting and recorded in the minutes. If a member asks for a vote of the group then a formal vote will be taken.

Votes are conducted in public and recorded in minutes. Members or participants may abstain from a vote when they have a real or perceived conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is where a member might have a

personal interest in a vote or look like they have a personal interest. For example, in a situation where a person could make money from the vote or has a family member who could make money. GCDE members should tell staff about any potential conflicts of interest, and choose not to vote (abstain) from any vote where they could have a conflict of interest. Here are a few examples:

- Bob works for Evergreen County. Evergreen County applied for a grant through accessible communities. Bob must not vote on the grant for Evergreen County because he works there.
- Sally is looking for a caterer for an event. Her cousin has a catering company. While Sally can suggest the catering company her cousin runs as an option, she cannot vote or participate in decisions around what catering company is chosen.
- Mary lives in King County. The AC committee is voting on a project that will be built in her county. She must not participate in that vote since she could be seen as getting a benefit from that vote.

GCDE Members are expected to minimize conflicts of interest, disclose ethical, legal, financial or other conflicts of interest and remove themselves from the related decision making and vote if a conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict of interest exists. Minutes record the person's name and abstention.

## Quorum

Quorum consists of a simple majority of the General Membership, Coordinating Committee, or subcommittee. Simple majority consists of half (50%) of the membership of that group, plus 1. GCDE wants to hear hearing different people's thoughts and work together to find solutions we all agree on. We work to make sure that there is enough time to talk and hear from each person prior to a vote. Staff will keep track of quorum and let the group know if we have quorum at the beginning of each meeting.

## Meeting Minutes

GCDE takes meeting minutes that document decisions that are made in meetings. These minutes will be available on the GCDE website.

The results of votes will be written in the minutes. The results are reported this way: the motion that describes what the group is voting on and who made it, a second to the motion, and a record of the number of members voting in favor, voting against, and abstaining.

For example:

Motion by Juan to approve the minutes. Seconded and passed unanimously. Or Motion to approve funding for Hope County ramp proposal, seconded and passed with 10 in favor, 3 against, and 1 abstention by Marie who lives in Hope County.

In votes that take place via email or online polling, a complete list of those who were asked to vote will be included with their vote in the minutes. GCDE does not conduct any votes by secret ballot.

## Open Public Meetings

GCDE does the business of the people in Washington state. We follow the [Open Public Meetings Act RCW 42.30.010 et seq \(OMPA\)](#). Anyone may attend GCDE meetings and observe. During open public comment, members of the public can provide input on anything they would like. GCDE will record open public comment in minutes exactly as shared.

GCDE Members must complete training on OPMA prior to serving, and periodically thereafter. Training on OPMA and other related guidance for those serving as Members is found on the Governor's Boards and Commissions website:

<https://www.governor.wa.gov/boards-commissions>.

#### Training includes:

- Being an Effective Board or Commission Member;
- Ethics in Government-A reminder of what is expected of you as a Board or Commission Member;
- Records Management: Public Officials and Public Records;
- Public Records Act Overview;
- Public Records Act quick reference guide; and
- Q&A regarding the Open Public Meeting Act.

## Participation

### Policy

GCDE Members are expected to participate fully in GCDE activities, including consistent attendance at meetings. If a member is absent, the GCDE Chairperson will check in. If a member can't fully participate, they may be asked to resign so others have the opportunity to serve.

**Attending subcommittee meetings is important.** Subcommittee chairs will contact new subcommittee members to welcome them, get to know them, and review the work of the subcommittee;

- GCDE Staff will let subcommittee chairs know if people are missing meetings. Subcommittee chairs will reach out to check in about absences and to troubleshoot any issues.

The subcommittee Chair will help the member develop a plan to increase participation. If the Member continues to miss meetings and/or fails to participate in agreed upon subcommittee work assignments, the subcommittee Chair may contact the GCDE Chairperson to review the situation and decide next steps.

If the member does not increase participation after working with the subcommittee Chair, the GCDE Chairperson is informed. The Chair will contact the member and try to find ways that the person can participate more. If the person is unable to participate they may be asked to resign. The GCDE Chair will agree with the Member on a timeline for improvement

in participation, or on resignation by a specific date, and will confirm these agreements with the member in writing.

## GCDE Member Resignation Process

GCDE members must submit a formal resignation letter to the Governor's Office. A copy must also be sent to the GCDE staff.

The resignation must include the GCDE Member's name and address, note that they are a Member of GCDE, and indicate the date the resignation is effective. The resignation may be submitted electronically [here](#).

## Travel Reimbursement Policy and Procedure

The GCDE Travel Reimbursement Policy is approved by the Office of Financial Management (OFM) and is outlined below with supplemental procedures pursuant to GCDE and consistent with OFM state travel policy, "General Administration Travel Regulations for Class 1 Boards, Commissions and Committees." See [Section 10.7.0](#).

Members of the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment (GCDE) give thousands of volunteer hours to the state of Washington each year. This expertise and energy impacts issues of equity in the disability community and has significant value to the state. GCDE manages the limited Member travel funds to promote the highest level of participation in GCDE activities.

### Eligibility

This travel policy pertains to GCDE Members and Members Emeritus. Associate Members are not compensated through travel reimbursement by GCDE for participation in GCDE activities. Associate Members must seek an exception to receive travel reimbursement from GCDE, or request reimbursement from their employer for expenses incurred on GCDE business (if approved).

### Employment Status

Members and Members Emeritus who are employees of the state of Washington or of other governmental entities, shall not receive per diem payment from GCDE nor accrue hours toward the GCDE per diem payment threshold for time during which they are also paid, or granted compensatory leave, by their employer.

### Official Participation

This travel policy pertains only to official participation in GCDE related activities. Attendance at GCDE General Membership Meetings is official participation for all GCDE Members and Members Emeritus. For the purposes of this travel policy, participation in any other GCDE related activity is "official" only for Members or Members Emeritus who are appointed to participate in that activity or subcommittee by the GCDE Chairperson.

### Allowable Costs

Members are to exercise prudent judgment in incurring travel expenses on official state business. Excessive or unnecessary expenses will not be approved or reimbursed.

## Airfare

In compliance with state regulations, GCDE Staff makes all airline travel arrangements. GCDE will cover the full cost of the most reasonable and available economy class air travel between the proximate commercial airports for the Member's city of residence/business and the city in which the GCDE related activity is conducted.

Members are responsible for contacting designated GCDE Staff for ticket arrangements and airline reservations at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the date of travel to ensure seating availability.

## Supplemental Procedures

- **Diversion for Personal Trips:** This may be done for the personal convenience of Members in cooperation with staff; however, Members must pay any additional cost. Members cannot bill the additional cost to the GCDE for reimbursement later;
- **Changes in Ticket Arrangements:** If a member's ticket needs to be changed, contact the designated GCDE staff person for assistance as soon as possible;
- **Cancellations:** If need to cancel your airline reservations, contact the designated GCDE staff person as soon as possible;
- **Contingency Situations:** Situations may arise during air travel that are unpredictable. Flights may be delayed, diverted to other airports, or be grounded for a variety of reasons; and travel plans may change unexpectedly due to inclement weather. Members must use their own judgment in dealing with these situations. GCDE will reimburse Members for reasonable costs, not paid by airlines, if they become stranded and must cancel their trip, find alternate means of travel, stay overnight, etc. Documentation and receipts of all expenses are required. Contact staff as soon as possible to work out the best way to resolve these issues.

## Privately Owned Vehicles

Eligible Members who travel to and from committee meetings or business in their own vehicles can be reimbursed for mileage at the current state- approved rate (subject to change each January). Mileage between points in the state shall be

determined based on distances shown on the Travel & Expense Management System (TEMS) or on Google Maps.

[Supplemental Procedures cont.](#)

**Alternative Travel:** Members may choose to travel in their own vehicles or by other means such as bus or rail, instead of traveling by air. Reimbursement will be made for what would have been the least expensive mode of travel, including the time involved for travel when calculating per diem reimbursement. Please explain alternative travel methods you used on the GCDE Travel Information Form when requesting travel reimbursement. Reimbursement amounts will be adjusted based on the information you have provided.

[Other Transportation](#)

Reimbursement will be made for tourist class rates on other common carriers used to travel between airports or other points of arrival and the location of the GCDE related activity. For reimbursement of these expenses, original receipts must be provided.

[Miscellaneous Expenses](#)

Expenses essential to the transaction of GCDE business are reimbursable. These expenses include taxi fares, ride share services, parking fees, car rental and gas, bridge and ferry tolls, registration fees, fares for buses, railroads, or other common carriers used to travel between airports or other points of arrival and the meeting place. Receipts are required for expense reimbursement.

[Reasonable Accommodations](#)

All travel-related requests for reasonable accommodations must be approved in advance by the GCDE Chairperson and Executive Director. Requests must be in writing and on file for audit purposes.

[Overnight Lodging](#)

Reimbursement for overnight lodging is covered by the per diem allowance. Eligible Members should request government rates when making hotel reservations.

**Reservations:** Members make their own reservations for overnight stays for GCDE meetings and activities.

**Reimbursable Rates:** Members will be reimbursed for overnight lodging at the actual rate. This cannot exceed the government rate for that area, not including tax. Some exceptions may be made, but these exceptions must be approved in advance by the GCDE



Chairperson and Executive Director.

### Per Diem Allowances

The eligibility threshold for per diem payment is eleven (11) uninterrupted hours (including travel time) of official participation in GCDE activities. Travel time, for purposes of the threshold calculation, is limited to the travel mode that provides the minimum travel time (i.e., air versus auto). The eleven hours threshold time is included in the payable hours when calculating the dollar amount of a Member's per diem eligibility. Members are reimbursed allowable meal and lodging expenses on the same basis, and under the same regulations, as regular state officials and employees, unless otherwise provided in statute. Reimbursement requires prior written approval from an authorized designee.

\*Please note - A hotel breakfast does not count as a meal unless you can order to your specification.

Travelers who cannot eat a provided meal may request an alternative meal (vegetarian, etc.). If the traveler receives written confirmation that an alternative meal cannot be provided, the traveler may be reimbursed for the meal allowance for the area of travel.

### Costs that are not allowable

These items may not be charged as travel expenses:

- Taxi, bus fare, car rental costs, and other transportation costs incurred to places of entertainment after business is concluded (excluding meals). Personal trip insurance; and
- Personal diversion flights.

### Exceptions

It is important that GCDE maintain broad representation by providing all Members, regardless of geographic location, disability characteristic and socioeconomic status, with opportunities to participate in GCDE activities. Therefore, GCDE Members, Members Emeritus, or Associate Members who believe that travel creates an undue barrier to participation may request reimbursement in writing to participate in a specific GCDE activity. Reimbursement must be approved in writing by the GCDE Chairperson and the Executive Director prior to travel.

The GCDE Chairperson and Executive Director, acting jointly, may grant an exception to this travel policy, provided that the reimbursement is within the parameters established by the Office of Financial Management's "General Administration Travel

Regulations for Class 1 Boards, Commissions and Committees" (10.70.20b, Option 2). **Any written request will also be responded to in writing.**

### Appeals

GCDE Members, Members Emeritus and Associate Members who wish to appeal an exception decision may request a review in writing to the GCDE Coordinating Committee within 30 days of receipt of notice. By a majority vote of its Members, the Coordinating Committee may:

- Concur with the decision of the GCDE Chairperson and Executive Director;
- Refer the request back to the Chairperson and Executive Director with a recommendation to reconsider; or
- Grant an exception to the travel policy, provided that the reimbursement which the Member receives because of that exception is within the parameters established by the Office of Financial Management's "General Administration Travel Regulations for Class 1 Boards, Commissions and Committees" (10.70.20b, Option 2).

### How to Claim Reimbursement

Travel Forms are available at GCDE meetings and on the GCDE website. Forms must be signed and dated to receive reimbursement. All original receipts for hotel/ motel, ground transportation, etc. must be attached to the completed travel Form. Staff use the information to input the travel reimbursement request on your behalf. Email to [ESDGP GCDETravelRequests@esd.wa.gov](mailto:ESDGP GCDETravelRequests@esd.wa.gov). If you have other travel questions, call staff at (360) 890-3778.

**Travel Information Forms must be received within 30 days of the date of travel.**

### Travel Advances

In accordance with state rules, a travel advance may be requested for trips totaling over \$100 **under circumstances of financial stress.**

## Other Travel Guidelines

### Out-of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel must be approved in advance by the Commissioner of Employment Security. There are different reimbursement schedules affecting out-of-state travel. GCDE staff will make the out-of-state travel arrangements and make any out of state travel requests to the Commissioner.

### Travel by Non-Members (working on special projects)

Volunteers on subcommittees, such as the Youth Empowerment Program, may be reimbursed using the same rules as GCDE Members. Travel must be preapproved in the same manner as GCDE Members.