



FY26 Q1 Hispanic EPAC Council Meeting Minutes

Date: July 10, 2025

Time: 10:03 AM

Chair: Carlos Charneco

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 AM by Council Chair **Carlos Charneco**. Chair Charneco recognized **Christopher Naranjo**, Statewide Manager for Latinx Diversity and Inclusion, to initiate roll call with the Deputy Director, **Patricia Santoyo-Marin**.

II. Roll Call

Chris Naranjo conducted roll call of Council members. All ex-officio and agency representatives were asked to sign in via the chat for attendance purposes. Chair Charneco highlighted that Stephanie Snow was on the call to represent Health and Family Services (HFS).

A quorum was not reached during the meeting; no votes could be taken during this meeting. All votes postponed to the October 2, 2025, meeting.

Hispanic Employment Plan Advisory Council			
COUNCIL MEMBERS			
Council Members	In person Chicago	In person Springfield	Via Webex
Chair Carlos Charneco			X
Vice Chair Dr. Layla Suleiman Gonzalez			X
Ana Guajardo			
Kenny Martín-Ocasio			X
Patricia Mota			
Jose Muñoz			
Giraldo Rosales			X
Roberto Sepúlveda			
X - Denotes a member's attendance, a blank represents a member's absence			



Hispanic Employment Plan Advisory Council				
EX-OFFICIOS				
Ex-Officio Agency	Agency Designee	In person Chicago	In person Springfield	Via Webex
IL Department of Aging	Pamela Martinez-Ruiz			X
IL Department of Children and Family Services	Jose Lopez			X
IL Department Commerce and Economic Opportunity	Diana Alfaro			
IL Department of Corrections	Marian McCann			X
IL Department Employment Security	Anna D'Ascenzo			
IL Department Healthcare and Family Services	Lizzy Whitehorn			
IL Department of Human Services	Amelia Gavina			X
IL Department of Human Rights				
IL Department of Public Health				
IL Department of Transportation	Brian Hendricks – Interim			X
X - Denotes a member's attendance, a blank represents a member's absence				

Additional Agency Representatives

Agency	Representative	In person Chicago	In person Springfield	Via Webex
IL Department of Central Management Services	Sarah Kerley			X
	Patricia Santoyo-Marin			X



IL Department of Innovation and Technology	Vickie Simpson			X
IL Department of Juvenile Justice	Jim Crowley			X
Illinois Department of Natural Resources	Eric Shirley			X
Illinois Department of Revenue	Shelby Kaiser			X
Illinois State Police	Mary Dowdy			X
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency	Pam Smith			
Illinois Lottery	Peter Romano			X
Illinois Department of Employment Security	Anna D'Ascenzo			
Illinois Gaming Board	Dovie Shelby			X
Illinois Department of Public Health	Ericka Williams			X
	Lubia Nunez			
GOV	Alici McNeal			
	Denise Maldonado			
X - Denotes a member's attendance, a blank represents a member's absence				

III. Old Business

May 15, 2025, Meeting Minutes

As quorum was not reached, the review of the minutes from the previous Council meeting held on **May 15, 2025, is postponed until the October 2, 2025, EPAC Meeting.** The motion to approve minutes was denied due to a lack of quorum.



IV. CMS Updates

CMS Staffing Introductions (Deputy Director Santoyo-Marin)

- **Chris Naranjo** introduced by Chair Charneco as the new Statewide Manager for Latinx Diversity & Inclusion at CMS
- **Rachel De Haro** introduced as Summer 2025 CMS Diversity and Inclusion Intern
- **Erik Colon** introduced as the CMS Chief Asset Management Officer
- **Daisy Nívar** introduced as Legislative Liaison as part of the Governmental Affairs Department

Congratulations were shared by council members to all our new CMS employees and looking forward to working with the new employees.

Staffing Announcements (Deputy Director Santoyo-Marin)

- New **Bilingual Administrative Assistant (Spanish Speaking)** role being created for the team to assist in travel, management, and allow the team greater capacity to do the work out in the community
- New **Statewide Manager for Language Access, Assessment, and Compensation** role being created to work with the Governor's office of New Americans, and manage the Bilingual Needs and Bilingual Pay Annual report

The council was excited and wanted to share their feedback and thoughts on the new positions and their importance to the State as well as strengthening the needs of the staff across the State. Dr. Suleiman-Gonzalez shared that the new Language Access position is critical to being compliant with the new State law she helped pass. The positions have been created and will be posted within three months.

CMS Data Updates (Chief Administrative Officer Kerley)

- 90% of data is accessible to CMS via Success Factors, with improvements to the migration being made to include all State employees managed by Bureau of Personnel
- **60,000 employees State Employees, with 4,600 identifying as Hispanic/Latinx, or 7.7% of the State workforce**, with distinctions in the data between PSA and SPSA.
- The mid FY24 percentage is **7.69% representing 3,612 employees of Latinx employees**, mid FY25 is **7.65% representing 4,098**, and the start of FY26 is **7.70% representing 4,595 employees**. The trend shows that the State is hiring a significant number of new candidates and that the percentage of Hispanic/Latinx applicants is steady.



- The State has a **7.54% of Ready to hire offers are made to Hispanic/Latinx candidates. The percentage of Hispanic/Latinx applicants was 10.48%.** Chair Charneco followed up with a question of the number of applicants per year, Sarah Kerley shared that the largest number of **Hispanic/Latinx applicants was 11% or 13,582, out of 123,527 in FY23, and 10.80% or 14,653, out of 135,970 in FY24.**
- The data shared will be able to be pulled by all BoP Agencies
- Jose Lopez from DCFS shared that there have been moments when he has been told that positions have not had applicants, and he wanted to be able to view the applicant pool data to understand the requirements of the role, the number of applicants, and those that met the minimum requirements.
- Chair Charneco brought up a question regarding the data presented, and whether we would be able to view which applicants met the minimum requirements for the roles that they applied to, and if we can verify that to see what the gaps are in experience/minimum requirements and candidates applying.
- Chair Charneco also mentioned IDOT and ISP numbers would likely need to be included in our system data to make sure we have a full picture of the employment numbers across all agencies. ISP has 1800 sworn officers, with 197 of them identifying as Hispanic/Latinx so about 11%. Brian Hendricks of IDOT Stated he would share follow up data.
- Councilmember Rosales shared the need for data integrity to assess the needs of the State, agencies, and the overall waterfall committee to make sure it is accurate and on time to deliver recommendations and identify the metrics for success when it comes to recruitment.

V. Talent Pool Update (Vice Chair Dr. Layla Suleiman)

- Vice Chair provided an abbreviated update and will have a more robust draft on 10/2/2025. She also thanks Francisco Alvarado for his help throughout his time and asked that he stay on during and after the transitions to help the committee.
 - Build on and expand on community partnerships with a focus on diversity in partners from higher education, faith institutions, nonprofits, etc.
 - Increasing the pool of candidates through a train the trainer model and making sure to address the turnover at nonprofits and affiliated organizations. A question to address during the committee meeting is how to cast a wide enough net to mitigate this concern.
 - Identifying the metrics that document a candidate's journey through the application process up to hire with a waterfall process showing the leaks and pinch points throughout a candidate's application journey.



VI. New Business

Next Potential EPAC Meeting dates for FY26 Calendar

- Without quorum the following vote for new business was postponed to the 10/2/2025 EPAC meeting
 - Potential dates for FY26 Q3 Meeting 2/19/2026 or 2/26/2026
 - Potential dates for FY26 Q4 Meeting 4/16/2026 or 4/30/2026

Council Members meeting with State Agencies

- The Agencies identified by the Chair and Council prior to the meeting were:
 - Healthcare & Family Services (HFS)
 - Revenue (IDOR)
 - Agriculture (AGR)
 - Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA)
 - Illinois Lottery (LOT)
- Council member Martin-Ocasio shared he would like to work with the Health & Family Services and shared that we should review the previous Agency meetings to assist with the recommendations made then and the role of the advisory council to make sure that the implementation is either carried out or if not, to follow up with the results. He also reiterated his concern with data being a driver for changes across the State but not having the necessary context to provide actionable feedback and recommendations across the State and its agencies.
- The Chair provided feedback for the type of questions and reporting the council will ask Agencies to provide during the meetings as well as an outline of the sourcing of data such as agency goals provided during the Annual EPAC report surveys. He also recommended reviewing the appendices of previous EPAC report surveys to follow up on the type of outreach events the Agencies approved and attended as well as the number of bilingual positions that they created.
- Stephanie Snow, the new representative on behalf of HFS was introduced and asked to be involved in the Council Member meeting with the State Agency
- Previous meeting minutes shared report outs on Council meetings with Agencies, the Council requested Statewide Manager Naranjo look up the meeting minutes and share that with the respective council members to address any goals and follow up were shared.
- Any other council members were directed to reach out to Statewide Manager Naranjo or Chair Charneco to note what agencies they may be interested in meeting with.



Ad-Hoc Committee Formation

Chair Charneco and Vice Chair Suleiman Gonzalez have worked to determine the need for the following committees based on needs for the implementation of the Hispanic Employment Plan, evaluate bilingual staffing needs across the state, and an ad-hoc committee of State Agencies for survey responses and feedback

- Ad-Hoc Committee Formation will likely include Ex-Officios
- Hispanic Employment Plan Survey Committee
- Bilingual Needs & Pay Survey Committee

Latino/Hispanic Veteran Recruitment Meeting Recap

- EPAC council members Charneco and Guajardo are a part of the committee along with IDHS and IDVA, with the intention of including more agencies that interact with Veterans more often.
- Events for recruitment: Rucking, yellow ribbon events, TAP classes, and award events
- Locations for recruitment: armories and additional support venues/events
- Chief Administrative Officer Kerley recognized the need to create and tighten connections between State services and engaging veterans to ensure that veterans are aware of positions across the State but also making sure that State services are being utilized.
- Kelly Firebaugh commented on engaging with Veterans in TAP classes, yellow ribbon, Army Mess Halls for Weekend Warrior events, Special Job Fairs, and armory visits as well.
- Chair Charneco commented that July 25th is National Hire a Veteran Day

VII. Public Comments

- Chair asked IDHS how their recruitment efforts have gone and how their email collection has worked over the last 5 years, their email collection has close to 10,000 emails. They also shared that they have shared their weekly vacancy list that they share with their partners in both English as Spanish and attending 310 events this year to include community engagement as an active part of recruitment. The agency also shared providing feedback to candidates has been immensely helpful in making sure that the candidates continue applying and stay in engaged and sharing the weekly vacancy list. DHS also shared the effectiveness of bilingual virtual recruitment events three times a month being a very useful tool underutilized by the State and other agencies. The agency



also shared that they provide the vacancy list more tailored to those individuals that applied within the last 2 years to try and assist the applicants in the process to land a role

- Chief Administrative Officer Kerley shared the 11-step process and the step times for each of the processes on average across the State. The last 6 months is showing a 71.6-day process compared to 109.7-days in the 6-month period prior. They also shared that IDHS uses Qualtrics to provide feedback to applicants, which CMS is in the process of procuring.

The public facing step process begins at Step 4 and ends at Step 11

4. Hiring Documentation Creation
5. Hiring Documentation Approval
6. Job Posting
7. Candidate Validation & Contraction Rights
8. Interview
9. Pre-Offer Approval / Hiring Sequence Compliance
10. Pre-Offer Screening
11. Candidate / Hiring Sequence Approval.

- Chair Charneco asked what the time is from the position posting closing to the time it takes to onboard a new employee, as IDHS mentioned there are a significant amount of applicant complaints about the application process timeline and the frustration that it leads to or the applicant finding another role.
- Deputy Director Santoyo-Marin commented on the role of the D&I team in providing internships, outreach, identity centered relationship building, and recruitment fairs. At these events the follow up was to call attendees and work on list serves to make sure that the D&I team is creating a way for the individual EPACs to address the needs of community members looking to join the State workforce
- Chair Charneco closed out the meeting reiterating the importance of State workers and how they are the primary point of contact and conduit for new applicants to share their interest in State work.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at **11:56 AM**.
The next meeting is scheduled for **October 2, 2025**.



Motion to Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn was made by Chair Charneco and seconded by Councilmember Rosales.
The motion carried, and the meeting was officially adjourned.