



# COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES MINUTES Thursday, October 21, 2021 5:30 PM

ART PICK CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL,  
3900 MAIN STREET, RIVERSIDE, 92501  
VIRTUAL MEETING, [RIVERSIDECAGOV/MEETING](https://www.riversideca.gov/meeting)  
GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, 951-826-5427

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## MISSION STATEMENT

*"The mission of the Commission on Disabilities is to promote greater awareness of, respect for, and the total participation of individuals with disabilities into all aspects of life."*

State law restricts the Commission on Disabilities from taking action on an item unless it has been included on an agenda and posted at least 72 hours in advance of a meeting or unless the matter falls within one of the narrow exceptions. Consequently, any item not listed on this agenda will normally have to be delayed until the item can be made part of a posted agenda.

CALL TO ORDER: 5:40 pm

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ABSENT: Don Coon, Gregory Alexander, Kimberly Hiniker, Miranda Ontko, Sharron Lewis

Also, in attendance was Analyst Jessica Spiking, General Services Deputy Director Shari Call, and Guest Speaker Michael Locklear from the Department of Rehabilitation.

1. **Public Comment Period** - This is the portion of the meeting specifically set aside to invite your comments regarding any matter within the Commission's jurisdiction. Individual audience participation is limited to 3 minutes.

There were no public comments.

## PRESENTATIONS

2. Presentation from the California Department of Rehabilitation about the programs for employment opportunities they provide to people with disabilities to ensure equal access and reasonable accommodations.

The Guest Speaker, Michael Locklear, works for the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) which is an organization that assists people with either mental or physical disabilities who are seeking

employment. Mr. Locklear states that DOR works toward providing people with disabilities the tools to become independent in hopes that they will not have to solely rely on public services in order to continue or get further employment. He stated that currently, the average person in America is getting 4.5 jobs in a matter of 30 years in the same career field as opposed to working for the same company for 30 years. With this in mind, the DOR provides people with job seeking skills for the future as well. Mr. Locklear states that DOR has programs for the youth and adults, and as long as individuals are willing to put in the effort and work with the staff members of the DOR programs, the end goal will be employment, independent living and equality.

In order to be eligible for the program, a person must have a physical or mental impairment that substantially impedes the individual's ability to secure employment. Mr. Locklear states that there may be necessary education or training that the DOR can provide before a person is qualified for employment. Another program eligibility requirement is vocational rehabilitation services to prepare, retain, or regain employment consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, capabilities, and interests. People who are eligible for the program will benefit from the vocational rehabilitation services in an integrated employment environment meaning there will be people of different age, race, ethnicity, and gender and the pay scale will be commensurate with the rest of the community.

The following is a list of specific programs that the DOR offers:

- Assistive Technology – Mr. Locklear gave examples such as a stand up work station or a specialized wheelchair. The DOR has experts that will help individuals with their specific needs.
- Blind Field Services – DOR staff works with people who have low vision or complete blindness.
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services – DOR staff works with people who are hard of hearing or completely deaf.
- Disability Access Services – If a company were to implement these services into their work establishment, they could possibly receive tax credits.
- Independent Living Program – There are two centers in the Inland Empire. The DOR worked with a local independent living center and established a program that resulted in the independent living center receiving a grant in order to provide kindle tablets to the individuals staying at this center so that they could search for jobs.
- Mental Health Cooperative – They help individuals prepare to become referred over to the Department of Rehabilitation for job seeking assistance.
- Supportive Employment – This program includes job coaching.
- Workforce Development Section – This department is based out of the central office in Sacramento and they try to establish relationships with large corporations in order to explain what the Department of Rehabilitation does for job seekers and how they can work together to benefit the business/employer.

The following is the process for getting started with the Department of Rehabilitation:

- Orientation – This includes watching a video as well as providing the opportunity to talk to a qualified rehabilitation professional or counselor.
- Intake – DOR staff will ask more indepth questions regarding an individuals needs based on their disabilities such as, how have their disabilities hindered their job seeking and employment retention. They will also discuss what type of employment the individuals are interested in. This is a crucial step in the process because it provides DOR counselors with all the necessary information in order to determine eligibility.
- Eligibility – This step is where the DOR determines whether or not they will be able to help individuals gain employment. If they are not able to get them employment now, they might be able to in the future after the individual has completed schooling or specific trainings.
- Plan Development – After obtaining information from the individuals such as what they want to do, what they are capable of doing, and what their resources are, the DOR staff will create a plan for employment and will help them connect with the correct resources.
- Training or Direct Employment – Many individuals seek to go to school prior to obtaining employment; however, the DOR can only work with State educational facilities due to funding restrictions.
- Successful Closure – The DOR works with the individuals after they are employed and stays in constant contact with them for a minimum of 90 days and up to a year.
- Post-Employment Services – This is for individuals who have already been closed successfully but they reach out to the DOR when they need additional assistance. For example, if an individual needs additional training, certifications or technology in order for their employer to promote them, the DOR will put them back in the system for approximately 30 days and will provide them with the services/tools needed.

The Business Consulting Services Unit (BSCU) of the Department of Rehabilitation facilitates and maintains relationships with businesses. There is a business specialist in every office that reaches out to employers, goes to job fairs, and works with people individually and helps them with skills such as writing resumes and how to interview. Mr. Locklear states that he teaches what are knows as virtual delivery classes and they contain information that help people in the workforce. These trainings include leadership skills or how to network when seeking employment. The goal is to ensure the businesses that they are hiring individuals that have been comprehensively trained, pre-screened, and will fit and benefit the business. Once an individual has been employed, their employment retention will be monitored with a weekly call or e-mail. The DOR works very closely with America's Job Centers of California (AJCC). The BSCU offers "Windmills" awareness disability trainings to businesses which teach businesses how to work with and accomodate individuals who have disabilities.

## Ways to connect with the Department of Rehabilitation:

- If you are interested in receiving DOR – VR services (age 22 or above), e-mail [IEDORIENTATION@DOR.CA.GOV](mailto:IEDORIENTATION@DOR.CA.GOV)
- If you are interested in receiving DOR – PE services (age 16 to 21), e-mail [IEDStudentsAssistants@dor.ca.gov](mailto:IEDStudentsAssistants@dor.ca.gov)
- Or call the Riverside Department of Rehabilitation Office at: (951) 782-6650

Commissioner Davis asks if there are any incentives for an employer to hire someone with a disability. Mr. Locklear states that there is a work opportunity tax credit which has eight different categories of job seekers, one of which is Qualified Rehabilitation Referral. This incentive gives a company a \$2,400 tax credit per individual and caps off at 400 hours. Another incentive for employers is on the job training programs where the Department of Rehabilitation can offer up to a \$4,900 training stipend to a company.

Chair Perkins asks if individuals are allowed to visit any of the seven DOR offices or do they need to go to an office that is designated to their specific residential address. Mr. Locklear states that most people utilize the offices that are local to where they live due to convenience, but if they want to visit another office, they are able to do so.

## DISCUSSION AND ACTION CALENDAR

*This portion of the Commission on Disabilities Agenda is for all matters where staff and public participation is anticipated. Individual audience participation is limited to 3 minutes.*

### 3. Approve minutes for the meeting of August 19, 2021

Motion to approve – Commissioner Davis  
Second – Vice Chair Nelson  
All in favor

### 4. Determine whether the absence of Commissioner Don Coon on August 19, 2021, should be recorded as an excused or unexcused absence.

Commissioner Davis made motion to designate the absence as excused,  
Second – Vice Chair Nelson  
All in favor

### 5. Determine whether the absence of Commissioner Gregory Alexander on August 19, 2021, should be recorded as an excused or unexcused absence.

Commissioner Aleman made motion to designate the absence as excused,  
Second – Commissioner Krick  
All in favor

6. Determine whether the absence of Vice Chair Nelson on August 19, 2021, should be recorded as an excused or unexcused absence.

Commissioner Krick made motion to designate the absence as excused,  
Second – Commissioner Aleman  
All in favor

#### COMMISSONER COMMUNICATIONS

7. Update on Brochures

Chair Perkins is working with Vice Chair Nelson on updating the information on the brochures. The goal is to have an updated brochure to review by the next meeting.

8. Updates on conferences, seminars, and regional meetings attended by Commissioners.

There were no updates at this time.

9. Items for future consideration as requested by Commission Members.

Staff member Jessica Spiking asked if any of the Commissioners have any recommendations for future guest speakers. Chair Perkins requested a guest speaker from a local community college present the educational programs they offer to disabled individuals that help them obtain employment after graduation.

#### ADJOURNMENT: 6:26 pm

All in favor

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Thursday, November 18, 2021 at 5:30 pm.