



Meeting Minutes: Governor's Committee on the Safety, Health, and Wellbeing of Agricultural and Food Processing Workers

DATE: 7/24/2025

MINUTES PREPARED BY: CINTHIA MARTINEZ

Attendance

Committee Members

Present

Erik Zabel, Epidemiologist Principal, Minnesota Department of Health

Marc Majors, Deputy Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Maureen Ramirez, Chief of Staff Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry

Patrice Bailey, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Sarah Berry

Rodolfo Gutierrez, Executive Director, Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment Through Research

Sarah Berry, Public Health Director, Waseca County | CHS Administrator, Le Sueur – Waseca Community Health Board

Guest

Abdiwad Mohamed, Assistant Commissioner for the Office of New Americans

Alyssa Wetzel, APRN-CNP, Kettering Health

Ann Meyers, Director of Adult Career Pathways, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Lidibette Guzman, State Monitor Advocate, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Ruth Shultz, Meat Packing Director, UFCW

Rhonda Eastlund, CEO, Community Health Services

Staff Present: Cinthia Martinez, CareerForce Office Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Agenda

- Introduction/Welcome
- Approve Minutes
- Updates
- DLI Presentation- Emmanuel Ramirez
- Community Reviewers -Ann Meyers
- Comments
- Adjourn

Introduction/Welcome

Approve Minutes

Approved

Updates

The next committee meeting will take place on October 23, 2025. The executive order we received last summer highlights barriers faced by food processing workers. As a result, the committee now has new mandates that include examining these barriers. If you or your team are aware of any, please share them with us

Rodolfo: HACER has been attending various events, and attendance has noticeably declined. It's assumed that fear of potential ICE presence is contributing to this drop. Many individuals feel safer working through the Mexican Consulate. As a result, people are staying home, losing their jobs, and choosing not to send their children to school. This situation is affecting not only families but also schools, which are losing funding due to decreased student enrollment. One suggestion that has emerged is the use of online schooling as a possible way to address these challenges.

Ruth: Wo Work authorization is being revoked for Haitian, Cuban, and Dominican individuals. As a result, the undocumented population is increasing significantly. Many people are waiting for asylum documents, but they are unable to obtain them.

Rhonda: We are seeing similar issues with clients relying solely on telehealth or missing appointments due to fear. Many are selling items from home to earn income, and there has been an increase in behavioral health concerns. We are using outreach efforts to try to connect with more children and families in crisis. Willmar has been especially impacted, and North Dakota is experiencing a significant number of visa revocations among workers.

We have been getting complaints of the heat and would like to hear from OSHA on heat exhaustion and addressing this in the workplace.

DLI Presentation-Emmanuel Ramirez

PowerPoint in attachments

Community Reviewers -Ann Meyers

Grantees are required to support individuals throughout their education and career journeys. We seek organizations that can help develop participants—often individuals facing multiple barriers to employment—by providing enhanced educational services when needed.

Recently, we released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Growing Careers in Agricultural Work project. We've received several applications and are now looking for community members or state employees who are interested in serving as proposal reviewers.

This project asks organizations to provide outreach, case management, and industry-specific skills training for agricultural workers. It also includes support for participants before, during, and after the training program, along with job placement and retention services.

Our goal is for at least 25% of our proposal reviewers to come from the community or outside our organization. If you're interested in serving as a reviewer, please contact Vanessa.

[Public comments](#)

[Adjourn](#)