

Access and Functional Need Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 23, 2025 at 3pm – 4:30pm CST

Call to Order

- The meeting called to order: 3:10pm by Chair Meskin-Schiff

Roll Call

- Attendance will be taken:
- Voting Members
 - Present: Kira Meskin Schiff, Jae Jin Pak, Angela Botz, Randy Colon, Wilhelmina Gunther, Chris Dodd, Lynnette Cale, David Kuriniec, John Eckert, Dawn Cook,
 - Absent: Dorothy Cox
 - Without notice: Kenneth Jennings, Robin Jones, Todd Roach
- Advisory Members
 - Present: Pam Heavens, Thane Hunt, Scott Clarke, Barbara Pritchard
 - Absent: Karen Tamley, Kristen Busch, Laura VanPuymbrouck, Libby Oxenham, Megan Norlin, Shelly Richardson, Susan Johnson, Tyler Woodard
- Introduction of new members and members of the public
 - Chair Meskin Schiff introduced Wilhelmina Gunther as new member and Wilhelmina introduced herself.
- Quorum will be noted before proceeding
 - Quorum: In-person quorum was not met.

Approval of Minutes

Please read the minutes ahead of the meeting and, if necessary, provide any corrections needed.

- June 20, 2024 meeting minutes vote for approval
 - Due to quorum not being met, vote was not taken.
- October 17, 2024 meeting minutes vote for approval
 - Due to quorum not being met, vote was not taken.

Reports of Officers

- Chair: Kira Meskin Schiff

- Chair Meskin Schiff welcomed Wilhelmina “Willie” Gunther as new member and reminded members to complete required annual trainings for voting members by Sept. 25
- Secretary: Jae Jin Pak: No report

Scheduled Presentations

- None

Unfinished Business

Unfinished business is business from a past meeting that was tabled, and a member wants to return it to the floor to be debated and potentially voted on.

- Due to time constraints, Chair Meskin Schiff determined that the following topics will be included in the agenda next meeting:
 - Update from IEMA-OHS regarding Access and Functional Needs Committee’s involvement in the drafting and revision process of Illinois’ Emergency Operations Plan.
 - Reformation of the Subcommittees
 - Formation of the By-Laws Review Ad Hoc Committee
 - Continued discussion/feedback on Committee structure, process, communications, and flow.

New Business

New business is reserved for formal proposals from the floor that are brought forth as a motion that needs to be debated and potentially voted on.

- Executive Committee elections
 - Elections were not held due to not meeting quorum
- Open Meeting Act (OMA) compliance update
 - The committee discussed at length issues and concerns related to the Access and Functional Needs requirement to comply with the OMA while also meeting the reasonable accommodation requests from committee members with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):
 - Kira Meskin Schiff and Jae Jin Pak shared updates on the legislation introduced in Spring 2025 that would exempt the committee from OMA’s mandate to meet in person and allow members to meet via virtual and audio conference. The bill is still in committee.

- The Executive committee also shared advocacy efforts done in collaboration with The Great Lakes ADA Center, such as meeting with IEMA-OHS, Office of the Attorney General, and Governor's Office to further discuss OMA/ADA concerns.
 - Randy Colon shared two concerns and questions that are being looked into by IEMA-OHS for clarification.
 - The State Advisory Body Exemption: Sections 2.01 and reiterated in 7(d) that says: "The requirement that a quorum be physically present at the location of an open meeting shall not apply, however, to State advisory boards or bodies that do not have authority to make binding recommendations or determinations or to take any other substantive action." Based on this language, it appears we'd fall under this exemption and could count remote participants toward quorum since our committee just makes recommendations without any binding authority.
 - Remote Participation for Members with Disabilities: Multiple committee members with disabilities participate remotely. The federal ADA requires equal participation for people with disabilities in public programs. Not counting these members toward quorum seems to create two classes of membership: those whose participation "counts" and those whose don't, even though we're all appointed voting members. Has Illinois determined whether ADA accommodation requirements override the physical presence rules for quorum? Is there any written guidance on this?
 - Members expressed concerns about the lack of a clear determination or clear guidance from the State on how to navigate this situation, and IEMA-OHS will follow up with the State for clarification.
- Set the whole committee meeting schedule for 2025
 - October 30 and early December were discussed as possible meeting dates. The Executive Committee will follow up with a survey to schedule.

Announcements and Good of the Order

Announcements are for the good of the order, such as available webinars, training opportunities, and any other issues individuals want to discuss that do not require a vote.

- Scott Clarke offered to the committee that they can utilize conference spaces at American Red Cross offices located throughout the state to help with logistics related to meeting in-person quorum requirements. Scott also shared that the American Red Cross is seeking more volunteers and asked for assistance with sharing recruitment info.

Public Comment

- Invitation for public comment: No public comment

Adjournment

- Motion: Chris Dodd made motion to adjourn
- Second Wilhelmina Gunther
- Meeting adjourned at 4:35pm

Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: TBD