



MINNESOTA

E1 MN Interagency Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes for May 20, 2021

Date: Thursday, May 20, 2021 **Time:** 9:00a.m. – 12:00p.m.

Location: Zoom Video Meeting

Advisory Committee Co-Chairs in alphabetical order:

- Natasha Jerde, Director, State Services for the Blind (DEED/SSB)
- Lesli Kerkhoff, Human Services Manager, Disability Services Division (DHS/DSD)
- Chris McVey, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DEED/VRS)

Membership and Stakeholder Representation on pages 2-3

Facilitation and Documentation: Holly Johnson, Lanterna Consulting, Inc. contracted through Management Analysis & Development, Minnesota Management and Budget

Advisory Committee Overview:

The **Interagency Employment First Advisory Committee** is a voluntary 14-member committee representing diverse stakeholders' perspectives from around the state including individuals and their families, support professionals, and advocacy organizations. The committee is an important part of a state agency partnership to fulfill the interagency agreement between Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development and the Department of Human Services that was formalized in the September 2019 joint memorandum of understanding which can be read here:

<https://disabilityhubmn.org/media/hirdrm05/dhs-deed-mou.pdf>

The committee's role is an advisory role established as part of the agreement to assist and inform the interagency partnership in the complex work of creating a more seamless and timely employment support system for people on HCBS waivers seeking competitive integrated employment.

The committee will meet bi-monthly over the next 18 months to assist the interagency work in preparation for replacement of the current interim guidance and implementation of enhanced interagency services in summer 2021.

Meetings will be hosted on Thursdays from 9:00am to 12:00pm on the following dates:

- May 21, 2020 - Kickoff
- July 16, 2020
- September 17, 2020
- November 19, 2020
- January 21, 2021
- March 18, 2021
- May 20, 2021
- July 15, 2021
- September 16, 2021
- November 18, 2021

Best Source of Information: <https://disabilityhubmn.org/for-professionals/work/e1mn/>



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Membership attendance in alphabetical order:

Name	Stakeholder Representative Appointment	Attended	Did Not Attend
Jon Alexander	Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE)	✓	
Tim Dickie	Minnesota Organization for Habilitation and Rehabilitation (MOHR)	✓	
Jessica Eggert	People receiving services & their families or supports	✓	
John Filek	Deaf Blind service provider	✓	
April Ildvad – resigned Jan 2021	Broader stakeholder community (Mental health, brain injury specialist)		✓
Danielle Mahoney	University of Minnesota’s Institute on Community Integration	✓	
Alicia Munson	Advocacy organization for people with disabilities (The Arc Minnesota)	✓	
Jillian Nelson	Advocacy organization for people with disabilities (Autism Society of Minnesota / The Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities)		✓
Julie Peterschick	VRS Community Partners Committee (CPC), formerly known as VRS Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) Advisory Committee	✓	
Kristina Petronko	Client Assistance Project (CAP), Minnesota Disability Law Center	✓	
Yekaterna (Kate) Probert Fagundes	Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA) Metro Minnesota representative	✓	
Phyllis Reller	Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA) Greater Minnesota representative	✓	
Rita Wiersma	Association of Residential Resources in Minnesota (ARRM)		✓
Barb Ziemke	People receiving services & their families or supports	✓	



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DEED VRS/SSB and DHS staff attendance in alphabetical order:

Name	Agency and Responsibility	Attended	Did Not Attend
Beth Grube	Benefits Planning Coordinator for Disability Services Division (DHS)	✓	
Amanda Jensen-Stahl	Program Specialist for Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DEED)	✓	
Natasha Jerde	Director of State Services for the Blind (DEED)	✓	
Leslie Kerkhoff	Human Services Manager, Disability Services Division (DHS)	✓	
Chris McVey	Director of Strategic Initiatives for Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DEED)	✓	
Ryan Merz	Employment Planning and Resource Coordinator for Disability Services Division (DHS)	✓	

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Meeting Objectives

Our objectives for the May 2021 Advisory Committee meeting are to:

1. Provide updates on final preparations for the launch of E1 MN on July 1, 2021.
2. Engage the committee in an open, respectful forum to answer questions on the important changes and to gather insights and advice to inform and improve launch preparations.

Agenda Topics

1. E1 MN Training
2. E1 MN Tools and Toolkits

Welcome and Opening

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am by facilitator Holly Johnson who provided an overview of the meeting agenda.



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Discussion

Agenda Item #1: E1 MN Training	
50 minutes	Amanda Jensen Stahl

Amanda provided an update on the training program that is being developed to support the launch of E1 MN. Over 1,200 people attended one of the three online introductory training for service professions at Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), State Services for the Blind (SSB), waiver case managers and employment service providers that were conducted in April and May. A recorded version of the training is available on the E1MN Training site.

The E1 MN Kickoff Training Goals are to:

1. learn about E1MN (how and why),
2. explain the Engage, Plan, Find, Keep framework,
3. have a high-level understanding of Roles & Responsibilities, and
4. be prepared for next steps leading up to launch July 1, 2021.

An overwhelming majority of 452 training feedback survey respondents agreed the training helped them understand the content for each of these goals. The biggest areas of confusion were around E1MN team member roles and responsibilities and feeling prepared for the July 1, 2021 E1MN launch.

Next, Amanda discussed the monthly one-hour open Coffee Chats that started in March. 526 people have attended so far, and a running FAQ is being developed from the meetings. These meetings are being extended with Coffee Chats planned for June 10, July 22, August 26, and September 23.

225 people registered for the joint DEED/DHS Service Provider Alignment webinar, designed for employment service providers and interested stakeholders, that was held on April 8. The Service Provider Alignment Webinar focused on the benefits of becoming both 245D licensed and VRS/SSB contracted. There was an initial general session with two breakout sessions focused on VRS/SSB and 245D information. The webinar was recorded and is available on E1MN website under provider trainings. A list of key E1 MN links is provided on the last page of these minutes.

Advisory members shared that provider alignment is being actively promoted within the Minnesota Organization for Habilitation and Rehabilitation (MOHR). Members asked about expected length of time for VRS application processing. VRS steering team members noted that numerous steps required by both federal and state regulations adds to the application processing time duration and variability. Two additional full-time positions focused on VR community partner programs and contracts have been added to increase capacity and support which should help accelerate processing of applications.



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As part of the E1 MN launch, DHS will replace interim guidance with new guidance that will be published and effective on July 1, 2021. DHS will direct case managers to follow the new guidance utilizing existing codes for the first few months. This fall, case managers will be given new codes aligned to the new guidance that will be required starting on September 1, 2021. Committee members advised that these changes will likely cause a high volume of questions on billings, authorizations, and code changes. Members recommended that training on these code changes should occur prior to the September effective date to reduce confusion and frustration. They also recommended creating a simple, clear summary tool such as a desk aid focused on coding.

Planning is also underway for targeted training and technical assistance including specific audience needs and joint trainings which will be developed for on-demand availability. Regional trainings are planned for the fall and on an ongoing basis to provide hands-on forums for learning, discussion, and practice. Amanda announced plans for a new centralized E1MN email to field questions on an ongoing basis for the interagency partners. More information will be shared when technology is identified and in place to support this technical assistance resource.

The committee provided feedback on the full range of training and discussed the following items:

- In response to earlier feedback, a new 'Waiver 101' training is being created to help VRS/SSB professionals build their knowledge on the waiver program, role of case managers and connections to E1 MN.
- The committee strongly recommends targeted training for high school special education case managers (and supervisors) especially 18-21 transition program staff. There is agreement that the 'handoff' that occurs between student and adult services is an important one and needs special support for E1 MN to be successfully implemented. Advisory members shared that in many situations, parents, or other supporting adults, are functioning like case managers and need easy to access, accurate information.
- The committee also reiterated the importance of creating some type of supporting materials for individuals and families on the Disability Hub site, again noting families with children on a waiver(s). Steering Team members responded that they are working in collaboration with Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to address these needs. In addition, there is currently a VR counselor and 1-2 VRS pre-ETS staff working with each of the more than 400 school districts in the state and they are important resources as well. Advisory members suggested that a one-page handout showing how E1 MN changes will affect families and advocates would be a great resource to develop and make available on the website.

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Agenda Item #2 : E1 MN Tools and Toolkits

60 minutes

Beth Grube

Beth provided an update on several E1 MN tools and toolkits that are under development on the Disability Hub website. The tools include tools from the Charting the LifeCourse framework, an important strategy to create more person-centered transitions between programs. These tools will help people and employment service providers plan for work and will help set the person up for success in their job search. There will be more information and training on the tools and how they support people and professionals in the Engage, Plan, Find, Keep framework later this spring and summer.

Beth previewed current drafts of 'My Profile', 'My Resources and Supports' (Charting the LifeCourse Integrated Supports Star), 'Build My Team', 'My Positive Summary', and the 'My vision' (Charting the LifeCourse Life trajectory).

The committee provided feedback and engaged in discussion related to tools and toolkits:

- The advisory asked about the connection of these tools to 'The Vault'. Beth explained that the goal is for people to use the tools and then share them with their employment team through their My Vault account. The advisory suggested creating and offering some form of 'Vault 101' best practices FAQ and on-demand training options to help people understand and make use of the Vault.
- Because case managers are unlikely to have adequate time to help people complete the tools and activities, these tools are expected to be particularly useful for providers who can assist people and their families should they need help filling them out.
- The committee strongly recommended usability and accessibility testing with people who have disabilities to gather feedback directly from stakeholders who the tools and website are being designed to serve. Specific questions asked by committee members included 'Are web pages accessible for people who use screen readers?' and "Will drop down menus be accessible?"
- Members noted that translating resources in additional languages beyond English would also be helpful to reaching the wide range of people that E1 MN is designed to serve.

The steering committee thanked the advisory for their excellent feedback noting its critical importance in creating effective training and tools to help everyone involved in the full range of employment services.



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Meeting Recap

Topic 1: The steering team provided an overview of the training plan being developed to support the launch of E1 MN which includes a recorded two-hour introductory training for service professionals that was conducted on April 27, April 29, and May 5. Training plans also include monthly ‘coffee chats’ and targeted training for providers, waiver case managers and VRS/SSB staff. The committee provided feedback on the training plan and discussed several specific ideas for targeted training needs.

Topic 2: The advisory committee received previews of several tools and toolkits designed to assist support professionals. The committee requested tools for families and advocate to aid in understanding what E1 MN means and how it works. The committee also talked about the importance of conducting usability and accessibility testing of tools and online resources by people with disabilities to get direct feedback.

Next Steps

1. Information on E1 MN training can be found using this link: <https://disabilityhubmn.org/for-professionals/work/e1mn/e1mn-trainings-and-events/>
2. The E1 MN Frequently Asked Questions is available using this link: <https://disabilityhubmn.org/for-professionals/work/e1mn/frequently-asked-questions/#article-start>
3. Toolkits for support professionals working with adults can be accessed using this link: <https://disabilityhubmn.org/for-professionals/work/>
4. Charting the LifeCourse resources for families can be accessed using this link: <https://disabilityhubmn.org/for-families>
5. The next meeting of the E1 MN Interagency Advisory Committee will be on July 15, 2021.

Meeting Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00p.m.

** End of document*