



MA LGBTQ Aging Commission

Quarterly Meeting

March 11, 2025

Minutes

Commissioners Present: Sen. Pat Jehlen, Rep. Samantha Montaño, Bill Bogdanovich, Sean Cahill, Barry Callis, Kara Cohen, Josie Dutil, Chris Erchull, Paul Glass, Lisa Krinsky, Michelle LaPointe, Margaux LeClair, Tanya Neslusan, Lynn Vidler, Julie Watt Faqir

Commissioners Absent: Lenny Alberts, Jordina Shanks

Guests: Alex Bergson, Trevor Boeding, Tiffany Chen, Anna Finley, Sarah Gentner, Vicki Halal, James Lomastro, Liisa Randall, Carlos Rios, Gretchen Van Ness, Debra Winters

Welcome and Introductions:

- Welcome to Rep. Montaño – new co-chair of Commission
- Thank you to Rep. Lipper Garabedian – former co-chair of Commission
- Welcome to Kara Cohen – new AARP representative

Review of Past Minutes:

Sen. Jehlen motions to approve minutes, Barry Callis seconds, Rep. Montaño and Kara Cohen abstain. All other Commissioners vote to approve.

Strategic Plan Review:

- Reviewed nine priority areas of Commission's 2025 strategic plan:
 - Infrastructure for Commission
 - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) lens for all Commission work
 - Public Visibility and Advancement of Commission
 - Statewide Needs Assessment of LGBTQ Older Adults
 - Social Support and Community Engagement for LGBTQ Older Adults

- Affirming and Accessible Healthcare for LGBTQ Older Adults
- Safe and Affordable Housing for LGBTQ Older Adults
- Policy and Advocacy for LGBTQ Older Adults
- LGBTQ Cultural Competency Training
- Key need to hire a full-time Director of the Commission to execute operations
- Request for final edit: Executive Office of Aging & Independence acronym is AGE

All Commissioners approved 2025 Strategic Plan, Josie Dutil absent from vote.

- Next step is implementation of action items via a work plan
 - Develop a website, Commission email address, build infrastructure and DEI lens

Policy Update:

- Federal policy updates that impact older adults and LGBTQ community:
 - Several anti-transgender executive orders –
 - Access to healthcare for those under the age of 18
 - Prohibits the promotion of “gender ideology”
 - Rescinded Biden-era sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) executive order
 - Administration for Community Living (ACL) previously included LGBTQ populations and those living with HIV under the federal Older Americans Act – included LGBTQ older adults in data reporting and research.
 - Research studies related to LGBTQ community and those living with HIV have had funding canceled and forced to end studies suddenly
 - Executive orders and actions pulling data explicitly go against multiple federal laws and policies
 - PEPFAR program funding has been greatly reduced which put millions of lives worldwide at risk
 - During implementation phase of these executive orders, opposition can slow down the policy process and fight against the federal implementation

- Threats to Medicaid and Medicare impact older adults
 - Fear, anxiety, and confusion amongst transgender older adults
- Proposal from researchers for state proposition to fund LGBTQ and HIV research studies at a state level
- AGE updates on state policy:
 - Regular checkpoints to understand state-level impacts of executive orders and federal policy changes
 - AmeriCorps programs using DEI language flagged and made to attest that work is not in opposition to executive orders
- EOHLC updates on state policy:
 - State protections of DEI and accessible housing in conflict with federal funding policies and executive orders, such as the federal Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- MA Dept. of Health (DPH) updates:
 - Co-ordinated approach to continuing health equity work and services
 - Possible changes to data submitted to federal agencies
- Questions about MA LGBTQI Bill of Rights implementation during executive orders

Care that Fits You – DPH 50+ campaign:

MORE Advertising update on 50+ Self-care campaign: Care That Fits You (CTFY)

- Sexual health information and services education for gay, bisexual, and men who have sex with men (MSM) based on Commission’s feedback from last year
- Expanded MSM audience to 50+ - normalize sexual health for older adults
- CareThatFitsYou.org - main resource for sexual health information and services
- Showed examples of ads used for print media, social media, dating sites, pedi-cabs, and bars and restaurants
- Estimated 13 million total impressions (times it was seen), 51,000 clicks to website with 18,000 website visitors
- Dating apps drove the most engaged users to the website
- Moving forward: research to broaden target audience for transgender men and gender expansive individuals as well as multigenerational campaign

Open Meeting/Discussion:

- Executive Office of Elder Affairs has changed to Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE) following community focus groups feedback to clarify purpose and increase access. Their new acronym is AGE.
 - Rebranding to address ageism and use community language
- FY '26 state budget: Submitting increased budget request to hire a full-time Director for Commission to implement new strategic plan.
- AARP webinar in May to discuss how Massachusetts is an age-friendly state, particularly for LGBTQ older adult populations
- GLAD wants to know about specific long-term care providers and service providers being targeted by federal policies and executive orders
- Free event at the Pryde Community Center in Hyde Park (Pryde LGBTQ Senior Housing)
 - Community Lunch and Learn about St. Patrick's Day Parade LGBTQ litigation on March 17

Close and next meeting: Tuesday, June 10, 2025

2025 schedule for Quarterly Commission Meetings

2nd Tuesday of the month 11am -1pm on Zoom

June 10, September 9, December 9