



Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion

Nina Harris, Chairperson
Alexandria Wilson, Executive Director
115 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 4N
Chicago, IL 60603

APPROVED JUL 16 2025

NOTICE

State of Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion CEI MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

Wednesday, June 18, 2025

1:30 PM

**Location: Jesse White State Building, 115 S. LaSalle St., 4th Fl., Lincoln Park Conference Room, Chicago,
IL 60603**

**Location: Lincoln Tower Plaza, 524 S. Second St., Ste. 502, Springfield, IL 62701
WebEx**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

- Chair Harris called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.
- In accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1 et seq., the Commission provided telephonic and video access to the meeting so that members of the public can monitor the meeting and has updated its website to keep the public fully apprised of the Commission activities relating to virtual participation.
- Chair Harris conducted roll call of the Commissioners.
 - i. Commissioners attending in person at a State facility:
 - 1. Commissioner Richard Costes
 - 2. Commissioner Bruce Montgomery
 - 3. Commissioner Ennedy Rivera
 - ii. Commissioner attending virtually:
 - 1. Chair Nina Harris
 - 2. Commissioner Van Austin
 - 3. Commissioner Benjamin Salentine
 - 4. Commissioner Ovelia Smith-Barton
 - iii. A quorum of the public body was not present.

2. Minutes: May 21, 2025 (Action)

- Approval of minutes deferred to July meeting as quorum was not established.

3. Operations Reports

- A. Legislative Updates and Outreach Report – Nikita Richards, Internal/External Communications & Legislative Affairs Officer**



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- CEI's FY25 Quarter 4 Newsletter is currently being developed.
- CEI is proud to have joined Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias and State Senator Elgie Sims Jr. for their MBE/WMBE Workshop. This was a valuable opportunity to learn about procurement opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses.
- CEI's Outreach unit is collaborating with the Rockford Black Chamber of Commerce to develop a BEP and VBP certification training for its members and the Rockford community.
- Recently, CEI engaged with procurement professionals concerning BEP, goal setting, exemptions, Utilization Plans, waivers, contract monitoring, annual reporting, and enforcement.
- CEI has partnered with the Veterans Chamber of Commerce to conduct a VBP Lunch and Learn scheduled for August 2025.
- CEI will be hosting its first BEP and VBP Listening Session on September 9th located in Chicago at the 555 Monroe Building. The Outreach Unit is also planning a second listening session for central and southern Illinois vendor participants.
- CEI's Outreach unit is developing the Veteran Business Advantage: Unlocking Surplus Resources & State Certification workshop scheduled for August 12th.
- Ms. Richards shared recent and upcoming outreach events.
- CEI is sharing its outreach efforts with State legislators and collaborating with them to ensure constituent access to State certification and procurement resources.
- CEI completed and submitted its End of Session Report to the Governor's Office, which provides insight on bills that are considered unfinished business and bills that may be reintroduced during veto and/or FY26 spring legislative session.
- CEI will continue to engage with bill sponsors throughout the legislative break, weigh in on supplier diversity bill, submit Legislative Affairs Weekly Reports to GO, and conduct daily legislative tracking.

B. Administrative Report – Robin Streets, Chief of Staff

- Administration has been working with project manager Granderson to identify trends in service tickets submitted through the SDMP along with root causes as we strive to improve customer service and the user experience with the portal.
- The CEI website has been revised to include the 2024 Supplier Diversity Report. There have also been updates to the BEP liaison page as well as to the BEP Council membership rolls.
- Leadership continues to work with the human resources department on position creation.
- Leadership is also assisting where necessary with the planning and distribution of the Race Gender Wage report for the upcoming fiscal year.

C. Financial and Human Capital Report – Robin Streets, Chief of Staff

- CEI's FY26 budget is approved.



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- All appropriation dollars will come from the General Revenue Fund (GRF); eliminating a split between the GRF and Professional Services Fund (PSF) as operating funding sources for the Commission. The consolidation of funds was initiated by GOMB and CMS.
- CEI's current headcount is 36 people, which includes 7 Commissioners with a maximum appropriation of 52 fte's.
- CEI recently closed two Exec I positions for Compliance Analysts and is awaiting CMS to validate the candidates. Both roles will head to panel interviews.
- CEI continues to work with CMS to post other positions that address other administrative needs.

D. Business Enterprise Program (BEP) Compliance Unit and Veterans Business Program (VBP) Reports – Harry Reinhard, Compliance Manager

- Two Compliance Analysts postings closed on May 20th. We are currently in the evaluation process. The hiring of these two positions will fill all vacancies in the Compliance Unit.
- A Draft of the VBP SOP manual has been created and shared with CEI leadership for review.
- A tentative date of July 9th has been set for the 1st BEP Compliance Subcommittee Work Study session to begin reviewing FY25 Class Exemptions, FY26 Compliance Plans and IL Admin Code 30 Exemptions.
- Final updates to the FY26 Compliance Plan reporting documents and process are confirmed. The Compliance Subcommittee will review each purchasing institution's Compliance Plan responses, and either accept the response or require further action on the institution's part.
- Veterans Key Performance Indicators:
 - 59 veterans expressing interest in the VBP certification after attending outreach events.
 - 26 qualified veterans and service disabled veterans that receive support and assistance through CEI programs and initiatives.
 - 11 veterans have received related events attended by hosted staff.
- BEP Compliance Key Performance Indicators:
 - FY25 year-to-date solicitation totals: \$ 7,868,000,000+
 - Average solicitation goal is at 5%.
 - 14 contract exemptions have been granted for FY25.
 - The compliance unit has completed 286 utilization plan reviews.
 - a. There are 157 non-responsive utilization plans submissions.
 - There were 37 pre bid conferences conducted by compliance staff for active solicitations during this period.



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E. Business Enterprise Program (BEP) Certification Unit and Mentor Protégé Program (MPP) Reports – LaTasha Binder, Deputy Director

- Certification Unit
 - The Certification unit is working diligently to finalize review of applications as we approach the end of the fiscal year.
 - The unit continues to collaborate with outreach to assist vendors with questions around applications in the Supplier Diversity Management Portal (SDMP).
 - The unit continues to provide Project Manager Alec Granderson with a working list of improvement requests to aid in enhancing functionality of the Certification Module.
 - As May 30th there are 3,258 active certified vendors in the supplier diversity management portal:
 - a. 1,080 African American owned firms
 - b. 18 American Indian or Alaskan Native owned firms
 - c. 444 Asian American owned firms
 - d. 1,004 Caucasian American owned firms
 - e. 615 Hispanic American owned firms
 - f. 7 Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander owned firms
- Mentor Protégé Program:
 - MPP continues to focus on capacity building, technical knowledge, and competitive edge of small businesses, minority and women-owned businesses, and veteran business enterprises through mentorship and developmental assistance.
 - Continuing implementation of the program's project plan.
 - Senior leadership is continuing to review the program's standard documents in preparation of the launch.
 - The MPP team is currently establishing operations and is on track to begin recruiting by the end of Q2.
 - Interest in the MPP program is as follows (as of 6/2/25):
 - a. 113 interested entities:
 - i. 18 self-identified as mentors
 - ii. 90 self-identified as proteges
 - iii. 5 who are unsure which category they fall in

4. Ongoing Business

- A. Race Gender Wage Report FY25 – Commissioner Richard Costes.
 - Report will focus on the race and gender wage disparities.



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- The report is expected to be completed by the end of the calendar year.
- This is the second year of this report which will become annual.
- In the future the report will be expanded by adding metrics to check channels of wage disparities over time.
- Each state agency and public institution of higher education is contributing to advancing these efforts by submitting a report detailing race, gender and wage earnings.

B. Partnership Update – Commissioner Van Austin and Commissioners

- Commissioners received inquiries from BEP certified vendors that attended pre-bid conferences as to whether attendance lists would be posted after the pre-bid conference.
 - Director Wilson contacted all four CPOs and the consensus was this information should be shared.
 - Commissioner recommend suggesting a standardized process across CPO portfolios to ensure BEP firms have the opportunity to meet potential prime vendors for potential partnerships.

C. Illinois Hiring Practices (30 ILCS 574/40-10(4)) – Commissioner Ennedy Rivera

- A joint working group will be formed as a space to share best practices, identify challenges and develop actionable solutions to create a more inclusive and representative State workforce.
- Commissioner Rivera encouraged organizations and businesses to consider how they can contribute.
- If you would like to contribute to this effort, please contact Ennedy.Rivera@illinois.gov.

5. New Business

A. VIVA Analytics Update – Alec Granderson, Senior Project Manager

- Mr. Granderson provided information about his background in project management and technology.
- Upon review of VIVA portal, Mr. Granderson determined that more engagement was necessary with CEI's team and the vendor's team.
- Mr. Granderson has been working closely with leadership and unit managers to determine the needs of each unit to be clearly communicated to the vendor.

6. Public Comment

- None

7. Adjournment (*Action*)

- Meeting adjourned by Chair Harris at 2:33 p.m.

