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MEETING NOTICE
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (IDPH)

Illinois Suicide Prevention Alliance

November 18, 2025

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

****Recording****

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Roll Call
3. Review & approval of August Meeting Minutes
4. ISPA Subcommittee Updates
5. IDPH Updates
6. Update on the [Governor's Challenge: To Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families](#) activities
7. Guest Speaker – Dr. Mark Lawrer & Joel Munson
8. Guest Speaker – Naomi Taylor & Emily Springer
9. Guest Speaker – Sarah Littrell
10. Annual Report
11. Proposal
12. Update on Suicide Related Legislation
13. Partner sharing
 - a. *All - Please share information about your agency's suicide prevention activities*
14. Public Comment

Future FY26 meetings:

Wednesday – February 11, 2026

Thursday – May 14, 2026

PROTECTING HEALTH, IMPROVING LIVES

Nationally Accredited by PHAB

x	1	Chuck Johnson	
E	2	Amber Clark	
	3	Kim Godden	
x	4	Deb Martin	
x	5	Dr. Jack Rein	
x	6	Randyl Wilkins	
x	7	Tracy Levin	
	8	Dawn Steward	
x	9	Janeth Barba	
	10	Donna Nahlik	
	11	Dr. Nabil Abou Baker	
	12	Tandra Rutledge	
	13	Katie Wilson	
	14	Sarina Thate Otyhunwahe DiMaso	
x	15	Ben Hollis	
x	16	Dr Maryann Mason	
x	17	Carrie Worthington	
x	18	Jane McFadden	
	19	Karen Hernandez	

Ex-Officio Members**Agency**

	20	Brian Kieninger	IDPH /Division of Emergency Preparedness and Highway Safety
	21	Dr. Melvin Hinton	Illinois Department of Corrections
x	22	Dr. Erin Alexander	Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
	23	Dr. Alda Leavy- Skinner	Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
x	24	Margo Watson	Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs
x	25	Sarah Littrell	Illinois State Board of Education
x	26	Dr. Monique Anawis	Office of the Attorney General
x	27	Katy Endress	

1. Welcome and Meeting Protocols

- **Facilitator:** Deb Martin
- Deb welcomed attendees and provided a reminder that the ISPA represents diverse members from state agencies, nonprofit sectors, education, public health, and legislative representatives. Due to this diversity, some members may not take public positions on policies.
- It was emphasized that while the Alliance may take collective positions, these do not necessarily represent every member's stance.
- Attendees were informed that the meeting would be recorded solely for note-taking purposes

2. Roll Call and Quorum Confirmation

- **Conducted by:** Katy Endress
- A roll call was taken to confirm attendance.
- A quorum was not established.
- Participants included representatives from state agencies, public health institutions, mental health organizations, schools, and community outreach programs.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- The minutes from the **August 2025** meeting were NOT reviewed due to not having enough for a quorum.
- Plan to approve minutes at the next meeting.

4. ISPA Subcommittee Consolidation

- Decided to consolidate all the subcommittees because they were all headed in the same direction with reserving the right to disconnect them later.

5. School Mandate Subcommittee

- Pull the school mandate subcommittee back out and work with ISBE.

6. IDPH Updates

- **Speaker:** Katy Endress

- We need to fill a co-chair vacancy for ISPA from a state department due to Dr. Glaze's retirement.
- Continued to fund project echo for clinician education as well as the suicide prevention summit.
- CDC comprehensive suicide prevention grant awarded for a subsequent year.
 - Will fund the **Aurora African American Health Coalition** to implement Man Therapy for another year and DeKalb Behavioral Health to continue implementation of the Zero Suicide Framework for an additional year
 - Two NOFOs posted to fund additional strategies
 - Implementation of teaching coping and problem-solving skills for youth. This closed on Friday.
 - Implementing gatekeeper training. This closed on Friday.
- Received award to extend SAMSA grant.
 - Extended the 4 funding opportunities for the grantees that were funded previously under this award.
 - **Alliance Chicago:** They're implementing a project to improve timely referrals for youth suicide prevention.
 - **Douglas County:** Implementing depression screening in school-based health centers.
 - **Dupage High School:** Postvention portal.
 - **Prevention 1st:** Implementing training, and technical assistance to improve suicide prevention for youth.
- IDPH continues to distribute cable gun locks for safe storage of firearms in partnership with the VA.
 - Since June 23, 2023, we've distributed over 243,000 cable locks.
 - 89,000 were distributed so far in 2025.

7. Board Members Update

- 7 members recently appointed or reappointed on October 12th.
 - 5 new members: Ben Hollis, Dr. Maryann Mason, Carrie Worthington, Jane McFadden, and Karen Hernandez.
- 1 application for reappointment has been submitted and is pending director approval
- 7 appointments expired in October are pending reappointment. Those members have been notified by email.
- 9 board positions open. These are for specific designees.
 - 1 representative from a suicide prevention organization.
 - 1 researcher in suicidology.
 - 2 are to be attempt survivors and or consumers of mental health services.
 - 2 are to be first response from the first responder professions.
 - 1 local provider of substance use prevention.

- 1 to be in maternal and postpartum health.
 - 1 to be from a community hospice or a palliative care organization.
- Reminder of the adolescent suicide postvention resources that are available through Dupage High School.

8. Governor's Challenge

- **Speaker:** Chuck Johnson
 - The Governor's Challenge is part of a nationwide initiative to bring state agencies, community providers, and faith-based organizations to develop a statewide suicide prevention strategic plan for the military community.
 - Completed 3 in-person suicide prevention military cultural competency trainings.
 - Promote online psych armor training portal with training modules and CME credit hours.
 - Promoting VAC (Veteran Assistance Commission) they serve as a central service office for veteran organizations.
 - Seeking DHS to appoint a new chairperson to fill Dr. Glaze's spot.
 - Anyone on the committee that has an interest in serving on the committee can contact Chuck.

9. Approval of Annual Report

- **Delivered by:** Katy Endress
 - Currently don't have a quorum so it won't be able to be approved.
 - Was sent via email for review.
 - Postponed for February meeting.

10. Update on Suicide Related Legislation

- **Delivered by:** Deb Martin.

11. State Police

- **Presenter:**
 - **Dr. Mark Lahr** has been a public servant for over 38 years with experience in public safety, higher education, and law enforcement training both as a practitioner and as an instructor. He has provided training at local, state, and federal levels nationally and internationally. He has served as an associate professor at McMurray College where he taught courses on law enforcement and homeland security issues. He currently serves as the firearm restraining order outreach training coordinator for the Illinois State Police.
 - **Joel Munson** is the assistant bureau chief. He is also one of the management administrators. Joel is filling in for Zach Camp, the bureau chief

today. He is coming up on his 20th year of law enforcement. He has worked with the state police since 2018.

- **Overview**
 - Dr. Lahr and Joel share information on the Firearms Restraining Order.
- **Key points**
 - New statewide initiative designed to strengthen public safety and save lives.
 - Goals and Objectives
 - What is a FRO? When should you apply for a FRO? How do you fill out an application for a FRO? What is the court process? How does removing a firearm work? Additional Illinois red flag laws.
 - FOID suspension vs revocation
 - A suspension is temporary disqualification while revocation is permanent.
 - Statute 430 ILCS 67
 - Went into effect January 1, 2019.
 - Established in response to a series of deadly mass shootings and increased rates of suicide across the country.
 - FRO is a civil process
 - This allows family/household members, intimate partners, and law enforcement to be petitioners within the court process.
 - An emergency FRO can last up to 14 days while a Plenary FRO can last up to one year.
- **Questions and Feedback**
 - Chuck Johnson thanks the speakers for all the work they do with FRO in terms of protecting victims.
 - Deb Martin asks for clarification on whether they can take any weapon they may find when a FRO is reported.
 - This was confirmed that it can be any weapon, and it isn't location specific.
 - Ben Hollis asked about what goes on the search warrant.
 - Speakers were unsure what the answer was.
 - Katy Endress asked about a scenario where a FRO was issued to a resident who was roommates to a police officer. Would the police officer have to store his firearm somewhere else for the duration of the FRO?
 - Yes, the firearm would have to be stored somewhere else. If you reside at the residence, you cannot have a firearm if a FRO was issued to someone in the residence.
 - A question was asked how do people renew a FOID card without access to a computer or internet.
 - There are kiosks that are available to the public.

12. Summary of the Suicide Prevention Presentations from Suicide Prevention Month

- **Presenter:**

- **Naomi Taylor** is the rape prevention education coordinator for IDPH. She has a Bachelor of Arts in sociology and has spent over 14 years as a preventionist for a rape crisis center early in her career. She then spent close to 10 years working in various other positions and fields revolving around violence and injury prevention.
- **Emily Springer** is the RISE Intern for the prevention section. She is a grad student at UIC and getting her master's in public health.
- **Overview**
 - **1st session** was held on September 3rd by Emily Inman. She presented on suicidal ideation and how emotional abuse, neglect, family dysfunction, and witnessing verbal violence can increase the risk of suicidal ideation.
 - **2nd session** was held on September 8th by Krista Cornelius. She presented on mental health 101, building awareness, and breaking stigmas. Some key takeaways were focusing on mental health and the prevalence of mental health. She discussed how treatment and recovery is possible with correct treatment.
 - Rafiah Maxie-Cole was the 2nd presenter during the 2nd session. She presented on act now heal together, addressing suicide in Chicago's black communities. She shared her story and lived experience through the loss of her son Jamal and how there is no single cause for suicide. A recommendation was for people to watch the 2024 documentary, While the Children Fade.
 - **3rd session** was led by Erika Barber. She presented on caring communities' guidance for supporting survivors of suicide loss. The five core strategies and focus areas include research, education, public awareness, advocacy, and outreach support. Some of the key takeaways and reminders in her presentation included that all populations are affected by suicide.
 - **4th session** was held on September 18th by Sharie Craddock and Karen Stallman. They presented on the farm family resource initiative and the unique stressors that farm family's experience. A tele counseling program was featured, which is very beneficial for farmers because it reduces transportation challenges and eliminates financial barriers through coverage.
 - **5th session** was held on September 22nd, and the first presenter was Ashley Warren. She shared the guidance on being supportive of mental health and working environment. Some key takeaways were trying to keep your level of stress manageable, engaging in social support and above all remembering to have fun.
 - The 2nd presenter for the 5th session was Anne King. She presented on talk saves lives, supporting our veterans. A few of the key takeaways were understanding that veterans suicide rates are about 50 % higher than the general population.
 - **6th session** was held on September 24th by Deb Martin. She presented talking with teens, what is your perspective. This emphasized education, open

dialogue, and support for teens struggling with mental health and suicide risk. Guest speakers from Pawnee Highschool included a teacher, Ashley and two students. Deb, the teacher, and the students modeled how education, openness, and empowerment can make schools safer and more responsive to youth needs.

- **7th session** was held September 29th, and the first presenters were Robert Hopper and Carl Ploense. They presented on social connectedness and moral injury. Some of the key takeaways that they stressed were the importance for informal low barrier community-based events and regular contact peer support groups for veterans.
- The next presentation was by Walidah Bennett. She presented on from service to belonging community as a lifeline in preventing veteran's suicide. Highlights from her presentation included the importance of linking clinical care with community connection. Stressing the importance of culture and addressing suicide risk, connection to family, peer to peer networks, and community bonds.
- The next presenters were Jim Munroe and Paul Alt. They presented on their tool called Sacra Space, a tool for reflection, connection, and community. This is a virtual healing environment platform to focus on transforming physical healing environments and behavioral health.
- The next presents were Amber Clark and Hannah Jordan. They presented on suicide postvention and how it's a constellation of services that provide organized, immediate and ongoing support following a suicide loss. They discussed the tyranny of hindsight. There was NO way you could have known it would have happened that very day at that precise moment and that you cannot control the thoughts and actions of others. Some reminders on learning to live.
- The final presentation was by Jennifer Prince. She presented warning signs, risk factors, and protective factors. She let us know some of the warning signs, including sleep disturbance, increased isolation, concerning texts post emails, increased anger, increased alcohol use, giving things away, feeling hopeless and helpless.
- If you would like the presentations, you can contact Naomi.R.Taylor@Illinois.gov and she can share these resources.

13. ISBE

- Presenter:
 - **Sarah Littrell** is the supervisor with the wellness and student care department at ISBE overseeing initiatives that support social emotional learning and mental health. She holds a master's degree in education administration and education leadership. Prior to joining ISBE, she spent most of her career as a high school social studies educator and director of library media services.

- **Overview**
 - Universal Mental Health Screening.
- **Key Points**
 - The Universal Mental Health Screening began in February of 2023 with the governor's blueprint for transformation.
 - August 2023 Public Act 103-0885 was made.
 - December 2023 Landscape scan on mental health screening practices and eventually became the law.
 - January 2024, Children's behavioral health transformation initiative.
 - March 2025, School screening readiness report.
 - January 2026, Procurement of screening tool in process.
 - September 2026, UMHS guidance and practices released.
 - The 2027-28 school year is when the screening begins.
 - A mental health screener is a screening tool to help identify symptoms of mental health conditions allowing for early intervention and connection to appropriate services and support for students.
 - PA 104-0032 requires school districts to offer mental health screenings to students enrolled in grades 3 through 12.
 - This screening is only required to take place once per year.
 - This is only in effect if the state has successfully procured a screening tool. The governor's office is procuring a screening tool that offers a self-report option for students.
 - If the state fails to procure a tool before the 2027-28 school year, then the law is moot until the state procures the tool.
 - Additional support and resources for districts and for families are Learning and Resource Hub, BEACON, SPIDER, UMHS Webpage.
- **Questions and Feedback**
 - Naomi Taylor asked how can you present the tool to people to where they'll understand the need and benefits.
 - Sarah responded that you just speak from the heart and speak from your knowledge base, and we want to keep kids safe. The most important reason is we want to keep kids safe. It is not just one kid: it's all the kids.
 - Deb Martin asked can parents opt out of the screen.
 - Yes, parents will be able to opt out and that will be up to the local school districts.
 - Can a student make the screen up if they are absent on the screener date?
 - This will be up to the local school policy.
 - Who will be evaluating the results?
 - The school implementation team. This will be worked out at the district level.
 - Is this an online screener or a paper and pen?
 - This has yet to be decided. ISBE is not responsible for procuring the tool, so I can't answer that question.

14. Public Comment & Closing:

Deb Martin expressed appreciation to all presenters and participants for their time and contributions.

Partner & agency updates shared during public comment:

- Topaz Lavi, Two QPR Sessions – December 2025 & January 2026. Webinar- February 2026: Partnering with Rob Hopper
- Maryann Mason, Illinois Violent Death Reporting System just release a data brief on veteran overdose deaths.
- Chuck Johnson, Adams County Suicide Prevention Coalition. During the month of September, they had a month-long radio and tv program with WGEM for suicide awareness. From October-December they will be doing media advertisements on streaming TV, YouTube, and the internet. Planning for a 2026 adolescent suicide prevention program for the community. We're going to have an evening virtual seminar for parents and others in the community on adolescent suicide. With regards to community outreach, Blessing hospital agreed to fund our 3rd bus ramp for the Quincy transit system. So, we now have three buses going through Quincy with a suicide prevention sponsorship on them.
- Beth Morrison, International Survivors of Suicide Loss Event. LGBT and ally survivor day-November 19th. In person events for suicide survivors-November 22nd. Statewide virtual event-November 23rd.
- Tracy Levine, Annual Community Mental Health conference – May 16th in Evanston. This will be live steamed for those who can't attend in person.

15. Subcommittee Updates

Delivered by: Kyra Vandoren

- **Public Awareness Subcommittee**
 - Updated some of the resources that are available on the IDPH website for suicide prevention.
 - More recently have been around college students and a one pager for parents.

Slides from presenters will be made available after the meeting minutes are approved. Attendees can also contact presenters directly for earlier access.

16.Upcoming Meeting Dates

- Wednesday, February 11, 2026
- Thursday, May 14, 2026

17. Conclusion

- Deb Martin dismissed everyone.