

Community Health Workers Review Board Meeting

June 27, 2025

2:00 – 4:00pm [HERE](#)

1. Call to Order

- Wandy Hernandez called the meeting to order and acknowledged Dr. Janice Phillips in her absence.
- **CHW Review Board Members Present:** Wandy Hernandez, Lubia Nunez-Montelongo, Esther Sciammarella, David Sanders, Leticia Boughton Price, Ricardo Anderson, Noelle Moore, Kristin Hartsaw, Ashley Colwell, Monica Cuevas, Dr. Shami Goyal, Emma Villarreal, Angela Ellison
- **CHW Review Board Members Absent:** Dr. Janice Phillips, Latoya Greenwood, Rep. Maura Hirschauer, Ofelia Figueroa, Ryan Croke, Ket Herena, Tracey Smith, Kevin Wood, Rep. Camille Lilly
- **IDPH Staff Present:** Sarahjini Nunn, Melissa Stalets, Marcella Kincaid, Lori Weiselberg, Allison Nickrent, Patricia Montalvo, Omayra Giachello, Amy Hall, Monica Dunn
- **Other Guests Present:** Nancy Barriga, Interprenet; Rushini Kuruppu, Darin Barham, Robert Marlow, Kathryn Janet, SIUC; Eugenia Olison; Carol Faben, Nada Qureshi, Andrew Kry, Jonathan Franks, Breakthrough Technologies; Whitney Moore, Pastor Leslie Glover, Live Free Chicago; Charisse Montgomery, Chestnut Health Systems; Maureen Burns, Rachael Telleen, HAP Foundation; Gloria West; Leslie Carnahan, Judith Sayad, Paula Allen-Meares, UIC; Cealisa Johnson, EB York, UChicago Medical; Gabrielle Going, Kayla Rainey, Alliance Care; Stephanie M. Barnett, Southside Healthy Community Organization ; Nacary Arreola, Lupita Solis, Oreletta Garmon, Georgina Menyah, Equal Hope Nurse Navigator; Chris Hodges, T.R.U.S.T.; Deb Adlington, Elisa Heffner, Aaron Miller, Easter Seals; Brittany Cain, Carle Health System; Sharika House, Southside Healthy Community; Gregory Scott; Jessica Mills, Livingston County Health Department; Cotelia Seawood; Adam L. Scheffler; Kayla Rainey, Alliance Care 360

2. Vote to Approve May Board Meeting Minutes

- Emma Villarreal moved to approve the minutes from May 30, 2025 meeting
- David Sanders seconded the motion
- Kristin Hartsaw abstained. Motion passed.

3. Board Process Decisions and Reminders

- Wandy Hernandez reminded Board Members and guests of the mission of the Review Board and protocols for being recognized to speak, public comment period, and Board member attendance.

4. Administrative Rule Review Status

- Lori Weiselberg revisited the process of administrative rule review. The rules will be reviewed by IDPH, then the Governor's office, then the State Board of Health Rules Committee, and finally the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules.
 - **The State Board of Health (SBOH) Rules Committee** will meet on August 14th at 1pm. If the review is delayed, our next opportunity is November 2025. Review Board members are allowed to attend and listen; however, any questions will be directed to IDPH staff.
 - **Joint Committee for Administrative Rules (JCAR)** will open a public comment period, followed by their review.
 - Depending on timing, we may expect the certification program to launch either in quarter 2 or 3 of 2026.
- Lori Weiselberg discussed updates to the administrative rules since the last meeting. Key changes include:
 - **Asynchronous Learning Cap** -- Up to 70% of CHW core training may be asynchronous. A minimum of 30% of the training must be synchronous (live or either virtual or in-person).
 - **Grandparenting /Work Experience Pathway** -- A sunset clause was added. This pathway will sunset after 10 years post launch. There will be no formal education requirement or training program requirement for those who qualify under this pathway.
 - **Training Program Equivalence Pathway** -- For those who qualify for this pathway, 80 hours of supervised work experience may substitute for a formal field experience if applicable.
 - **Criminal Background Checks** - Background checks will be required for applicants who self-disclose a felony conviction or if the Department learns of a felony conviction through another means. Only Class X, 1, and 2 felonies will be reviewed. Legal review will consider several criteria specified in the rules, including, but not limited to the length of time since the conviction and severity of the penalty imposed; whether the conviction involved theft, deception or infliction of intentional, unjustified harm to others; whether there are repeat or multiple convictions or whether the convictions suggest a particular pattern of overall disregard for the safety or property of others.
 - IDPH will cover all background check and fingerprinting costs. Applicants may provide supporting documents related to their character and appeal a denial of certification through a hearing process.
 - Angela Ellison raised concerns about systemic racial disparities and questioned the necessity of IDPH mandated background checks given that employers conduct their own.
 - Ricardo Anderson emphasized clarity in communications, timeframes, and transparency about the process.
 - Leticia Boughton Price expressed continued opposition to the requirement, noting it could unfairly disqualify otherwise qualified CHWs who may not work in settings that require such scrutiny.
 - Esther Sciammarella and Emma Villarreal advocated for an equitable compromise that

ensures CHWs with lived experience are represented.

- Patricia Montalvo and Allison Nickrent clarified that the policy aims to protect the public while ensuring fair treatment and rare denials, based on other health profession benchmarks.

5. Public Comment Period

- Lupita Solis (Equal Hope) advocated for trusting employers to assess risk and hiring suitability; emphasized contributions of undocumented CHWs.
- Vincent Carter (Live Free Illinois) spoke against background checks based on the Illinois Constitution's emphasis on rehabilitation and citizenship; noted CHWs with lived experience are critical to reducing crime and violence.
- Chris Hodges (TRUST) shared personal experience as a CHW with a felony; emphasized barriers and need for representation.
- Whitney Moore (Live Free Illinois) opposed added restrictions on justice-impacted individuals; emphasized CHWs' unique contributions to community healing.
- Maureen Burns (HAP Foundation) provided data and argued against excluding CHWs with felonies, warned of a two-tiered system, and stressed that incarceration is a social determinant of health.

6. Breakthrough Technologies

- Katrina Kasten provided a visual preview of the CHW Certification Program's IT platform.
 - The IT platform will include a website -- public-facing content about CHW and training program certification, user login and applications, FAQs, certified CHW and training program registries, a glossary and resources for employers and the public. The platform is fully bilingual in English and Spanish.
 - The platform includes built-in logic to guide CHW applicants to particular pathway/s based on eligibility. It includes automated and customizable status notifications via email, as well as supervisor recommendation forms.
 - Breakthrough will return at a future meeting to review additional functionality including data reporting.

7. Second Public Comment Period

- Maureen Burns (HAP Foundation) returned to complete her earlier remarks. She warned that many CHWs may not be recognized in traditional job titles (e.g., street outreach worker, violence interrupter) but are still essential CHWs. She stated that background checks disproportionately affect those most connected to the community and create inequity in funding and hiring (e.g., CBOs vs. health systems). She stressed the importance of lived experience in community health work. She dissuaded the Board from structuring certification around a system that does not provide equal opportunity for all.
- Pastor Leslie Glover (Live Free Illinois) identified as a former correctional officer, pastor, and grassroots outreach worker, advocated for removing barriers for formerly incarcerated

individuals. She praised CHWs as essential to preventing violence and providing healing. She amplified opposition to the felony background check provisions.

8. Schedule of Board Meetings and Announcements

- Materials Review Committee: Tuesday, August 19, 3-4:30pm
- Full Board Meetings
 - Friday, August 22, 2-4pm
 - Friday, October 10, 2-4pm
 - Friday, December 12, 2-4pm
- Announcements
 - Sarahjini reminded the Materials Review Committee of the upcoming meeting and stated that the meeting invite had already been sent.

9. Other Business

- None

10. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn was made by Angela Ellison
- Ricardo Anderson second the motion. *Motion passed.*