

**MINUTES
of the
FIRST MEETING
of the
LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**July 31, 2020
Video Conference Meeting**

The first meeting of the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee was called to order by Representative Deborah A. Armstrong, vice chair, on July 31, 2020 at 9:07 a.m. by video and audio conference via an online platform.

Present

Sen. Gerald Ortiz y Pino, Chair
Rep. Deborah A. Armstrong, Vice Chair
Rep. Gail Armstrong
Rep. Joanne J. Ferrary
Sen. Bill B. O'Neill

Absent

Sen. Gregg Fulfer
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson
Sen. Cliff R. Pirtle

Advisory Members

Rep. Karen C. Bash
Rep. Rachel A. Black
Rep. Micaela Lara Cadena
Rep. Rebecca Dow
Rep. Miguel P. Garcia
Sen. Linda M. Lopez
Sen. Michael Padilla
Sen. Mary Kay Papen
Sen. Nancy Rodriguez
Rep. Andrea Romero
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero
Sen. Antoinette Sedillo Lopez
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics
Rep. Elizabeth "Liz" Thomson
Rep. Christine Trujillo

Rep. Phelps Anderson
Rep. Zachary J. Cook
Rep. Doreen Y. Gallegos
Rep. Dayan Hochman-Vigil
Sen. Gay G. Kernan
Rep. Rodolpho "Rudy" S. Martinez
Sen. Mark Moores
Rep. Gregg Schmedes
Sen. William P. Soules
Sen. Bill Tallman

Staff

Andrea Lazarow, Bill Drafter, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Sabina Gaynor, Bill Drafter, LCS
Nancy Martinez, Research Assistant, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

Friday, July 31

COVID-19: Statewide Responses and Administration of Services (9:16 a.m.)

Dr. David R. Scrase, secretary, Human Services Department (HSD); Alex Castillo Smith, manager, Strategic Planning and Special Projects, Office of the Secretary, HSD; Kathyleen Kunkel, secretary, Department of Health (DOH); Dr. Chad Smelser, deputy state epidemiologist, DOH; James C. Kenney, secretary, Department of Environment; and Brian Blalock, secretary, Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), provided the committee with presentations on COVID-19 relief measures implemented by their respective agencies. The presentations can be found here:

DOH:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/LHHS%20073120%20Item%201%20NMDOH%20COVID-19%20Update.pdf>.

Department of Environment:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/LHHS%20073120%20Item%201%20NMED%20COVID%20Activities.pdf>.

HSD:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/LHHS%20073120%20Item%201%20HSD%20Covid-19%20Response.pdf>.

CYFD:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/LHHS%20073120%20Item%201%20CYFD%20Covid%20Response.pdf>.

Comments from committee members included the following:

- contact tracing should be tied to state agencies and subject matter experts;
- an inquiry about testing supply shortages;
- whether face shields should be used in addition to face masks;
- fear that immigration status would prevent the public from being tested for COVID-19;
- the likelihood of rationing care in treating COVID-19;
- the DOH should intervene when businesses fail to comply with mandatory health orders;
- in smaller communities across the state, residents are still gathering in groups and not practicing social distancing;
- dissemination of misinformation needs to be addressed;
- New Mexicans are receiving bills for testing, but they should not;

- it is important for public health administration offices to prepare for the availability of a COVID-19 vaccine; and
- increasing state COVID-19 relief efforts in rural New Mexico communities, specifically Native American pueblos.

Public Comment (12:35 p.m.)

Comments from members of the public included concerns about the following:

- health care workforce development;
- access to health care in rural communities and rural practitioner residency;
- access to timely data;
- addiction and mental health services;
- expanding the role of primary care practitioners;
- the experiences of people of color with respect to COVID-19; and
- legalizing recreational cannabis and access to medical cannabis in schools.

HSD Program and Service Delivery: Opportunities to Improve Performance During COVID-19 (1:34 p.m.)

Dr. Scrase; Angela Medrano, deputy secretary, HSD; and Kari Armijo, deputy secretary, HSD, provided the committee with a presentation on practices that the HSD has implemented in response to COVID-19. The presentation can be found here:

[https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/LHHS%20073120%20Item%202%20HSD%202020_07_31%20FINAL%20FINAL_REVISED_KLA%20\(002\)Revised%20AM_v2.pdf](https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/LHHS%20073120%20Item%202%20HSD%202020_07_31%20FINAL%20FINAL_REVISED_KLA%20(002)Revised%20AM_v2.pdf)

A committee member asked about the number of HSD employees who have tested positive for COVID-19.

Work Plan and Meeting Schedule (2:58 p.m.)

Ms. Lazarow presented the proposed work plan and meeting schedule for the 2020 interim of the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee. The proposed work plan can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/LHHS%20073120%20Item%203%20workplan.pdf>

Comments from committee members regarding topics that they would like included in the work plan included the following:

- the Vocational Rehabilitation Division of the Public Education Department should be included in the late September meeting date topic addressing professional licensure;
- a COVID-19 vaccine should be included in the topic of prescription drug costs;
- oversight of boarding homes;
- dentistry for patients with special needs at the University of New Mexico;
- sex education and affirmative consent instruction for seventh graders;

- the impact of COVID-19 on essential workers, especially Latinos, through organizations such as New Mexico Voices for Children, Organizers in the Land of Enchantment, El Centro Family Health, SOMOS and NM CAFé;
- the Long-Acting Reversible Contraception Mentorship Program in the context of COVID-19;
- the Cerebral Palsy Task Force;
- the Crown Act;
- reporting required by legislation that was not heard during the last interim;
- midwives and the utility of midwife practices in rural areas;
- rehabilitation from COVID-19;
- streamlining and simplifying the licensing process for behavioral health professionals, including reciprocity agreements with other states;
- amending statutes to create penalties for state employees who disclose patient information;
- human trafficking;
- the Physical Therapy Act and the national compact;
- report from the New Mexico Nurses Association about the implementation of the Safe Harbor for Nurses Act;
- revisions to the Patient Protection Act;
- funding for the New Mexico Poison and Drug Information Center and Office of the Medical Investigator; and
- reporting required by statute regarding access to dental care; the health care workforce working group; and the DOH's Harm Reduction Program.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.