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**VIRTUAL/TELECONFERENCE**  
**EQUITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Virtual, 4822 Madison Yards Way, Madison, WI 53705**  
**Contact: Colleen Uhlenkamp, (608) 266-2112**  
**December 17, 2025**

*The following agenda describes the issues that the Advisory Committee plans to consider at the meeting. At the time of the meeting, items may be removed from the agenda. Please consult the meeting minutes for a record of the actions of the Committee.*

**AGENDA**

**11:00 AM**

**CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL**

- A. Adoption of Agenda (1)**
- B. Approval of Minutes of October 29, 2025 (2-3)**
- C. Introductions, Announcements, and Recognition**
  - 1) Introductions
    - a. Silvia (Sofia) Anderson – DPD Member
- D. Administrative Matters**
  - 1) Subcommittee Delegations and Scheduling – Discussion and Consideration
- E. Strategic Plan – Discussion and Consideration**
  - 1) Mentorship Program Subcommittee Report (Uhlenkamp) **(4-5)**
  - 2) Equity and Inclusion Culture and Recruitment Subcommittee Report (Petzel) **(6-7)**
- F. Equity and Inclusion Officer Update**
- G. Public Comments**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**NEXT MEETING: FEBRUARY 20, 2026**

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MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND MAY BE CANCELLED WITHOUT NOTICE.  
Times listed for meeting items are approximate and depend on the length of discussion and voting. All meetings are held virtually unless otherwise indicated. In-person meetings are typically conducted at 4822 Madison Yards Way, Madison, Wisconsin, unless an alternative location is listed on the meeting notice. In order to confirm a meeting or to request a complete copy of the agenda, please visit the Department website at <https://dsps.wi.gov>. The body may also consider materials or items filed after the transmission of this notice. Times listed for the commencement of any agenda item may be changed by the body for the convenience of the parties. Requests for interpreters for the hard of hearing, or other accommodations, are considered upon request by contacting the Affirmative Action Officer or reach the Meeting Staff by calling 608-267-7213.

**VIRTUAL/TELECONFERENCE  
EQUITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
OCTOBER 29, 2025**

**PRESENT:** Melinda Boyle-Prior, Katrina Cardin, Kelly Kimberger, Katie Petzel (co-chairperson), Ashley Sarnosky (secretary), Monique Spencer, Colleen Uhlenkamp (co-chairperson)

Also Present: Regina Howard

**ABSENT:** Quinn Buczakowski, Jessica Catlin, Charlene Vogt

**CALL TO ORDER**

Colleen Uhlenkamp, Co-Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. A quorum of eight (8) members was confirmed.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Katie Petzel moved, seconded by Monique Spencer, to adopt the Agenda as published. Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 20, 2025**

**MOTION:** Kelly Kimberger moved, seconded by Katrina Cardin, to approve the Minutes of August 20, 2025 meeting, as published. Motion carried unanimously.

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

**Elections Update – Discussion and Consideration**

**MOTION:** Katrina Cardin moved, seconded by Kelly Kimberger, to reaffirm current officers to serve until next election scheduled for 2026. Motion carried unanimously.

<b>ELECTION RESULTS</b>	
<b>Co-Chairpersons</b>	Katie Petzel, Colleen Uhlenkamp
<b>Vice Chairperson</b>	
<b>Secretary</b>	Ashley Sarnosky

**INTRODUCTIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECOGNITION**

**John Bechard – DPD Member (Resigned: 8/8/2025)**

**MOTION:** Katie Petzel moved, seconded by Colleen Uhlenkamp, to recognize and thank John Bechard for their service to the Committee and State of Wisconsin. Motion carried unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Ashley Sarnosky moved, seconded by Kelly Kirnberger, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

## DSPS Mentorship Program

### **Goals**

1. Increase interpersonal engagement amongst employees
2. Promote diversity and inclusion
3. Attracting and retaining top talent
4. Building up future leaders and high potential employees

### **Mission Statement:**

To foster the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace that allows all employees to facilitate knowledge sharing, skill development, and career advancement for the purpose of pursuing and retaining careers in state service through mentoring and continued support for advancement and growth in Wisconsin.

### **Design Roadmap:**

Who are our target mentees?

1. Probationary employees – include with agency onboarding
2. Self/Supervisor nominations

Who are our target mentors?

1. Self/Supervisor nominations
2. Post-Probationary employees
3. Employees with strong communication skills
4. Employees who have the willingness and availability to help

Process for matching mentors and mentees?

1. Self/Supervisor nominations
2. Similar to parking stall share process
3. Division and cross division match-ups

Key Motivators and Developmental Goals

1. Guidance through probationary period
2. Roadmap to state employment
3. Leadership guidance

### Mentor/Mentee Check-ins

1. Cornerstone learning center trainings with application process
2. Encourage regular mentor/mentee check-ins
3. Regular DSPS follow-up check-ins with mentor/mentees

## EQUITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Equity and Inclusion Culture and Recruitment Subcommittee Report

- Meeting months opposite of Committee meetings
- Tasks accomplished so far:
  - o Continued monthly Awareness Posting
  - o Reviewed training in Cornerstone (Recruitment Strategy 2)
  - o Created a short list of TedTalk Videos and descriptions for larger committee discussion (EI Culture Strategy 2)
- Tasks to be accomplished prior to the next committee meeting:
  - o Continue Monthly Awareness Posting for 2026
  - o Assign training in Cornerstone (Recruitment Strategy 2)
  - o Ted Talk Lunch and Learns (EI Culture Strategy 2)
    - Select videos for Q1 and Q2 2026

#### Ted Talk Abridged Short List and Descriptions –

##### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Isn't What You Think

“Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Isn't What You Think” challenges some of the common assumptions people have about DEI efforts and explains why these initiatives often miss the mark. The speaker breaks down what diversity, equity, and inclusion actually mean in practice and shows how organizations sometimes focus on surface-level actions instead of real change. The talk encourages looking at DEI as an ongoing commitment that involves listening, being open to uncomfortable conversations, and creating systems that support everyone fairly. It offers a straightforward reminder that meaningful inclusion requires more than checking boxes and that thoughtful, consistent effort is what truly makes workplaces better for everyone.

##### Creating Inclusive Workspaces for All

Catarina Rivera's “Creating Inclusive Workplaces for All” shares what the workplace looks like from her perspective as someone with visual and hearing disabilities. She walks through the challenges she faces during interviews and in day-to-day tasks and explains how many of these barriers are things employers may not notice. Her main point is that inclusion is more than meeting basic requirements. It involves being intentional, paying attention to individual needs, and creating a workplace where everyone feels they belong. She also highlights how small adjustments can make a meaningful difference in helping all employees participate and do their best.

##### How Reverse Mentorship Can Help Create Better Leaders

“How Reverse Mentorship Can Help Create Better Leaders” explains how pairing senior leaders with younger or less experienced employees can shift perspectives in a positive way. The speaker shows how this type of mentorship helps leaders understand current challenges, new ideas, and different lived experiences that they may not see in their day-to-day work. It also gives newer employees a chance to share insights and contribute in a meaningful way. The talk highlights that

reverse mentorship is not about criticizing leadership but about building stronger communication, improving decision making, and creating a more connected and informed workplace.

### The Spoon Theory

The Spoon Theory explains what it is like to live with a chronic illness or disability by using “spoons” as a simple way to show how limited energy can be. The idea is that each task in a day costs a certain number of spoons, and people who live with chronic conditions start with fewer spoons than others. This means they have to make careful choices about what they can do and what they need to save their energy for. The concept helps others understand why someone may appear to be doing fine one day and struggling the next. It is a clear and relatable way to describe an experience that is often invisible and helps encourage understanding and empathy in daily interactions and workplaces.

### Overcoming the Stigma Around Mental Illness

Michaela Mulenga’s “Overcoming the Stigma around Mental Illness” explores how misconceptions and negative attitudes about mental health create barriers for those who need support. She shares personal stories and examples to show how stigma affects daily life, work, and relationships, and she highlights the importance of open conversations, empathy, and education. The talk emphasizes that challenging these misconceptions not only helps individuals seek the help they need but also creates healthier, more understanding communities and workplaces where everyone can thrive.

### Surviving with a Mental Illness

In “Surviving with a Mental Illness,” Eric Walton shares his personal journey living with mental illness, laying bare the challenges he faced — from stigma and daily struggles to the toll it takes on relationships and self-identity. He describes how acknowledging vulnerability, seeking help, and building community support helped him move forward, even when things felt overwhelming. His story is a powerful reminder that mental illness doesn’t have to define a person forever — with honesty, resilience, and the right support, healing and hope are possible.