



**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
**LEGISLATIVE EXECUTIVE WORKFIRST POVERTY REDUCTION OVERSIGHT TASK FORCE**

Meeting Minutes from August 17, 2023 from 9:00 am – 11:45 am

Virtual Meeting: John A. Cherberg Building, Room A/B/C

[TVW Recording](#)

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**Attendance**

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**Voting Members**

Quorum?  Yes  No

**Senators**

- Sen. Perry Dozier (R)
- Sen. Manka Dhingra (D)
- Sen. Chris Gildon (R)
- Sen. Joe Nguyen (D)

**Representatives**

- Rep. Mia Gregerson (D) (Legislative Co-Chair)
- Rep. Michelle Caldier (R)
- Rep. Carolyn Eslick (R)
- Rep. Strom Peterson (D)

**Agency Members**

- Jilma Meneses, Department of Social and Health Services (Executive Co-Chair)
- Colleen Thompson, proxy for Kelly Cooper, Department of Health
- Annie Blackledge, proxy for Veronica Gallardo, Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction
- Diane Klontz, Department of Commerce (Co-Chair Advisory)
- Jennie Fitzpatrick, Department of Corrections
- Tim Probst, Employment Security Department (Co-Chair Advisory)
- Nicole Rose, Department of Children, Youth, and Families
- Carli Schniffner, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

**Non-Voting Members**

- Terry Redmon, Economic Security Administration Secretary
- Mystique Hurtado, Governor's Office Indian Affairs
- Megan Matthews, Office of Equity
- Kate Sowers, on behalf of Grace Yoo, Washington State Women's Commission
- Anna Minor, Office of Financial Management
- Nam Nguyen, Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
- Ed Prince, Commission on African American Affairs
- Manny Santiago, Washington State LGBTQ Commission
- Maria Siguenza, Commission on Hispanic Affairs
- Drayton Jackson, PRWG Steering Committee
- Juanita Maestas, PRWG Steering Committee

**Staff**

- Amber Leaders, Office of the Governor
- Lively Beha, Department of Social and Health Services
- Alex Panagotacos, Department of Social and Health Services
- Babs Roberts, Department of Social and Health Services

- Charice Pidcock, Neutral Facilitator, Department of Social and Health Services
- Lindsay Morgan Tracy, Department of Social and Health Services
- Lori Pfingst, PhD, Department of Social and Health Services
- Gwen Teok, PhD, Department of Social and Health Services
- Suzy Young, Department of Social and Health Services

### **Presenters**

- Trinity Wilson
- Jeff DeLuca, Poverty Reduction Work Group member

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### Opening

Meeting opened at 9:00 am.

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### Rules of Engagement

Meeting engagement for the hybrid meeting were shared. Rules of engagement were reviewed as a reminder of acceptable behavior for the meeting.

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### Welcome and Introductions

Co-chairs, Representative Mia Gregerson and Secretary Jilma Meneses, welcomed members, presenters, and guests. Mr. Terry Redmon was introduced as the new Assistant Secretary of the Economic Services Administration in the Department of Social and Health Services. Secretary Meneses thanked the Poverty Reduction Work Group for the June Homecoming event.

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### Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was shared, consisting of the meeting agenda and the meeting minutes from May 2023. Quorum was confirmed. Representative Gregerson moved to accept the consent agenda. Secretary Meneses seconded the motion. Motion passed.

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### Aligned Poverty Efforts

Alex Panagotacos provided introductions, including Juanita Maestas, Drayton Jackson, Jeff DeLuca, and Lori Pfingst. Juanita reminded LEWPRO members it is difficult for non-members to come into these spaces and share. Juanita also thanked members for attending the June Homecoming event.

Jeff DeLuca shared information from the Washington State Community Action Partnership (WSCAP) case study and Drayton Jackson shared photos and presented on the June Homecoming event.

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### Decision Matrix/Implementation Action Plan

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Babs Roberts provided an update on the implementation action plan. The subgroup has prepared a draft intended to be a roadmap of considerations such as implications, benefits, and challenges for each recommendation. This is a good start and is ready for input and feedback from LEWPRO members, PRWG Steering Committee and members, community partners, and those with lived experience.

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#### Public Comment

Public comments were shared.

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#### Break

The group took a 9 minute break, reconvening at 10:30 am.

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#### Possible Agency Request Legislation and Decision Packages Related to the 5-year Plan

Babs Roberts provided an overview of the process agencies follow to propose agency request legislation and decision packages. Agency representatives shared potential request legislation being considered in the following order: Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF); Department of Commerce (COM); Department of Corrections (DOC); Department of Health (DOH); Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS); Economic Services Department (ESD); and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

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#### Public Health Unwinding

Trinity Wilson, of the Health Care Authority, gave a presentation on the public health unwinding.

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#### Public Comment

Public comments were shared.

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#### Farm Bill

Babs Roberts provided a summary of the response to the Farm Bill letter LEWPRO sent. Representative DelBene will be introducing the SNAP E&T Enhancement Act, which includes many of the recommendations proposed in the LEWPRO letter:

- Provide greater flexibility to states on when they can request reallocated funds.
- Extend the timeline of when states must spend allocated and reallocated funds so that they have sufficient time to provide services to E&T participants.
- Extend E&T provider job retention service eligibility from 90 days to 180 days. Human resources studies have typically held that long-term employment for a new employee is determined in the first 6 months. Helping participants get past this probationary period through a modest extension of job retention services will move more individuals into stable employment.
- Provide an increase in funding for the SNAP E&T program on par with the percentage increase in the 2018 Farm Bill. The increase in work requirements in the Fiscal

Responsibility Act necessitate additional funds to cover administrative costs. Without increasing funding, rural areas are the ones that will lose out.

- Reduces barriers to reentering the workforce by excluding wages from apprenticeship programs, which combine education credentials with on-the-job training and represent one of the clearest pathways out of poverty, from counting toward SNAP eligibility.
- Allows for the reimbursement of on-the-job training wages under the E&T subsidized work-based learning activities.
- Provides E&T providers with the ability to conduct screening to determine whether an individual qualifies for SNAP E&T or a “reverse referral.”
- Allows states to reimburse E&T participants for additional basic necessities, like utilities and housing, if the state determines they are reasonably necessary and directly related to participation in the program. States can already provide reimbursement for internet and phone services, however without electricity it is not possible to use either of these, for example.

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### Good of the Order

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The next LEWPRO meeting will be held on November 16, 2023 from 9:00 am to noon. The meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.