

Advisory Task Force on Waiver Reimagine: DRAFT Charter

About this charter

- Date approved: (Insert date)
- Next scheduled review date: (Insert date)
- Review cycle: The charter will be reviewed every two years or upon the joint request of the co-chairs or two-thirds of task force members.

Task force overview

Purpose

The Advisory Task Force on Waiver Reimagine will provide recommendations on Minnesota's Waiver Reimagine initiative — a significant reform of the state's disability waiver system. It is meant to guide and improve the process of transforming existing waiver programs for people with disabilities, while considering and integrating the needs of all interested parties.

Specifically, the task force is intended to support the development of:

- Disability waiver services that reflect the needs and preferences of people receiving them.
- Waiver structures that promote equity, flexibility and independence.
- A system that helps people live in the most integrated settings possible, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Minnesota's Olmstead Plan.

The task force will make findings and recommendations related to Waiver Reimagine to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over disability waiver services.

Background

Waiver Reimagine is the name of ongoing work by the Department of Human Services (DHS) to make system-level improvements to Minnesota's four disability waiver programs. This project is intended to provide equitable access and funding across waiver programs and increase choice and control for people receiving services in planning services and supports. It represents a significant reform of the state's existing disability waiver system. In 2025, the state Legislature established the Advisory Task Force on Waiver Reimagine to provide recommendations on Minnesota's Waiver Reimagine initiative.

Waiver Reimagine phases

- Phase one: The first phase mandated the streamlining and simplification of the service menu. Implementation of the first phase was completed on Dec. 31, 2021. Completion of Phase 1 prepared the system for the transition to a new waiver structure.
- Phase two: The second phase that marks the go-live of the two-waiver structure and individualized budgets on or by Jan. 1, 2027, and the go-live of the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Portal on or by July 1, 2026.
- Beyond Jan. 1, 2027: Continuous improvement to expand and strengthen self-direction, simplify systems, ensure reliability and expand tools and resources to build capacity. DHS will collaborate with the task force and other interested parties to integrate feedback on how the system could be improved. It will partner with Minnesota IT Services (MNIT) to address technical issues discovered during the go-live in year 2027. And it will reevaluate further system improvements needed.

Jurisdiction

Different areas of government have jurisdiction over Waiver Reimagine:

Governor's office

- Provides executive leadership and policy direction for state agencies, including DHS.
- Oversees the state budget process and signs omnibus bills passed by the Legislature, which establish or modify functions such as Waiver Reimagine.
- Works in coordination with DHS and the Legislature in setting budget and policy priorities.

Minnesota Legislature

- Enacts the laws that authorize Waiver Reimagine's phases, creates advisory task forces, sets statutory deadlines and reporting requirements (e.g., consolidation of waiver programs, individual budgets).
- Controls appropriations (funding) and statutes that define what DHS must or may do under Waiver Reimagine.

Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)

- Implements the Waiver Reimagine initiative: designs policy and procedure for the waiver system, recommends changes and has decision-making authority over some system elements.
- Submits required reports and federal waiver applications to CMS (via the governor/executive branch) for federal approval.
- Supports engagement of interested parties, convenes advisory bodies, provides research/data and executes changes on the ground.

Federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

- Approves state waiver amendments under the home- and community-based services (HCBS) 1915(c) waiver authority and related federal rules.
- Serves as the federal "gatekeeper," ensuring changes comply with HCBS rules (settings, person-centered planning, monitoring), which influences how DHS designs the reforms.

Relevant statutes or authorities

The task force is established under [2025 Laws of Minnesota, 1st Special Session, Chapter 9, Article 2, Section 29 \[256B.4907\]](#). Enabled June 14, 2025.

Outcomes and deliverables

Desired outcomes

The overarching objective of the Task Force is to advise the Minnesota Legislature and the Department of Human Services on Waiver Reimagine and to provide recommendations that support the development of an effective, efficient, equitable and empowering disability waiver system for people, families and Minnesota.

Deliverables

The task force shall submit a report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over disability waiver services no later than Jan. 15, 2027, that describes any concerns and recommendations related to Waiver Reimagine as identified by the task force.

Findings and recommendations will address areas, as defined in statute, including:

- Program structure
- Service budgets
- Rate and budget exceptions
- Assessment tools
- Covered services
- Service planning and authorization
- Integrated living supports
- Impact evaluation
- Other questions or issues, if they emerge.

Timeline and schedule

- The task force will convene by Nov. 30, 2025.
- Quarterly meetings are required, but monthly meetings are recommended to allow for adequate work time.
- The task force will establish a regular meeting schedule. Any schedule changes will be communicated as promptly as possible.
- The time commitment for the task force includes attending task force meetings, reviewing materials, responding to emails between meetings and potentially participating in working groups.
- The task force does not expire.

Workplan

The task force may develop one or more workplans to help organize their agendas, tasks and deliverables.

Participants

Task force members

Membership, as defined in statute, includes state legislators, people living with disabilities, family members, service providers, advocacy organizations and state agency representatives. Ten appointments are made by the governor and 11 by authorizing agencies. Representation from greater Minnesota is required. A link to current members can be found on the [Boards and Commissions page of the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State](#).

Note: While tribal nations were not called out in the legislation enacting this task force, we highly recommended that feedback and representation is sought from tribal nations by/on this task force.

Task force member terms

Task force members serve four-year, staggered terms.

Quorum

A quorum will be required to make decisions. A quorum is defined as at least 50 percent of seated members plus one member. Task force work may proceed without a quorum, but decisions cannot be made.

Alternates

Task force members may not delegate their responsibilities or appoint someone as a formal alternate to their seat. However, in the event that a task force member cannot attend a meeting, they are encouraged to send a colleague or representative to provide information and listen on the participants' behalf.

Working groups of the task force

The task force might decide to convene working groups composed of less than a quorum of task force members to review information, generate ideas or develop draft proposals. Working groups will not have decision-making authority and any outcomes of their discussions will come to the full task force for review, deliberation and decision making.

Staff and facilitation

Staff and facilitation support for the task force includes:

- Lead facilitator - Frances (Fran) Van Houten, RainMaker Coaching (franv@rainmakercoaching.com, 307-690-1528)
- Facilitation support – Katie Pratt, Minnesota Office of Collaboration and Dispute Resolution, (katie.pratt@state.mn.us, 651-350-2593)
- Lead project manager – Adrienne Hannert, DHS (Adrienne.J.Hannert@state.mn.us, 651-431-4023)
- Documentation - Elian Sorensen, Public Consulting Group.

Roles and responsibilities

Role of co-chairs

The task force will select two co-chairs to support the work of the body. At least one chair should have direct experience with the waiver program as a recipient or family member. Task force co-chairs will serve one-year terms, with the opportunity to renew.

Task force co-chairs will:

- Collaborate with facilitator and DHS staff to define meeting desired outcomes.
- Meet with facilitator and DHS staff to reflect on past meetings and prepare for upcoming meetings.
- Support the facilitator in enabling respectful and constructive dialogues.
- Provide leadership by maintaining a forward-focused, solution-oriented mindset.
- Support collaborative problem-solving among task force members, helping the group develop ideas and recommendations that meet multiple needs.

Role of task force members:

Task force members will:

- Commit to the purpose of the task force.
- Attend all meetings, to the degree your schedule allows.
- Alert staff to your schedule availability or any changes to your availability.
- Come prepared to meetings, including reviewing documents and completing pre-meeting assignments.

- Strive to:
 - Listen to learn, balancing inquiry and advocacy.
 - Help bridge gaps in understanding.
 - Clearly articulate your views.
 - Ask questions to help build your own understanding.
 - Consider underlying needs and interests of all participants and stakeholder groups.
 - Seek creative resolution of differences which integrate the needs of all parties.

Role of the facilitator

The facilitator will:

- Develop the task force approach with input from task force members.
- Develop the agenda for all meetings.
- Facilitate all meetings.
- Provide support for subcommittees of the task force.
- Meet with any task force members to address concerns or problem solve.
- Monitor progress towards agreed upon deliverables.
- Identify and synthesize points of agreement and disagreement and communicate these either during meetings or via meeting summaries.
- Advocate for a fair, effective and credible process, but remain impartial with respect to the outcome of the group's work.
- Monitor compliance with the processes described in this document.

Role of staff

Staff from the Department of Human Services will:

- Support meeting logistics, including meeting scheduling and calendar appointments.
- Maintain the task force website and necessary materials.
- Help locate requested information.
- Other duties as needed.

Decision making

The waiver reimagine task force is advisory in nature. It is charged with providing findings and recommendations to the Legislature. In generating recommendations, the task force will use the following principles:

- The group will strive to operate by consensus. Participants will build consensus by integrating the perspectives and the interests of all participants.
- Consensus does not require complete unanimity but involves collaborating on decisions people can live with, even if it is not their first choice.
- Where the process generates a consensus, participants agree to support the recommendation and not actively work against it.
- If consensus cannot be reached, the facilitator can suggest a vote by simple majority. In cases where a consensus is not reached, the minority perspectives will be noted in service to the Legislature and Department of Human Services.

In addition to building consensus on recommendations, the task force must work as a group to make decisions about their group and administrative processes – how they will work together toward deliverables. The facilitator will guide decision making on administrative issues using majority vote, consensus or other methodologies.

Documentation and resources

Documentation of meetings

Staff from the Public Consulting Group will act as scribes for task force meetings and will assist with generating the task force report. Meeting minutes will be posted on the [Advisory Task Force on Waiver Reimagine webpage](#).

Background documents and resources

The task force will strive to review background materials to the degree needed to build shared understanding and inform task force deliberations. When deciding whether to or not to investigate background resources or data, the task force will use the following methodology:

1. Start with the question | What question are we trying to answer?
2. Clarify how data will help | What do we need from the data?
3. Test whether additional data is actually needed | How will the data help us? Do we really need more data to move forward? What would we do if we didn't have the data?
4. Identify the best-fit source | Choose sources based on fit, credibility and timeliness.
5. Use data to move the work forward | What does this clarify? What questions does it raise? How does it inform our next steps?

Background materials about Waiver Reimagine can be found on the [Waiver Reimagine webpage](#).

Engagement opportunities

The voices of concerned and affected groups, beyond those seated on the task force, may be considered by the task force through several mechanisms as needed including:

- Reviewing past or concurrent input from interested parties by DHS or legislative committees.
- Input gathered by task force members outside of meetings from their community or network to inform task force deliberation on specific topics.
- Task force members may decide to hold listening sessions or collect written comment.

Internal and external communication agreements and norms

To facilitate an open and collaborative discussion, participants agree to:

- Share your interests and concerns; don't just restate positions.
- Listen when others are speaking rather than plan a rebuttal.
- Don't make assumptions. Ask questions.
- Be mindful of how long you speak for the purpose of ensuring that all voices are heard.
- Give each other the benefit of the doubt.
- Look for areas of common interest.

Participants may have private conversations with the facilitator(s) upon request.

Media and social media

In any media or social media statements, task force members agree to clarify that they speak on behalf of themselves and not for the task force as whole unless their statements have been discussed and agreed upon by the task force as a whole.

Open meeting law and data practices act

This task force is subject to Minnesota Open Meeting Law, [Minn. Stat., chapter 13D](#). This means that the public and media may attend meetings of the task force, notice of task force meetings must be provided to the public, and documents used at meetings must be available to the public. DHS will provide notice of meetings and post meeting materials on the [Advisory Task Force on Waiver Reimagine Webpage](#). For more information about Open Meeting Law, see the [Data Practices Office](#) at the Department of Administration.

This task force is also subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, [Minn. Stat., chapter 13](#). Things such as emails, notes, computer records or saved phone messages related to the work of the task force are considered government data and are subject to the requirements of this law. If there is a data request for information you might have, DHS will work with you to provide that data. For more information about the Data Practices Act, see the [Data Practices Office](#) at the Department of Administration.

Compensation

Members of the task force may receive compensation and expense reimbursement as provided in [Minn. Stat. §15.059, subd. 3](#).

Adoption

This charter is adopted by the Advisory Task Force on Waiver Reimagine effective upon approval by the members.