

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

April 11, 2025

9:30AM, CDT

IN-PERSON MEETING

Country Inn & Suites – Nebraska Ballroom

[North Hotel and Conference Center]

5353 N. 27th Street

Lincoln, NE

AGENDA

- 9:30 1. **Call the Meeting to Order, Welcome, *Pledge of Allegiance*, and Introductions – Rachel Siffring and Kristen Larsen**
- Welcome, Pledge of Allegiance, and Council members will be asked to introduce themselves.
2. **Nebraska Open Meetings Act Announcement – Rachel Siffring**
- Council meetings fall under the Nebraska Open Meetings Act and a copy of the Act is posted on the door by the sign-in table as required.
3. **Public Comment Period #1 – Rachel Siffring**
- All public meetings must allow time on their agenda for people who are not on the Council to comment.
4. **Approval of Minutes – Shaistha Karipi**
- Draft minutes of the February 7, 2025 meeting were included in the meeting packet. The Council will review them and, following any needed corrections, vote to approve them through a roll call vote as required by the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

Council members who were not at the February meeting need to abstain when voting.

[Vote to approve minutes.](#)

5. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest – Rachel Siffring

Members are asked to declare any conflicts of interest as required by Council's policies. To fulfil this requirement, the following Council members are asked to verbally declare any conflicts of interest at the meeting today: Ashley Hansen, Stephen Morton, and Amy Rhone.

6. Financial Report – Kristen Larsen

Kristen Larsen will review the second quarter financial report for FFY2025 (October 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025).

A handout of the financial report will be provided at the meeting.

7. Upcoming Election of Council Officers & Applying for Reappointment to the Council with the Governor – Rachel Siffring and Kristen Larsen

Officer elections for FFY2025 will be conducted at the August 15, 2025 Council meeting. This includes the offices of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. If you are interested in any of these offices or would like more information, please contact Kristen Larsen at 402-471-0143 or kristen.larsen@nebraska.gov.

Eligible Council members whose term expire on October 1, 2025, and are interested in continuing to serve on the Council, are encouraged to reapply with the Governor. Applications can be submitted either online at the *Boards & Commissions – Application for Executive Appointment* webpage at <https://governor.nebraska.gov/board-comm-reg> or by mailing a *completed Executive Appointment Application* to Pat Selk at the Office of the Governor. Council members eligible to apply for reappointment are:

George Griffith (Family)

Ashley Hansen (Family)

Eddie Kraska (Individual)

Beth Libra (Family)

Sasha Reeks (Individual)

Mark Shriver (MMI/UCEDD)

NOTE: Ashley was appointed to serve the remainder of Tricia Strauch's term. Reeks was appointed to serve the remainder of Dustin Henderson's term. The By-Laws indicate they are eligible to serve an additional two three-year terms.

The following Council members have terms that will expire October 1, 2025 and are ineligible for reappointment due to term limits:

Matt Kaslon (Individual)

Cheryl Montgomery (Non-Governmental)

Rachel Siffring (Family)

NOTE: **Caiti Donaldson** (Individual), whose first appointment expired October 1, 2024, has decided not to apply for reappointment.

8. 2025 Hybrid Tri-Board Meeting Update – Kristen Larsen

The Tri-Board consists of the DD Network Partners (the DD Council, Disability Rights Nebraska, and Munroe-Meyer Institute/University of Nebraska Medical Center UCEDD). The 2025 Hybrid (in-person and virtual) Tri-Board meeting will be on Friday – June 13, 2025. The topic will be *Effective Advocacy to Improve Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS)*. **We strongly encourage you to attend in-person if possible.** In-person participants will meet at the Munroe-Meyer Institute facility located near the UNO Scott Campus at 6902 Pine Street. A link to the Zoom meeting will be forthcoming.

NOTE: You will need to register with Council staff by May 31, 2025 for the meeting. To register, contact Nikki Krause at 402-471-2330 or nikki.krause@nebraska.gov.

NOTE: MMI is working on a hotel room block. A few of the hotel rooms are being held for the Council. Please let Nikki Krause know as soon as possible if you will be attending in-person and will need accommodations.

9. Break

10. Report of the Planning Committee: State Needs Assessment Survey – Judy Trent, Dr. Kerry Miller, and Kristen Larsen

Judy Trent and Kristen Larsen will provide an update on the 2027-2032 Five Year State Plan Development.

The Planning Committee Five Year State Plan Development launch meeting was on March 3, 2025, and the Planning Committee met again on April 10, 2025. NCDD is working with MMI contractor, Dr. Kerry Miller, to develop the Needs Assessment questions and focus areas to collect data over the summer.

Dr. Miller will share the prioritized issues identified by the Planning Committee on March 3rd to address in the State Needs Assessment Survey. We will discuss proposed survey questions for Council feedback. Additionally, Dr. Miller will seek Council input on needs and gaps.

Dr. Miller and the MMI team will prepare the final draft of the Needs Assessment survey by **May 15, 2025**, and work with the Council to identify contacts for distributing the survey. Council members will be asked to help disperse.

The Needs Assessment will be published in October 2025 and will guide the Planning Committee with setting State Plan Goals and Objectives to share at the November 21, 2025 meeting.

11. Report of the Planning Committee: Subaward Recommendations for FFY2026 – Judy Trent and Kristen Larsen

The Planning Committee met on April 10, 2025, to make recommendations for formal subaward projects for the Fall. Although NCDD federal funding for FFY2026 is currently uncertain, we still need to discuss and approve funding for a potential RFA release. The Council will consider the Planning Committee's recommendations and vote to approve Requests for Applications (RFAs) for formal and continuous subawards to be released this June. Reminder that FFY2026 will be the last year for the current State Plan.

[Discuss and individually vote on each formal subaward RFA recommended by the Planning Committee.](#)

12. Lunch

Working lunch with time for networking among members.

13. Presentation from the State Unit on Aging regarding Nebraska's Aging and Disability Center (ADRC) Program and Council Input – Ben Stromberg

Ben Stromberg, DHHS Program Manager II – State Unit on Aging, will present about Nebraska's ADRC Program and gather Council input on how to improve the program.

14. Concerns on recent Federal policies, Threats to Medicaid Funding, and potential Council Funding Concerns – Kristen Larsen

Kristen will share updates from NACDD and other partners. Update members on letters sent by Rachel Siffring and Kristen to Congressional delegation about Medicaid funding concerns. Kristen will also share strategies to educate and inform policymakers about concerns.

15. Updates from Agency Representatives –Tony Green, Developmental Disabilities Division; Dr. Tom Janousek, Behavioral Health; Amy Rhone, Department of Education – Office of Special Education; DJ Plautz, Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation; Jennifer Severe-Oforah, Maternal and Child Health, Division of Public Health; VACANT, Medicaid and Long-Term Care and Aging

Council members representing state agencies will provide brief oral and written updates on activities that have occurred since the last meeting.

16. Updates from our DD Network Representatives – Seamus Kelly, Disability Rights Nebraska; Dr. Mark Shriver, Munroe-Meyer Institute/University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)

Council members representing our DD Network will provide brief updates on activities that have occurred since the last meeting.

17. Council Chair and Staff Updates

The Council Chair and Council staff will share information on activities and other matters of interest that have occurred since the November meeting.

18. Member Updates – Council Members

Time is provided for Council members to share any advocacy and/or disability activities they have been involved with since the November meeting.

19. Public Comment Period #2 – Rachel Siffring

All public meetings must allow time on their agenda for people who are not on the Council to comment.

20. Adjourn – Rachel Siffring

The next In-Person Council meeting is scheduled for August 15, 2025. The Virtual Grant Review Committee meeting will be held the afternoon of August 14, 2025.

NOTE: In accordance with the provisions of Section 84-1401-1414 Nebraska Statutes (Nebraska Open Meetings Act) passed by the Unicameral, minutes of this meeting will be on file ten working days from the date of this meeting in the office of the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, 301 Centennial Mall South, PO Box 95026, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-5026. All items known at time of distribution are listed and a current agenda is available. These meeting sites are accessible. If special accommodations are needed, please contact our office at (402) 471-2330 / TDD (800) 833-7352 by April 3, 2025.

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

Mission

The Council engages in **Advocacy**, **Capacity Building**, and **Systemic Change** activities that assure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design and have access to needed community services, individualized support, and other forms of

assistance that promote *self-determination*, *independence*, *productivity*, and *integration* and *inclusion* in all facets of community life.