



Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment  
Coordinating Committee Meeting  
Friday, November 21, 2025, 10:00am-12:00pm

## Notes

**10:00am: Welcome, call to order, roll call, housekeeping – Yvonne Bussler-White, GCDE Chair (10 min)**

**Meeting called to order** by presiding Chair Yvonne Bussler-White at 10:01am. Welcome to all to our last meeting of the year – thanks for your dedication and hard work this year.

### Present:

Staff – **Emily Spears, Elizabeth Gordon (leaving early), Elaine Stefanowicz**

Members – **Yvonne Bussler-White, Amy Cloud, Steve Lewis, Kristin DiBiase (joined late), Marsha Cutting, Nancy Zellers, Cullyn Foxlee**

**Absent:** Dave Carl (excused), Patti Dailey-Shives (unable to join remotely)

**Quorum** of 6 members met.

**Standard housekeeping items** reviewed: State your name prior to speaking, raise your hand, speak slowly & 1 at a time. This is a safe space for ideas and feel free to turn on your camera.

September meeting minutes – motion called to approve unless questions, concerns, or amendments. Amy moves, Marsha seconds – minutes approved as written (elevator pitch section swapped with whiteboard training for today's agenda).

**10:10am: Whiteboard training – Cullyn Foxlee, Member-At-Large (10 minutes)**

Cullyn presented their training on how to use whiteboards for collaboration in Zoom desktop/phone for the good of the CC Membership. We may need to test again later. There are [written instructions](#) as well.

**10:20am: Elevator pitch for GCDE – staff/all (15 minutes)**

**Check-in:** has there been progress on a draft for this since the last meeting? Do folks approve of what Yvonne started last meeting (see minutes – YBW notes). What is the purpose – when would we use this (if not attending other events) – when asked about what GCDE does (verbally -- conversational).

Discussion was had about what Yvonne drafted last meeting (onscreen/read aloud). A suggestion was made to start with people/purpose rather than agency/what we do. Also to condense it/use plain language (90 second version). AI may be able to help.

30 second (plain language). Move the vision up top (benefits all). We don't really support business – perhaps teach advocacy or acknowledge/recognize employers instead. General empowerment. Structure: who we are, what we do, position statement (why/passion), and how we do it.

Please reach out to Yvonne via email if you have other ideas.

### **10:35am: Members at Large-voting and results - all (10 mins)**

Discussion was had about the members put forth for consideration and role, and a vote was conducted.

The group came to consensus that we would like to **offer 2026 MAL positions to the following three (3) members:**

- 1 -- Amy Cloud
- 2 – Nancy Zellers
- 3 – Lucas Doelman

**Yvonne (or staff) will contact them** to inform them of their appointment and duties.

### **10:45am: Updates Elizabeth – CDAN, subcabinet, federal impacts, EO 24-05 (15 mins)**

Elizabeth provided updates on agenda topics as follows:

**CDAN** – DRW approached us over the summer – unable to support the Cross Disability Action Network (independent policy focus group for cross-disability discussion) – asked us to do so. After research/discussion, we agreed to help support alongside DRW (full supt. would change dynamic). First meeting was last week – leadership/group to discuss those changes/decide on that proposal -- agreed. GCDE Admin. supt. – meeting invites, passing along info, etc. – gaps ID'd (no funding for travel). Aligns with our values – please check it out – great learning space (weekly on Thurs. pm during session). Looking forward to evolution.

**Immigration subcabinet** – Talked at GM – currently, lots of outreach has been done to ID folks to sit on the subcommittee addressing disability aspect – 5 members ID'd thus far, several others to meet with. Kickoff early December. Will keep folks posted. 11:30 meeting with Governor's office & legislative caucus. Impact – immigrant children with DD will lose services (100+ upon Medicaid cuts). Listen further to partner (leaving early).

**Federal impacts** – shutdown created impacts in the food access systems that will likely remain (unclear). Will likely be a big topic at this year's legislative session. We can share out the fact sheet on this topic.

**EO 24-05** (Increasing Employment of PWD in State Govt). – nothing new to share on this one (first subcommittee meeting in a couple of weeks). More to come then.

**Transition council** – focuses on helping youth with disabilities exiting high school (16-22) to connect them to the labor market prior to departing. Research shows that employment outcomes are poorer otherwise.

### **11:00: Break – all (15 minutes)**

Please be back at **11:12am**. Elizabeth leaving at 11:30.

### **11:15: Membership update – Dave Carl, Membership Chair (10 mins)**

Membership staff person Elaine Stefanowicz (on behalf of Membership Chair Dave Carl) provided the following updates on the 2026 Membership process/appointments:

7 members left early, 2 termed off, leaving 9 openings in 2026. Membership has 6 members. 35 applications came in. Personally identifiable information was scrubbed prior to review. Based on initial review, 27 people were offered interviews. 22 are done, 5 remain (completed early next week). Monday 12/1 – 9 finalists and 9 alternates will be chosen. Staff will put together the application package and submit to B&C for appointment by the first quarter of 2026. NMO will happen after that, and mentorship. Should CC focus on attrition/exit interviews for next year to help with early turnover? Work, education, and geographic locations are the main reasonings for departure in this instance. More from Elizabeth. We do try to analyze it annually. This is the nature of volunteerism post-covid, and we are still in better shape than many other commissions based on her conversations. We will recognize folks who left early, too, as this may be ongoing and it is still important to recognize contributions. A youth council is still being explored to bring in younger advocates/energy.

### **11:25: Subcommittee report outs – planning for 2026 – Yvonne, subcommittee chairs (20 mins)**

Chairs started a discussion and reported in a round robin format on their plans for 2026 as follows:

**Community Outreach** – Faced funding issues, hostility to govt., and increased restrictions due to Zoom bombing. Discussed option and landed on a possible statewide listening session in partnership with AC. Targeted for next year after session. Lost Co-vice chairs, small committee currently. Marsha terming off EOY. Hard to plan when departing. No December meeting. Plan in place for successor consideration/supt. – will put into 1-pager format with priorities based on recent meeting notes.

**Legislative** – Patti was not present to report – Nancy to cover. Nothing to report, unable to connect with Patti. Staff has a report they can share (below). Nancy will connect with them in early December. It will be a short session this year. Once bill priority is decided for advocacy, it will be full speed ahead, so prompt action may be needed for comment. A 1-pager of priorities may be helpful (send to Coordinating by EOY).

The Washington State legislative session in 2026 will begin on Monday, January 12, 2026, and is a 60-day short session, expected to end on Thursday, March 12, 2026. Prefiling for the session will start on Monday, December 1, 2025. The Nov. and Dec. subcommittee meetings have focused on Leg. 101 and Advocacy 101 trainings and creating a plan for the new year.

**Membership** – Reported earlier (see above).

**Employment workgroup** – we could not hold an event last year, or likely this coming year. The EWG came out of it. Lots of comms went out during NDEAM in Oct. We created a resource guide for employment discrimination in final review. Planning is starting for next year on focus/advocacy, brainstorming conducted on how to support this topic. Lunch and learns, partnerships, information sharing, collaborating in the employment community (DVR closing categories on 12/8). Different delivery method forthcoming for services. Support and resources still exist – messaging out accordingly.

**Youth Empowerment** – Impacted by state funding issues, pilot program (pivot from prior model of in-person weeklong sleepaway camp) – move to hybrid/virtual model/production with remote or watch

party options. No funding for transport – fully virtual. Many of the folks who signed up were support folks and partners vs youth participants. Many did not attend. Resulted in low turnout. Team and staff were prepared and carried on with the few folks present. Zoom restrictions also impacted formatting. Another change in formatting forthcoming. In the meantime, talks have been had with other youth commissions for insight. In discussion of having a GCDE youth commission to build up the advocacy pipeline and leadership growth. Focus for 2026 (structure in progress, partner conversations, launch in Fall). Would the commitment be short term or wider range to address the transitory aspect? Staggering is being considered in terms of grade levels.

**Accessible Communities** – They are concentrating on briefings. Grant funding exists. The 14 current ACAC's have been asked to develop and submit grant apps for Spring review. In the Fall, the all-county virtual meeting was successful. They hope to repeat that next year to develop cross-communication. Finally, they hope to create new ACAC's, especially the largely populated King County.

Coordinating (2 hours bi-monthly) and 3 General Membership (and **2026 calendar**) forthcoming in December or early Jan. (**staff to work on**).

**11:45: Overall recap, vision and next steps – Yvonne Bussler-White, GCDE Chair (15 min)**

Yvonne recapped **next steps** as follows:

- 1: Cullyn to send additional information on how to use whiteboards in Zoom and find time to re-test.
- 2: Yvonne will revise her draft elevator pitches, and the group will re-review/vote on how to proceed (send).
- 3: Yvonne (or staff) will contact the 3 members selected for 2026 MAL positions (Nancy, Amy, Lucas) to inform them of their role/duties. Amy and Nancy currently serving, Lucas new. [YBW sent 11/24 8:22a] Vice-Chair announcement forthcoming [Brit unavailable].
- 4: Elizabeth will continue to provide updates as needed on the projects she's currently working on. Consider joining CDAN. More to come on immigration subcabinet and EO 24-05, federal impacts (fact sheet and session work), transition council. Steve would like a lawyer referral for a friend facing back payments on old SSI payments (Legal Shield, NWJP, payment plan suggested).
- 5: Membership members and staff will continue work on interviews, rating, and submission of recommended applicants to B&C with an anticipated appt. date of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2026. We will continue to analyze attrition and recognize contributions as needed.
- 6: Staff will work on a 2026 calendar next month, more info forthcoming – in the meantime, chairs should continue to think about/work on their plans for next year. Have a great holiday and end of the year, thank you again for your work, looking forward to next year. Keep in touch and take care.

**12:00: Adjourn.**

*Next Coordinating Committee meeting will tentatively be from 10am-12pm on Friday, January 23, 2026.*