

Priority Populations Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: August 12, 2025

Location: Clemson Center and virtually via Zoom

Time: 3:00 – 4:00

Attendance

Committee Members:

- Lisa Gillespie
- Pat Pruitt
- Cherri Boller
- Cynthia Sprinkle
- Sandy Jordan

Board Staff:

- Windy Graham

Center Staff:

- William Hunter

Guest Speaker:

- Kimberly Burke, Department of Employment and Workforce

Meeting Overview

The Priority Populations Committee convened to review current workforce development initiatives and discuss strategies to support underserved populations,

including individuals with disabilities, justice-involved individuals, and those with limited English proficiency.

Program Updates

- **Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW):**
Kimberly Burke presented updates on the *Rapid Response* and *Second Chance* programs, which assist displaced workers and individuals nearing release from incarceration. She shared program statistics and emphasized the importance of local engagement with correctional facilities.
- **Ticket to Work Program:**
Kimberly outlined the Social Security Administration's *Ticket to Work* initiative, which supports individuals receiving disability benefits in their transition back to employment. The program allows gradual increases in work hours while maintaining medical benefits and offers benefit reactivation if needed.
- **SCDEW Program Expansion:**
Kimberly reported that the Second Chance program has expanded from one to three case managers in Columbia, with plans to extend services to 24 correctional facilities. She highlighted partnerships with *Term 90* and *Persevere*, and discussed the use of virtual platforms in correctional settings.
- **Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan:**
William Hunter shared updates to the LEP plan, including new interpreter guidelines and customer rights. Six languages have been recorded since May, with repeat clients often requiring multiple waivers. He also introduced a free three-part training module on Workforce GPS for serving individuals with disabilities.
- **Unemployment Data Review:**
Windy Graham presented unemployment statistics for South Carolina, noting increases in 46 counties from May to June. She identified

discrepancies in wage data by race, age, and veteran status, which will be reported to Dr. Grady and the Labor Market Information (LMI) team.

- **Upcoming Events and Policy Concerns:**

Sandy Jordan announced the *Employer Summit* scheduled for October 1st at the Michelin Conference Center in Greenville. William Hunter shared details about a *Trade Skills Job Fair* on August 26th in Anderson, featuring opportunities in healthcare, CDL, IT, and flight certification. The committee also discussed proposed federal changes to accommodation requirements and disability hiring goals, with members encouraged to contact their legislators.

Action Items

- **Windy Graham** to distribute the Workforce GPS training flyer on serving individuals with disabilities.
- **Windy Graham** to report data discrepancies (pages 15–16 of the community profile) to Dr. Grady and the LMI staff.
- **Sandy Jordan** to send out the flyer for the Employer Summit on October 1st.
- **Pat Pruitt** to coordinate with workforce consultants for Ticket to Work referrals in the Oconee area.
- **Committee Members** to:
 - Review the National Council on Disability's concerns regarding proposed changes to construction requirements.
 - Contact legislators regarding disability nondiscrimination and hiring goals.
 - Complete and submit the Conflict of Interest form.
 - Attend the Trade Skills Job Fair on August 26th from 1–3 PM at the Anderson office.

Next Meeting:

Priority Populations Committee

Date: Tuesday, October 14, 2025

Format: Clemson Center or Virtual via Zoom