



**Asian American Employment Plan Advisory Council**  
FY2025 Quarterly Meeting (#1)  
Wednesday, July 31, 2024 | 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

**Minutes**

- I. Call to Order – Chair Jani**  
The meeting was called to order at 2:04 PM by Chair Jani.

- II. Roll Call – Chair Jani**

**Council Members**

Asian American Employment Plan Advisory Council				
Attendance Roster: Council Members				
Members	Present			Absent
	In person Chicago	In person Springfield	via WebEx	
Nimish Jani, Chair			X	
Shree Gurusamy			X	
Nasir Jahangir				X
Kalpesh Joshi			X	
Abin Kuriakose			X	
Phimmasorn Lisa Luangsomkham				X
Grace Chan McKibben			X	
Dennis Mondero				X
Hae D Paul Park				X

**Total: 5 members present, 4 members absent. Quorum was achieved. The meeting was held via WebEx video conference.**



**Agency Representatives**

Asian American Employment Plan Advisory Council Meeting				
Attendance Roster: Agency Representatives				
Agency	Representative	Present		
		In person Chicago	In person Springfield	via WebEx
Central Management Services	Sarah Kerley			X
	Audra Williams			X
	Patricia Santoyo-Marin			X
	Patricia Young			X
	Arthur Sutton			X
	Mayra Magaña			X
	Kevin Jeong			X
	Jacqueline Aguayo			X
Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs	Beatris Gonzales			X
	Alexandra Puccetti			X
Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice	Jim Crowley			X
Illinois Department of Employment Security	Anna D'Ascenzo			X
Illinois Department of Public Health	Lance Morgan			X
Illinois Department of Insurance	Melina Tomaras-Collins			X
Illinois Department of Aging	<i>Unable to attend</i>			
Illinois Gaming Board	<i>Unable to attend</i>			
Illinois Department of Transportation	Adam Graham			X
Illinois State Police	Mary Dowdy			X
Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology	Vickie Simpson			X

**Total: 17 CMS and other Agency Employees attended this meeting.**



**Members of the Public**

Asian American Employment Plan Advisory Council Meeting				
Attendance Roster: Members of the Public				
Name	Entity Represented	Present		
		In person Chicago	In person Springfield	via WebEx

**Total: 0 member of the public attended this meeting.**

**III. Old Business**

- A. Approval of April 24, 2024 (FY24 Q2), Meeting Minutes
  - 1. Council member Grace Chan McKibben motioned to approve the meeting minutes.
  - 2. Council member Shree Gurusamy seconded the motion.
  - 3. All were in favor. The motion carried and meeting minutes were **approved**.
- B. Outreach and Community Event Recommendations
  - 1. Council Member Gurusamy discussed an upcoming festival in October with the Bengali Association of Chicago.
  - 2. Chair Jani shared developing outreach opportunities in Bloomington, IL (September) and Rockford, IL (October).

**IV. CMS Updates**

- A. New State Marketing Efforts - CMS Chief Administrative Officer, Sarah Kerley
  - 1. Chief Administrative Officer Sarah Kerley shared information about the State’s marketing efforts to promote jobs throughout Illinois.
    - a) The campaign included print, radio (local to Chicago in Spanish), television, social media, and online and digital media and ran from May 2024 – June 2024 delivering on core themes of flexibility, benefits, and work/life balance.
    - b) The campaign delivered its core message of “Really Great Careers” throughout the State of Illinois while focusing on two specific needs: Healthcare with the Department of Veterans Affairs and Engineering with the Department of Transportation.
    - c) There are discussions to continue development of the campaign into FY25 with a focus on the Illinois EPA.
  - 2. These efforts coupled with an on-the-spot hiring event resulted in the DVA making 25 CNA hires and 4 nursing hires. IDOT reported an increase of 22.1 applications per posting (3.5 to 25.6) during the campaign’s pilot.



3. Chair Jani asked if the campaign materials could be made available to all council members to share on social media and at events. Chief Administrative Officer Kerley responded that she would share those resources with CMS D&I Deputy Director Patricia Santoyo-Marin to share with all coordinators and councils.
- B. Introduction of CMS D&I Community Partner Internship Program Intern – Jacqueline Aguayo
1. Intern Jacqueline Aguayo introduced herself as a student at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and expressed her pleasure with the internship program.
  2. Coordinator Kevin Jeong provided some additional detail about her quality of work and the support she has been able to provide to the CMS D&I team.
- C. CMS Outreach and Recruitment – Asian American Employment Plan Coordinator Kevin Jeong
1. Coordinator Jeong discussed efforts toward solidifying existing relationships while building and expanding relationships within the Asian American community in central and southern Illinois to support partner agency outreach.
  2. Ten outreach events were reported for Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May including:
    - a) Asian American Coalition of Chicago’s AAPI Heritage Month Kick-Off
    - b) Illinois Asian American Legislative Caucus Foundation’s Launch Reception
    - c) ISBE’s 18th Annual Bilingual Parents Summit
    - d) Multicultural Education Group’s Rhythm of Asia
    - e) Oakton College’s Asian Night Market
    - f) Pacifica Square’s AANHPI Celebration
    - g) Alliance of Indian Americans in the Naperville Area’s Asian Heritage Fest
    - h) Illinois Asian American State Employees Association’s (IAASEA) AAPI Heritage Celebration at Wrigley Field
    - i) Illinois Asian-American Civil Engineers 1st Year Anniversary Gala
    - j) CMS Live Conversation Panel Discussion
  3. Additional summer outreach efforts included:
    - a) CBCAC’s Annual Fundraiser
    - b) Piyesta Pinoy
    - c) Dragon Boat Race for Literacy
    - d) Alderwoman Shweta Baid’s Annual Back to School & Ice Cream Social
    - e) Tabling at Aditya Gadhvi Concert
    - f) IAASEA’s Summer Meet up in Chinatown
  4. Upcoming Outreach and Developing Partnerships:
    - a) Meeting with AsiaConnect Board members in Bloomington, IL
    - b) Meeting with State Representative Sharon Chung at her Resource Fair and Blood Drive in Bloomington, IL



- c) India Day Celebration in Naperville, IL.
  - d) Garba Mela in Schaumburg, IL
  - e) Moon Festival in Aurora, IL
  - f) Social Justice Conference at Malcom X College in Chicago, IL
5. Developing Fall Programs:
- a) EIU Multicultural State Job Fair and Panel Discussion
  - b) ISU Job Fair and Community Events

**V. New Business**

A. Presentation of Agency Efforts Toward Recruitment Goals.

- 1. Department of Veterans Affairs – Beatrice Gonzalez, Human Resources Director
  - a) Human Resources Director Beatrice Gonzalez reported the following agency employment data for FY23 and FY24:
    - i. FY23 – 1209 total employees
    - ii. FY23 – **66 (5.46%) Asian American employees**
    - iii. FY24 – 1282 total employees
    - iv. FY24 – **70 (5.46%) Asian American employees**
  - b) Gonzalez outlined the DVA’s recruitment plan with a focus on diversity and inclusion including:
    - i. Implementing a new recruitment unit with a focus on diversity and inclusion which includes creating inclusive job advertisement and recruitment process
    - ii. Establishing partnerships with diverse organizations and institutions
    - iii. Implementing training programs for newly created recruitment unit
    - iv. Monitoring and evaluation recruitment practices
- 2. Department of Juvenile Justice – Jim Crowley, EEO and Affirmative Officer
  - a) EEO and Affirmative Officer Jim Crowley reported the following agency employment data:
    - i. The IDJJ currently employs approximately 685 individuals
    - ii. Approximately **1% is Asian American**
  - b) Crowley discussed the IDJJ’s recruiting efforts toward their Juvenile Justice Specialist role—the main professional category for their recruitment—including 27 screening events in FY24 and participation at over 30 recruiting events with their recruitment team of about 26 employees.
  - c) Crowley also shared that the IDJJ’s Communications Director has been outstanding developing flyers, press releases, and other printed materials that are shared via email to listservs, agency partners, council members, and with newspapers throughout the state.
  - d) Crowley also shared that the IDJJ’s FY24 4th quarter report showed that 39 employees at all levels including specialists, educators, nurses and more.



- e) Coordinator Jeong inquired about facility locations as the Council's effort expanded to Southern and Central Illinois to which Crowley provided details about screening events and facilities throughout the state.
- 3. Department of Employment Security – Anna D'Ascenzo, EO Officer, Language Access and Disability Access Coordinator
  - a) EO Officer D'Ascenzo presented the Asian American workforce analysis data. Of approximately 1050 employees:
    - i. FY23 – IDES employed **50** Asian Americans or **4.4%** of workforce
    - ii. FY24 – IDES employed **51** Asian Americans or **4.7%** of workforce
    - iii. She explained that IDES lost two Asian American employees to retirement in FY23, and had a net gain of 3 employees in FY24
  - b) D'Ascenzo discussed the changes to their underutilization throughout the state since FY23, indicating that their efforts in Region 1 would make the most difference in overall hiring. D'Ascenzo expanded on this by providing a list of offices in Regions 1, 2, 6, and 10.
  - c) D'Ascenzo also included a list and brief descriptions of job titles in the Professionals EEO Category that the agency most hires for, noting the "Employment Security Program Representative" as the agency's entry level position. Additionally, D'Ascenzo shared information about how to search for IDES jobs and set alerts on the Work for Illinois website.
  - d) D'Ascenzo discussed the IDES' annual bilingual language assessment for their local offices and how those results are used to determine whether bilingual positions are necessary in certain areas.
    - i. D'Ascenzo reported that IDES employs approximately **130 bilingual employees** or about **10%** of their workforce.
    - ii. D'Ascenzo also shared bilingual hiring recommendations made to 8 local offices to have language options added to job descriptions and postings.
    - iii. D'Ascenzo suggested that adding bilingual positions could also address Asian American underutilization within the agency.
  - e) D'Ascenzo shared that IDES is taking steps to reduce the underutilization of Asian American employees at IDES in several ways:
    - i. Locating additional community partners to work with.
    - ii. Targeted recruitment
    - iii. Deliver presentations to communities through partnerships
    - iv. Continue bilingual assessments
    - v. Discussions with the IDES DEIA employee forum
    - vi. Recommendations from the council



- f) Chair Jani raised a question regarding the possibility of adding Hindi as a bilingual language. Officer D'Ascenzo responded that those discussions have been taking place and went on to share how bilingual language recommendations are driven by the data collected by local offices. D'Ascenzo suggested that Chair Jani reach out to share his recommendations for a specific language and specific location where that language would be most effective incorporated into a bilingual role.
  - g) Council Member Grace Chan McKibben thanked EO Officer for her presentation and agreed with the Chair's suggestion. McKibben also added that some other languages to consider might be Tagalog and Arabic.
  - h) Patricia Santoyo-Marin, Deputy Director CMS D&I, added that IDES has always been a strong partner with CMS' D&I specific efforts. The Deputy Director also discussed that some recent recommendations made that were tied to Census data that IDES may have already been utilizing. Furthermore, she shared that CMS D&I has received support from the CMS CAO and Director to formalize a language access coordinator position to lead annual evaluations of bilingual staff tied to state statutes to promote equitable representation and equitable service.
4. Department of Public Health – Lance Morgan, EEO/AA Officer
- a) EEO/AA Officer Morgan shared the following employment data from IDPH with the council:
    - i. FY23 – **96** Asian American employees or **8.36%** of IDPH workforce
    - ii. FY24 – **98** Asian American employees or **8.63%** of IDPH workforce
    - iii. Underutilization decreased from **5** in FY23 to **4** in FY24 with the fulfillment of underutilization in Region 10
    - iv. Morgan reported completion of the Q4 summary workforce analysis which indicates an increase to **101** Asian American employees or **8.56%** of IDPH workforce.
  - b) Morgan discussed the agency's FY24 goals to address underutilization with included:
    - i. Involving senior management and supervisory staff in the elimination of underutilization
    - ii. Increasing recruitment efforts by engaging IDPH program staff
    - iii. Targeted job opportunities to local/relevant sites
    - iv. Proactively recruiting for position in relevant public health regions
5. Department of Insurance – Melina Tomaras-Collins, HR Director
- a) HR Director Tomaras-Collins shared information on the DOI's current recruiting and outreach efforts noting some of the challenges the agency has faced in hiring over the past several years. These outreach efforts included



social media, online postings, and flyers. Tomaras-Collins also requested additional support and recommendations from the council for sharing information and job postings.

- b) Tomaras-Collins shared that DOI has two offices, noting that approximately 75% of DOI's positions are located in Springfield while the remaining 25% are located in Chicago, with the majority of hiring located in Springfield.
  - c) Tomaras-Collins discussed that the roles typically available at DOI require very specific coursework leading the agency to develop partnerships with colleges and universities, legal partners, and attorneys to share job postings.
  - d) Tomaras-Collins discussed the implementation of a trainee program in the fall of 2022 and the promotion of 40 trainees into positions at DOI. The HR Director further shared that DOI is seeing a reversal in the agency's previous hiring trend and that the agency is currently seeing growth.
    - i. Approved headcount: 272 (FY23), 283 (FY24), 342 (FY25)
    - ii. Of those **13** are Asian American or **5.4%** of employees
      - a. **6** Officials/Administrators, **6** Professionals, **1** Admin support
      - b. **3** in Senior Level Leadership positions
  - e) The agency does not have any Affirmative Action goals and has been able to meet and exceed current goals in each location. As part of the agency's growth Tomaras-Collins reported:
    - i. 5 new Asian American hires over the past two years
    - ii. 4 Asian American promotions over the past two years
- 6. Department on Aging – No representative available
  - 7. Illinois Gaming Board – Unable to join meeting. To be rescheduled to FY25 Q2.
- B. Proposed Dates for Asian American EPAC Meetings for Q3 and Q4
- 1. Coordinator Jeong introduced two dates for the FY25 Q3 and Q4 meetings
    - a) February 5, 2025
    - b) April 23, 2025
  - 2. Chair Jani called a vote to approve the quarterly meeting dates.
    - a) The motion was moved by Council Member Grace Chan McKibben and seconded by Council Member Shree Gurusamy.
    - b) The motion was unanimously approved.

**VI. Public Comment - None**

**VII. Adjournment**

- A. Chair Jani invited all council members and State Agencies on the call to attend the India Day Celebration and indicated interested parties to reach out to Coordinator Jeong or Deputy Director Santoyo-Marin.
- B. COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURNED