

## Task Force on Eliminating Subminimum Wages meeting summary: Jan. 10, 2022

- **Location:** Online meeting (Zoom)
- Participants listed below.
- Go to the [task force webpage](#) to find the formal meeting agenda, presentation slides, and any other relevant documents from the meeting. (Sometimes postings to the Department of Human Services website are delayed.)

### Agenda items

1. Task force voting on the "Legislative report from the Task Force on Eliminating Subminimum Wages."
2. Task force future and next steps.
3. Department of Human Services (DHS) survey of members on Task force duty 2: Results and next steps.

### Task force voting on its report to the legislature

All 16 task force members voted to approve their legislative report on eliminating subminimum wages. The report will be presented to the legislature by Feb. 15, as specified in the duties of the task force. To vote, task force members used the electronic polling function of Zoom and had these two choices:

- Yes, I approve the legislative report on eliminating subminimum wages. (16 votes)
- No, I do not approve the legislative report on eliminating subminimum wages. (0 votes)

### Background about the report and the voting process

Before voting on the report, the task force heard updates about work on the report and about the voting process. (Refer to slides 5-15 from the meeting presentation, to be posted on the [task force webpage](#).) Task force members had received a draft version of the report Dec. 30, 2022, and an updated version Jan. 9, 2023.

Task force co-chair Andrea Zuber highlighted changes made in the time between the Dec. 30 draft and the Jan. 9 document. Those edits and additions didn't change the meaning of the task force recommendations, Andrea said. The changes included edits from Public Sector Consultants to its sections on public engagement, one edit that a task force member suggested to reference county-funded services as well as waiver-funded services. There also were several changes based on suggestions from subject matter experts in Minnesota to increase mention of coordination with local communities; add more on training for leaders, managers and supervisors at provider organizations; add reference to ongoing coaching in addition to training and technical assistance for providers during the transition.

Co-chair Jillian Nelson asked for questions, comments, and concerns. Task force member Heidi Mahan noted that the Jan. 9 version of the draft repeated one of the recommendations in the executive summary. That problem was corrected.

Karen Gaides and Jessica Burke, facilitators from Management Analysis and Development (MAD), went through background information about the "Legislative report from the Task Force on Eliminating Subminimum Wages" and about the voting process.

Karen [Gaides] reviewed a list of milestones for the report from the Dec. 13, 2022, task force meeting until the time at which the task force will deliver its report to the legislature Feb. 15. DHS will review the report starting later in the week of Jan. 9 for final edits to improve plain language and accessibility, as needed. Karen [Gaides] also went over the task force's approach to voting, which required that 12 of 16 members (75%) approve the report if it is to go to the legislature.

Jessica [Burke] walked through the outline of the report, as she had at the Dec. 13, 2022, meeting. After highlighting the different sections of the report, she asked if there were questions. There were none.

No one had questions or comments before the vote.

### Task force future and next steps

Jessica [Burke] covered a number of topics about the task force going forward. (Refer to slides 16-19 from the meeting presentation, on the [task force webpage](#).)

- Task force continuation: The task force will continue until March 31, 2024, based on session law passed by the legislature and signed by the governor. That session law also requires that the report to the legislature from the task force include a recommendation whether the task force should continue beyond the March 2024 date. The task force report recommends continuing beyond March 2024 if Minnesota takes legislative action to phase out subminimum wages. If so, and if the legislature agrees, the task force would continue until subminimum wages have ended.
- There will be no task force meeting in February because the date set for the February meeting is one of two Disability Advocacy Days at the state capitol. For the rest of 2023, the task force will meet on the second Tuesday of the month, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Task force member Brittanie Hernandez-Wilson suggested that people interested in news about Disability Advocacy Days check the website for [Minnesota ARC](#) for forthcoming updates.
- The task force has formed a new workgroup on communication that will meet for the first time on Friday, January 13.

### **DHS survey of members on Task force duty 2: Results and next steps**

Ryan Merz, employment coordinator for the Disability Services Division of DHS, presented results of a November 2022 survey that DHS conducted of task force members on Task force duty 2. (Refer to slides 20-31 from the meeting presentation, on the [task force webpage](#).) Duty 2 says that the task force will “consult with and advise the commissioner of human services on statewide plans for limiting subminimum wages in medical assistance home and community-based services waivers...” This task continues after the task force sends its report to the legislature.

Minnesota currently allows subminimum wages under waiver employment support services and prevocational services. The survey drew responses from 12 to 13 task force members, depending on the question. The November survey focused on three topics, as follows:

- Should DHS pursue changes to Minnesota's waiver plans to require competitive wages in any job position for which a person is receiving employment support services. (Opposed = 0, Neutral = 2, Support = 2, Strong support = 8, Not enough information = 1)
- Should DHS pursue changes to Minnesota's waiver plans to require competitive wages for any wages earned while a person is receiving prevocational services. (Opposed = 0, Neutral = 2, Support = 1, Strong support = 8, Not enough information = 2)
- Should DHS increase monitoring and enforcement of certain state waiver plan requirements. (Opposed = 1, Neutral = 3, Support = 5, Strong support = 3, Not enough information = 1)

The survey also asked about timelines for action on the first two areas, if action is taken.

Ryan [Merz] said he is working on a summary of the survey results and will share it with task force members once it is available. The summary will include information on answers that task force members wrote out, as well as the multiple-choice answers he talked about at the meeting.

Task force member Larissa Beck asked how long it might take, on average, for DHS to make changes such as the ones asked about in the survey. Ryan [Merz] said there are processes that the agency must go through when changing requirements and that these take time. Task force member Heidi Hamilton from DSD said the time required varies from issue to issue. She also said any proposed changes would need to be reviewed by officials at the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) before Minnesota could take action.

### **Next task force meeting**

Tuesday, March 14, 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Zoom.

### **Jan. 10 participants**

Task force members present:

- Larissa Beck
- Sara Ellstra
- Susan Fleurant
- Brittanie Hernandez-Wilson
- Amanda Jensen-Stahl

- Alex Junge
- Michelle Kamenov
- Kirk Langsjoen
- Debbie Luther
- Heidi Hamilton
- Heidi Maghan
- Chris McVey
- Jillian Nelson
- Lori Schluttenhofer
- Raquel Sidie-Wagner
- Andrea Zuber

Others

- Jessica Burke, MAD
- Karen Gaides, MAD
- Matt Kane, MAD
- Ryan Merz, DHS