

Minutes: NHWSB Certification, Training, and Public Engagement Workgroup

Date: Monday, Jun 29, 2026

Minutes prepared by: Linnea Pignatello

Location: Hybrid – Ramsey Room at the Department of Labor and Industry and via Webex

Attendance

Members Present

Commissioner Blissenbach (remotely)

Paula Rocheleau (remotely)

Michelle Armstrong

Visitors Present

Jeff Bostic

Jonathan Lips (remotely)

DLI Staff Present

Paul Enger

Ken McGurran

Linnea Pignatello

Leah Solo

Agenda items

1. **Call to order** – The meeting was called to order by Executive Director Solo at 11:03 a.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared.
2. **Approval of agenda** – A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Paula Rocheleau and seconded by Michelle Armstrong. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.
3. **Approval of drafted meeting minutes** – No motion was made to approve previous meeting minutes as this is the first meeting of this workgroup.
4. **Board updates** –
 - a. The group reviewed a memo outlining the summer work and Solo reviewed the timeline, specifically highlighting important dates through September of 2026.
 - b. Certification and training discussion ensued and included some of the following information:

- i. The required two-year standards review window is approaching. Armstrong noted it would be a rush to get new standards approved before the legislative session begins in 2027.
 - ii. Blissenbach stated concern about the timeline for people/workers getting trained and noted it would be nice if there were more certified worker organizations (CWO) applicants while acknowledging the existing ones aren't busy. Rocheleau speculated that facilities will want to train more once state plan amendment (SPA) is approved or denied. Blissenbach also reminded the group and facilities that the training is still valid and required even if the wages don't get approved. The group discussed additional reminders to be sent out to the email list. Rocheleau asked if there are entities that aren't unions that can train workers and Blissenbach replied that yes, there are non-profits and worker organizations. Solo suggested staff can research other organizations that could meet CWO requirements.
 - iii. In discussing new standards, Rocheleau pointed out that a Registered Nurse (RN) standard would become obsolete quickly noting competitive environment makes static standards difficult.
- c. Solo reviewed proposed changes to the posting notice, training guide and curriculum. There were no objections from members. The materials will be updated accordingly once the SPA is either approved or denied.
- d. Solo overviewed the renewal application for Certified Worker Organizations. The key points in the renewal application are:
 - i. Must include attestation that curriculum and training materials will be updated.
 - ii. Organizations must report capacity changes since prior approval.
 - iii. Data policy adherence is required; Rocheleau suggested adding a section on documentation retention for training records.

Renewal must open within 30 days of standards becoming effective and the application window must remain open for 60 days. New CWO applications are available year-round and are reviewed on a rolling basis.
- e. Solo reviewed the questionnaire draft. The questionnaire led to the following discussions:
 - i. Ask whether they are responsible for dependent insurance coverage to question 8
 - ii. Jeff Bostic (advocate) recommended amending question 15, to include asking which holidays were swapped.
 - iii. Jeff Bostic (advocate) recommended adding "are you aware of the new \$200-\$400 legislative worker payments?" (to be added carefully so as not to confuse with retroactive pay) Solo asked about reactions to question 17, "How have the changes in Values Based Reimbursement (VBR) affected your facility?" Rocheleau said it's worth asking and good data to have.
- f. There was discussion about the circulation of the questionnaire. The survey will be conducted via DLI's new Formstack system. Rocheleau suggested a flyer with a QR code for employers to print and hang in lounges or time clock area. Solo volunteered to email individual administrators.

- g. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) keeps information on certification of Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN), Certified Nursing Assistants (CAN), and Registered Nurses (RN) but it may not be effective to send email blasts to those lists.
- h. Public engagement- Rocheleau said fewer is fine, Armstrong said it's good to still have engagement events, wait until after SPA would give more input on other items besides the SPA. Solo suggested being specific in the scope of the engagement. The group agreed that September seemed like a good month in which to hold forums and agreed that the three-member formula that was used last time is a good way to structure the board member attendants at the forums. The recommended format includes one forum in northern MN, one in southern MN and one in the south metro. One of the forums would be hybrid.

5. New business –

6. Next meeting –

Adjournment

A motion was made by Michelle Armstrong to adjourn the meeting at 12:21 p.m. and seconded by Paula Rocheleau. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.