

Agenda: Olmstead Subcabinet Meeting

This document is available in alternative formats to people with disabilities by contacting MNOLmsteadPlan@state.mn.us or by calling 651-296-8081. To provide feedback about the meeting, email MnOlmsteadPlan@state.mn.us.

Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2026

Time: 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

- 1. Access check, call to order, and land acknowledgment**
- 2. Approval of the agenda**
- 3. Roll call**
- 4. Approval of the March 13, 2026, meeting minutes**
- 5. Olmstead milestones and timeline review**
- 6. OIO updates: public comment period summary**
- 7. Break**
- 8. Discussion: systems change planning**
- 9. Adjournment**

Land Acknowledgement

We collectively acknowledge that we are located on the traditional land of Indigenous people that once and still is occupied by the Ojibwe, Dakota and other Native peoples from the time immemorial. These lands hold great historical, spiritual, cultural and personal significance for these Native nations. We recognize, support and advocate for the sovereignty of these nations in this territory and beyond. By offering this land acknowledgement, we affirm tribal sovereignty and will hold ourselves accountable to the American Indian people and nations.

Meeting Minutes: Olmstead Subcabinet (Unapproved)

This document is available in alternative formats to people with disabilities by contacting MNOLmsteadPlan@state.mn.us or by calling 651-296-8081.

Date: March 13, 2026

Location: Department of Revenue Stassen building and Zoom Webinar online platform

Attendance

Subcabinet members and designees

- Jolene Rebertus, Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Commissioner Willie Jett, Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)
- Evan Rowe, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)
- Colleen Wieck, Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD)
- Commissioner Brooke Cunningham, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)
- Commissioner Jennifer Ho, Minnesota Housing
- Commissioner Rebecca Lucero, Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR)
- Commissioner Shireen Gandhi, Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Wendy Wulff, Metropolitan Council (MetC)
- Lisa Harrison-Hadler, Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (OMHDD)
- Nicole Archbold, Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- Jean Wallace, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)
- Eric Meittenun, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA)

Inclusion Consultants

- Mercedes Elder
- Angela Harper
- Adam Harrington
- Nikki Huelsman
- Rich Pennington
- Kevin Pone
- James Poteet
- Madam Robinson

- Ken Rodgers
- Abraham Tieman
- Bob Wagner
- Mao Yang

Other state staff and guests

- Erik Adolphson, Direct Care and Treatment (DCT)
- Chloe Ahlf, Olmstead Implementation Office (OIO)
- Scott Beutel, Minnesota Housing
- Ryan Baumtrog, Minnesota Housing
- Kristie Billiar, MnDOT
- Jonathan Bucki, Dendros Group
- Angela Carter, Dendros Group
- Yoshiko Chino, Dendros Group
- Nora Cronin, MDVA
- Tom Delaney, MDE
- Rilyn Eischens, OIO
- Daron Korte, MDE
- Maya Larson, Dendros Group
- Kari Martinka, DHS
- Chris McVey, DEED
- Natasha Merz, OIO
- John Patterson, Minnesota Housing
- Jenn Purrington, OIO
- Gloria Smith, DHS
- Dez Sobiech, OIO
- Gerri Sutton, MetC
- Mike Tessneer, OIO
- Dee Torgerson, DEED
- Bharti Wahi, DCYF
- Lauren Webber, DOC
- Madi Wegener, OIO
- Amanda Welliver, Minnesota Housing
- Leah Wilson, DCYF
- Mor Vue, DHS

Call to order

Commissioner Ho (Minnesota Housing) called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. Madi Wegener (OIO) gave an accessibility message, and Jenn Purrington (OIO) read a land acknowledgment.

Agenda review

Commissioner Ho reviewed the agenda. No changes were requested.

Approval of meeting minutes

Action: Approve the September 26, 2025, Subcabinet meeting minutes

Motion: Gandhi Second: Meittenun

In favor: Roll call vote was taken with 13 Ayes and 0 Nays. Motion carried.

- DOC: Aye
- MDE: Aye
- DEED: Aye
- GCDD: Aye
- MDH: Aye
- Minnesota Housing: Aye
- MDHR: Aye
- DHS: Aye
- MetC: Aye
- OOMHDD: Aye
- DPS: Aye
- MnDOT: Aye
- MDVA: Aye

OIO updates

Jenn Purrington gave updates from the Olmstead Implementation Office.

- The quarterly report covering September 2025-February 2026 will be available at the next Subcabinet meeting, to be scheduled
- Jenn thanked those who worked on the draft plan and noted the hope for meaningful feedback through the public comment process
- The plan currently has goals organized into seven categories: housing, education, employment, crisis services, health and safety, transportation and transit, and transition. Every topic section has goals from multiple agencies, generally a lead agency or agencies, and then supporting agencies

- The plan has a section called Data Collection goals. These goals do not yet have a baseline but are goals to institute data collection so that a measurable goal can be established
- The plan also includes a systemic change section, which is new
- The draft plan will still have some revisions before being officially released for public comment
- Dendros Group will be hosting seven virtual community meetings in the month of April to receive feedback from community members on the draft Olmstead plan. In addition to community meeting opportunities, we will have a written comment period starting in early April. This feedback will be organized and provided to agency teams to inform revisions to the goals. The final plan is expected to be presented to the Subcabinet in September

Grounding for draft plan discussion

Commissioner Ho thanked the Inclusion Consultants and agency staff for their work on the draft plan. She noted two objectives for the plan: setting a vision for transformative change in Minnesota's disability services system to combat ableism and foster true community inclusion for people with disabilities as well as ensuring that Minnesota meets the foundational and compliance requirements of the Olmstead Decision through measurable goals.

Natasha Merz (OIO) described the concept of a Disability Systems Change Advisory Council outlined in the draft plan. This council, if adopted, would collaborate on policy changes that require:

- More than five years of work
- Significant shifting of funding and resources, and/or new funding and resources
- Changes to state law and potentially federal law
- Strategic partnerships (lead agencies, providers, advocates)

Kristie Billiar (MnDOT) and Daron Korte (MDE), Co-chairs of the Olmstead Leadership Forum, gave an overview of feedback on the draft goals from the February 19 Leadership Forum meeting. Themes included:

- Plan organization and streamlining to ensure that the goals most closely tied with ADA obligations are prioritized while also addressing concerns about length and readability of the plan
- Lack of some key terms such as assistive technology, guardianship/conservatorship, self-advocacy, and person-centered
- Concerns that some goal targets are too low, with the suggestion they be expanded

Agency leadership feedback on draft plan

Commissioner Ho asked Subcabinet members for their feedback on the draft plan, including any issues that should be addressed before this draft plan goes out for public comment. Discussion included:

- Support for the Disability Systems Change Council and the need for support with interagency discussions to address complex issues that cross departments and agencies
- Appreciation for the introductory section of the draft plan and the spirit of transformational change
- Reflection on the co-creation process leading to deeper conversations and awareness in agencies about accessibility and considering the disability community when making decisions
- Some agencies indicated they are continuing to work on goals and expect changes before the official public comment draft is released
- Support for goals focused on emergency preparedness for people with disabilities
- Looking ahead to implementation – agencies will need to work collaboratively to accomplish the plan goals
- Acknowledging connections with federal government and federal funding; when funding is threatened, it affects staff and time resources as well
- Reminder that the process and plan are incomplete and will be informed by public comment. The plan needs some reorganization, and some targets may need to be higher over the 5-year period covered by this plan

Inclusion Consultants' feedback on draft plan

Inclusion Consultants Abraham Tieman, James Poteet, Madam Robinson and Mercedes Elder spoke on behalf of all of the consultants on the questions:

What will make these goals more effective to improve the lives of Minnesotans with disabilities? What will make these goals more effective to improve the lives of Minnesotans with disabilities?

The responses included:

- Appreciation for agency staff who have worked hard on the draft and for the acknowledgment that meaningful community inclusion for people with disabilities needs to be improved
- As a whole, Inclusion Consultants are dissatisfied with the goals as currently written in the draft plan. They feel many of the goals are based on what can easily be accomplished rather than transformative change and “do not represent a meaningful shift toward a more equitable society”
- There is disparity between the time it takes to be evaluated for services – up to a year – and the brief time allowed for the disabled people requesting those services to respond

- Consultants named a variety of barriers faced by people with disabilities, including housing, food insecurity, support staff shortages, disproportionate harm in policing interactions, out of state placements, and poverty-level asset limits. They noted that programs meant to address some of these issues are often complicated or largely unknown to disabled Minnesotans
- Navigating complex and siloed support systems requires support that is currently lacking
- Minnesota has the second largest deaf, deaf-blind, deaf-disabled and hard of hearing population in the country. Deaf schools and programs are culturally appropriate and should not be considered segregation
- Consultants called for agencies to reach higher, to standardize data practices, to examine racial and ethnic disparities and to make a concerted effort to work together across agencies
- Consultants are concerned about enforcement of the plan and who will hold agencies accountable if they are not making progress on their goals

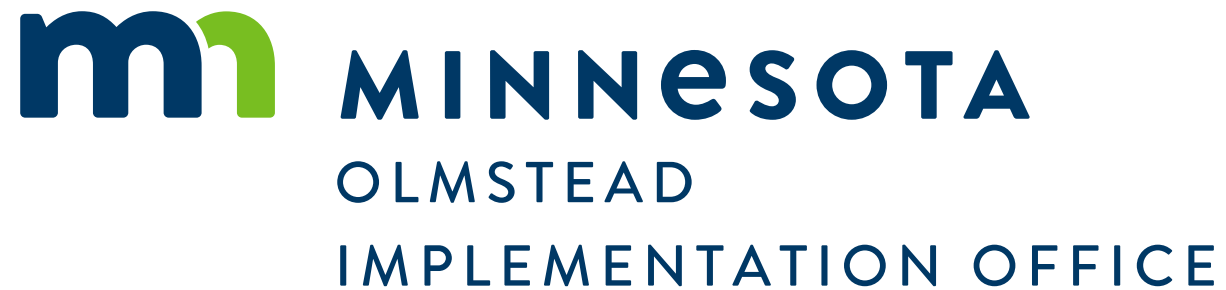
After the presentation, Commissioner Ho thanked the Inclusion Consultants for their thoughtful presentation and noted that agencies still have work to do. Other members also expressed appreciation, and one noted that agencies can look to what can be done now, outside of the Olmstead Plan, to address the issues that were raised. An Inclusion Consultant noted that while agencies are working to make improvements, there needs to be safety nets for people with disabilities who are struggling to navigate the current systems.

Closing thoughts and adjournment

Commissioner Ho shared her thoughts on the need for both aspirational planning and alignment of resources to create change. She asked that agencies use the public comment period to ask themselves, “Is this the best that we can do?” Commissioner Ho adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Project timeline

- June – Agency teams (state staff and Inclusion Consultants) will continue to meet to work on goal revisions and the “Incorporating Public Feedback” document
- July 1 – Goal revisions due to OIO
- July 15 – “Incorporating Public Comment” document due to OIO
- July – OIO revising draft plan based on agency team revisions
- Last week of July – Final draft of Olmstead plan out to agencies for final review
- August 14 – Leadership Forum meeting
- September 15 – Subcabinet meeting



2026 Community Input

Community input process: Online survey

- Online survey
 - Available in English, Spanish, Hmong, Somali, and American Sign Language (ASL)
- Additional feedback, including email and letters

Community input process: Virtual meetings

- Virtual meetings
 - Seven meetings, one for each topic in the plan
 - Intended to be an accessible alternative to the online survey
 - Planned and implemented by Dendros Group, facilitated by Inclusion Consultants
- Individual interviews, as an accessible alternative to sharing written feedback or participating in group meetings
 - Planned and implemented by Dendros Group, facilitated by Inclusion Consultants

Public comment participation

Source	Number of submissions/participants
Survey	122
Virtual meetings	48
Emails and letters	16
Total	186

Survey demographics: Role

Role	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
Person with a disability	42	34.4%
Parent of someone with a disability	41	33.6%
Work in a disability-related field	40	32.8%
Friend or ally of someone with a disability	31	25.4%
Caregiver	29	23.8%

Note: This table shows the five roles selected most often. Participants could choose more than one role.

Survey demographics: Region

Geography	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
Seven-county metro area	66	54%
Greater Minnesota	26	21.3%
Did not respond	30	24.6%
Total	122	100%

Virtual meeting demographics: Role

Role	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
Person with a disability	23	47.9%
Parent of someone with a disability	14	29.2%
Work in a disability-related field	25	52.1%
Other	1	2.1%
Service provider	9	18.7%
Total	48	

Note: Participants could choose more than one role.

Virtual meeting demographics: Region

Geography	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
Seven-county metro area	29	60.4%
Greater Minnesota	12	25%
Did not respond	7	14.5%
Total	48	100%

- Goal targets are not ambitious enough
 - “Many of the proposed goals reflect minimal improvement over long timeframes (e.g., 2–4% increases). These goals do not reflect the urgency of the barriers people still face or the need for meaningful changes to systems and services.”
- Important goal topics are missing
 - Examples include intersectionality, geographic disparities, choice, assistive technology, and many more.
- Concerns about implementation and accountability
 - “There are no clear accountability or enforcement mechanisms.”

Example themes by topic: Crisis services

- The Olmstead Plan should address crisis prevention.
 - “These goals rely on a broken system and siloed services to address the problem. I am certain that individual families want crisis services to be available. However, I am also certain they would prefer supports and services that meet their on-going needs PRIOR to the mental health crisis.”
- The staffing shortage affects crisis prevention and services.
 - “You can train staff on early intervention and ‘compassion’ all day long, but if the local community supports have a two-year waitlist or if provider reimbursement rates are too low to sustain a workforce, that child is still going to an institution.”

Example themes by topic: Education

- The education goals should focus more on transition services.
 - “Transition is such a HUGE part of education for people with disabilities that our state continues to do poorly on. We are working on this, but every district does something different. There aren't uniform rules or laws on what has to be provided. Some districts don't even have a transition program. There needs to be a goal about transition service and maybe the continuity of programs in the state.”
- Teachers and school staff need more resources to support students.
 - “Streamline systems to reduce administrative burden on educators. Excessive training, tracking, and reporting requirements take time and resources away from instruction and direct student support.”

Example themes by topic: Employment

- People need sustained, quality employment built on person-centeredness.
 - “There is limited discussion of placement appropriateness and long-term stability. Employment should not only be measured by job placement, but by sustained employment [and] wage progression.”
- Some populations experience increased barriers to employment.
 - “[The plan should] directly address systemic barriers for underserved populations, including BIPOC [Black, Indigenous, and people of color] individuals, by measuring and enforcing equity in employment outcomes rather than simply improving access to services.”
 - “Simplify service pathways [for Veterans.] Veterans with disabilities should not need multiple layers of navigation (health care systems, navigators, digital outreach networks) to access employment services. The system should be direct, efficient, and outcome-driven.”

Example themes by topic: Health

- The plan is missing goals about important health topics, including access to health care and services, health insurance, and dental care.
 - “Why are there NO goals to improve access to health care, quality health care, culturally responsible health care?”
- The goals rely too much on training, rather than accountability and enforcement.
 - “Without clear expectations for consequences and system response, it is difficult to ensure that harm is prevented or addressed effectively. There is also limited attention to oversight and monitoring of care settings, particularly those serving people with disabilities who rely on others for daily support. Strengthening how facilities are reviewed, investigated, and held accountable is essential to improving safety.”

Example themes by topic: Housing

- The plan should focus on housing choice.
 - “I think an important goal is people with disabilities being able to live where they choose (like in their own homes) and having their needs met in that setting.”
- Invest more in housing navigators who respect the culture of immigrant and underserved families.
 - "Fund Somali-speaking housing navigators in regions with significant Somali populations, including the Twin Cities, St. Cloud, Rochester, and Willmar."

Example themes by topic: Transition

- The Olmstead Plan needs to address the direct care workforce shortage.
 - “Unfortunately, you have not identified the greatest barrier, which is the continuing workforce shortage. Without care people cannot live and work in the community, period.”
- There are too many data collection goals, and not enough focus on accountability and progress.
 - “Again with the ‘wants to write a goal.’ This is mind boggling. How many Olmstead goals are to write a goal?!?!?”

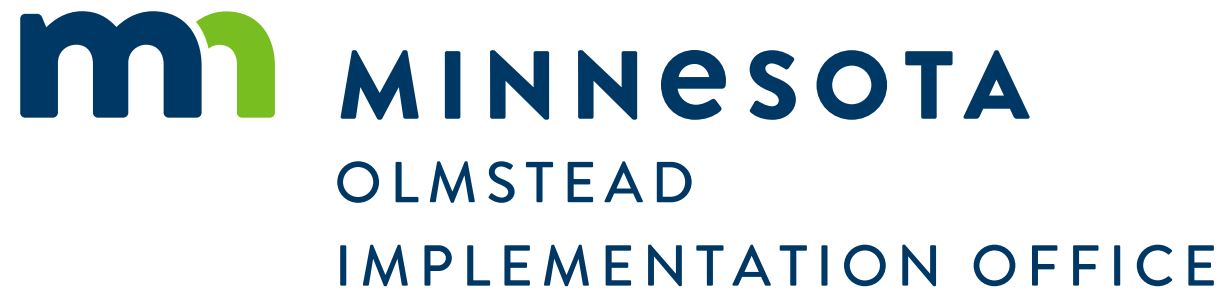
Example themes by topic: Transit and transportation

- Greater Minnesota needs more transportation options.
 - “Recognize that transportation issues in Greater Minnesota are very different than those in the metro. This impacts everything: employment, housing, and socialization.”
- People with disabilities need reliable transit and transportation options.
 - “Need to schedule transportation a week ahead of time. Sometimes drivers will drop people off at the wrong location or they will show up to the wrong location, or they arrive at the wrong door to a building and completely miss them.”

Where to find more information

- Available on OIO's website:
 - Summaries of all feedback by topic (including survey, virtual meetings, interviews, emails)
 - Virtual meeting summaries
 - Full survey comments
 - Letters from individuals and organizations

- What may have surprised you about the public feedback?
- What messages come through the strongest for your agency?
- What has your team been working on to address the feedback?



Disability Systems Change Workgroup proposal

Disability Systems Change Workgroup (DSCW)

- Long-range planning workgroup (6-20 years)
- To plan for transformative changes to Minnesota's disability service system
- Scope: Changes that require:
 - New legislative authority (change to state or federal statutes)
 - Significant investment (staff, new services, adding to existing services, etc.)
 - See also page 11 of draft plan

Example of DSCW topic

Addressing the root cause of people with disabilities and high rates of poverty:

- High costs of managing a disability (out-of-pocket expenses, finding and paying staff, transportation gaps, etc.)
- Benefit cliffs (perceived and real) that discourage work
- Siloed funding that fragments supports/services
- Ableist, paternalistic practices; employment-related discrimination and low expectations

Long-range planning: solving for the root cause

- Is Minnesota is spending money in the “right” places relative to the outcomes for people with disabilities?
- Rather than spending more money on Medicaid, should Minnesota look at long-term, flexible income supports that allow for better options with more autonomy and less ableist funding structures?
- Are there other long-term mechanisms to support people with disabilities that help them get out of or avoid persistent poverty?
- How can we help people get access to services without requiring impoverishment?