

Governor's Council on Women and Girls - Full Council Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

In-Person: LOB, 300 Capitol Ave, Room 1E, Hartford, CT

Tuesday July 1, 2025 at 3:00pm

Video Available Here via YouTube: [Click to Watch](#)

I. Welcome & Opening Remarks

The Lt. Governor called the meeting to order at 3:00pm, welcomed new members, and introduced Mariana Monteiro, Connecticut Chief Opportunity Officer. Vice Chair, DCF Commissioner Jodi Hill-Lilly also issued welcoming remarks.

II. Presentation: 'State Agencies Opportunity Plans', Mariana Monteiro, CT Chief Opportunity Officer

In 2024 an executive order by Governor Lamont mandated the creation of the Opportunity Office. Mariana Monteiro was named the state's first Chief Equity and Opportunity Officer and presented on the mission and process of the office.

There are three main components of the office:

1. Support state agencies and departments in creating "Opportunity Plans"
2. Assess policies, practices and procedures for fairness
3. Develop and implement statewide training

Monteiro described the current environment at the federal level using the military term "VUCA", which stands for Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity.

The process for addressing the priorities of the executive order through the Opportunity Office involves consulting with various stakeholders, including the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Commissioners, as well as continuously monitoring the federal landscape, particularly executive orders, to ensure responsiveness and standardization across the state.

The State of Connecticut is: 1) an employer; 2) a service provider, and 3) a growth partner. Across all three of these pillars, inclusivity and diversity are necessary to hire and retain the best people for Connecticut. Monteiro identified three principles important to Connecticut as a service provider: access to opportunity, affordability, and accountability.

Monteiro also discussed a strategic approach to state agency operations, emphasizing the need for a balanced response that is both pragmatic and forward-thinking. She highlighted that all agencies have submitted their plans, achieving 100% fulfillment, which is a significant accomplishment. The focus is on fostering strategic shifts while maintaining core objectives,

with an emphasis on measuring outcomes and embracing flexibility in Agency Opportunity Plans in order to find balance between the status quo and deferring to federal mandates in order to maintain funding.

III. Subcommittee Reports

- a. Health and Safety
 - i. Elisa Neira of the Office of Health Strategy (OHS) provided update that the Health and Safety Subcommittee is working to improve doula, prenatal and post-partum programs to women at York Correctional Facility
 - ii. 2nd Health and Safety subcommittee meeting of the year focused on 1) OEC's Early Childhood Education Endowment Fund and what plans exist to increase access to childcare for working families and 2) Family Bridge program that offers nurse visits to new moms in Bridgeport
- b. Leadership
 - i. Lt. Governor provided update that the Leadership Subcommittee recently hosted a panel at the CT Department of Transportation: "Women in Transportation" with women from different backgrounds in the transportation sector including engineering, technology, and aviation
 - ii. Subcommittee looks for future opportunities to highlight women leaders in underrepresented areas
- c. Education and STEAM
 - i. Paul Lavoie, tri-chair of Education and STEAM subcommittee, is leaving state service as of July 24th for a position at University of New Haven as the inaugural Vice President of Innovation and Applied Technologies

IV. Announcements

- a. **Upcoming Full Council Meetings:**
 - i. October 14th, 2025, 3:00pm in LOB, 300 Capitol Ave, Room 1E, Hartford, CT
- b. **Upcoming Subcommittee Meetings:**
 - i. Leadership Meeting: July 8th, 2025, 3:00pm on Microsoft TEAMS
 - ii. Economic Opportunity and Workforce Equity Meeting: August 12th, 2025, 3:00pm on Microsoft TEAMS
 - iii. Education and STEAM Meeting: August 26th, 2025, 3:00pm on Microsoft TEAMS
 - iv. Health and Safety Meeting: September 2nd, 2025, 10:00am on Microsoft TEAMS

V. Adjournment

The Lt. Governor ended the meeting at 3:58pm.