

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

Insurance Diversity Initiative

300 Capitol Mall, Suite 1700 - Sacramento, CA 95814

[www.insurance.ca.gov/diversity](http://www.insurance.ca.gov/diversity)



## Insurance Diversity Task Force 4th Quarterly Meeting Minutes

### Date & Time:

December 4, 2024

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. PST

### Location:

California Department of Insurance

300 S. Spring Street

South Tower – Room 90001

Los Angeles, CA 90013

### I. Task Force Meeting Call to Order

- a) Roll Call – Conducted by California Department of Insurance (CDI) Staff – Shannon McCollum
  - a. Absent: Tommy Smith, Imelda Alejandrino, Vikita Poindexter (Vice Chair)
  - b. In attendance virtually: Cecil Plummer, Rebecca Aguilera-Gardner, Fabiola Cobarrubias
- b) Establishment of Quorum – Quorum Established

### II. Public Comment for Items Not on Agenda

No public comments received.

### III. Meeting Minutes Review & Approval

Approval of minutes from the 3rd Quarterly Meeting were postponed until the next meeting.

### IV. Introductions

Task Force: Mark Morales (Chair), Linda Akutagawa, Alycia Anderson, Annalisa Barrett, Kelly Huang, Pradip Khemani, Jose Plascencia, Marquita Thomas

CDI Staff: Michael Martinez (Chief Deputy Commissioner), Chandara Phanachone (Chief, Office of Insurance Diversity & Innovation (OIDI)), An Kim (Manager, Insurance Diversity Program), Shannon McCollum (Manager, Insurance Diversity Program), Stesha Hodges (Assistant Chief Counsel, Health Equity & Access Office), Julia Juarez (Deputy Commissioner, Community Relations & Outreach), Claudia Mildner (Assistant Chief Deputy Legislative Director), Maxine English (Strategic Planning Manager)

Public: Danetta Jackson, (Chief, Statewide Supplier Diversity Program – California Department of General Services (DGS))

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[www.insurance.ca.gov/diversity](http://www.insurance.ca.gov/diversity)**V. Department Remarks** Held until 10:45 AM PST**VI. Policy & Legislation Updates**

Claudia Mildner, Assistant Chief Deputy Legislative Director (CDI)

- 2024 Legislative session wrapped at the end of September and the new session has started with a lot of action.
- There were four non-sponsored bills related to diversity and inclusion that CDI sent letters of support. Four bills passed the legislature, but three were vetoed.
- Senate Bill 957 by Senator Scott Weiner was signed into law. It focuses on improving demographic collection by the California Department of Public Health, specifically requiring them to include voluntary self-identification information regarding sexual orientation, gender identity and variations on sexual characteristics. This was in response to a state audit that highlighted gaps in their demographic data collection.
- It's too early in the 2025 Legislative Session to identify bills we want to support, but we are seeing early bills proposed on major topics like immigration, social housing, race and gender issues that could potentially be of interest to this Task Force in the future.

Stesha Hodges, Assistant Chief Counsel, Health Equity & Access Office (CDI)

- Guidance on [SB 923](#) (Transgender, gender diverse, or intersex (TGI) Inclusive Care Act):  
In September, CDI issued guidance on SB 923, authored by Senator Wiener, requiring trans-inclusive, evidence-based cultural competency training for staff interacting with transgender, gender diverse, or intersex (TGI) individuals. The guidance outlines training content, timelines, compliance deadlines for insurers, and reminders on network adequacy, anti-discrimination, and privacy requirements. Full details are available on our website: [www.insurance.ca.gov](http://www.insurance.ca.gov).
- **Updates on CDI Co-Sponsored Bills:**
  - **AB 2258 (Zbur):**  
Authored by Assemblymember Rick Zbur and co-sponsored by CDI alongside health organizations, this bill codifies federal guidance on preventive care services into state law, effective January 1. It ensures Californians won't face costs for integral services like anesthesia and polyp removal during cancer screenings, aligning state law with existing federal standards.
  - **SB 729 (Menjivar):**  
Authored by Senator Caroline Menjivar and co-sponsored by CDI and reproductive health organizations, this bill updates infertility coverage requirements, including IVF, effective July 1, 2025 (or July 1, 2026, per the Governor's request). It redefines infertility to include LGBTQ+ and single individuals, ensuring equitable access to family-building treatments. Implementation dates are staggered to allow cost and benefit evaluations within the essential health benefits package.

Chandara Phanachone, Chief, Office of Insurance Diversity & Innovation (OIDI):

- The California Insurance Diversity Survey (CAIDS) is a biennial, statutorily-codified survey administered by the California Department of Insurance, requiring insurance

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companies collecting over \$75 million in premiums within California to report on their board diversity and supplier diversity efforts. This year's survey, administered starting April 11, had an initial deadline of July 1, with statutory extensions until July 31. The survey achieved 100% compliance from all companies that were required to report, representing 92% of California's insurance market share.

- [The CAIDS portal](#) serves as a vital tool to understand the level of diversity in boardrooms and supplier procurement, promoting transparency and accountability in the insurance sector. [A new CAIDS Portal Fact Sheet](#) was created to increase accessibility of past data for both consumers and companies.
- **Highlights:**
  - *Survey Participation:* Increased by 12% compared to 2022, with over 350 companies reporting.
  - *Board Diversity:* Over 25% of insurance board members self-identified as women, a critical milestone since CAIDS' inception, with gender parity projected in 30 years.
  - *Policy Impact:* Public policies sponsored by Commissioner Lara's administration have driven progress in board-level diversity within California's insurance industry.
- **Discussion Points:**
  - Chair Mark Morales emphasized the importance of correlating board diversity data with company financial performance to demonstrate tangible benefits.
  - Claudia Mildner (CDI) outlined upcoming policy changes aimed at supporting small and diverse businesses, including extended deadlines for reporting and streamlined processes for state contracts.

## V. Department Welcome Remarks

Michael Martinez, Chief Deputy Commissioner (CDI)

- The Department's commitment to equity initiatives continues, highlighted by Commissioner Lara's formal establishment of the Office of Insurance Diversity and Innovation (Office) and the appointment of Chandara Phanachone as its inaugural Chief. This marks a significant and long-overdue step in emphasizing the importance of insurance diversity work and making the program permanent, along with the new Insurance Innovation Program under this Office.
- The creation of this new Office represents a pivotal chapter for the Department of Insurance, aligning with its mission to protect consumers. Previously considered a temporary initiative, the Insurance Diversity Program is now a permanent fixture. The combined focus on innovation and diversity underscores the importance of ensuring equitable opportunities for all Californians.
- Commissioner Lara's leadership remains focused on protecting vulnerable populations and advancing equity initiatives. With two years remaining in his term as Insurance Commissioner, the Department will continue to champion progress and meet anticipated challenges with resilience.
- The 2024-2026 strategic plan produced by the Task Force will guide efforts, while Chandara and her team work to integrate diversity and innovation within the Department's policies and priorities.

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- The Department's leadership expresses full confidence in Chandara and the Task Force's leadership, including Chair Mark Morales and Vice Chair Vikita Poindexter, in advancing shared goals. Partnership remains a key priority, and collaboration will continue to ensure ongoing success in promoting diversity and innovation in California's insurance industry.

**VII. California Statewide Coalition on Diversity Initiatives Updates**

An Kim, Manager, Insurance Diversity Program (CDI)

- The second annual California Supplier Diversity Symposium is scheduled for March 13th at the May Lee State Office Complex in Sacramento, CA.
- Registration will open in January, with the event capacity increased from 500 to around 700 attendees.
- A supplier diversity advisory group will meet on January 28th in Sacramento. Feedback on potential topics, sessions, and speakers is being requested.
- Exhibitor opportunities will again be available for this year's event.
- Based on feedback, the event duration may be extended by an hour to accommodate additional sessions.
- The Task Force's first quarterly meeting in 2025 is scheduled for March 12th in Sacramento, aligning with the Symposium on the following day to facilitate travel arrangements.

Danetta Jackson, Chief, Statewide Supplier Diversity Program - Department of General Services (DGS)

- DGS is conducting the [Disparity Study](#) with multiple virtual and in-person sessions that were convened in November, and aimed at gathering feedback on challenges faced by diverse suppliers seeking state contracts.
- The study is designed to provide a platform for both suppliers and consumers to share their experiences and barriers they have encountered in state contracting.
- Though business meetings for the study have concluded, opportunities remain for participation through one-on-one interviews or surveys.
- Danetta encouraged community leaders and stakeholders to engage with the study by visiting [the website](#), where they can sign up for interviews or complete the survey.

**VIII. Task Force Administration**

Shannon McCollum, Manager, Insurance Diversity Program (CDI)

- OIDI is currently updating the Task Force Handbook, focusing on travel policy changes that reflect CalHR's latest travel updates as of October 1, 2024. The revised version will be shared with Task Force members with key updates highlighted.
- A one-page summary document is being created to simplify travel guidelines and improve clarity on what is and isn't allowed under the state's travel policies.
- The goal is to streamline the travel process and ensure compliance with state laws and guidelines as well as justifying travel expenses to the CDI accounting office.

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Chandara Phanachone, Chief, OIDI (CDI)

- 2025 Task Force meeting dates will be sent via Outlook to Task Force members. Members must attend at least two of the four meetings to meet Bagley-Keene quorum requirements.
- Chandara highlighted the importance of advisory group participation to advance strategic goals.
- Enhanced focus on hybrid meeting accessibility to maximize participation and inclusivity.
- Important upcoming events:
  - January 28, 2025: Supplier Diversity Advisory Group meeting (after the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday).
  - March 12, 2025: First quarterly meeting, aligned with the Supplier Diversity Symposium on March 13<sup>th</sup>, in Sacramento.
  - Fall 2025: Insurance Diversity Summit (October/November, location TBD).

**IX. 2024-2026 Strategic Plan Updates & Discussion**

Chandara Phanachone, Chief, OIDI (CDI)

- **Mission & Growth:** The Task Force remains committed to advancing supplier and board diversity in the insurance industry. Since its launch in 2011, the Insurance Diversity Initiative has grown into a full-fledged office (OIDI) in the Department of Insurance, positioning itself for continued expansion.
- **Strategic Plan Overview:** The 2024-2026 plan remains dynamic, with flexibility to adapt as needed. The four key pillars guiding efforts include:
  - **Communication & Public Relations:** Refining messaging strategies to align with evolving political and industry landscapes.
  - **Community Engagement:** Strengthening outreach efforts in collaboration with the Community Relations Outreach Branch.
  - **Access to Opportunities:** Enhancing leadership within the statewide diversity coalition to support diverse suppliers and small businesses in securing contracts.
  - **Recognition & Accountability:** Maintaining transparency through innovation policies and programs that protect consumers while promoting responsible industry growth.
- **Board & Supplier Diversity Initiatives:**
  - A more detailed Board Diversity Report and Supplier Diversity Report are in progress.
  - Shannon McCollum will lead board diversity efforts, working with key organizations to advance this initiative.
  - Companies that earn distinctions in diversity reporting will be featured in case studies to highlight best practices.
- **Data & Engagement Improvements:**
  - Efforts are underway to distill survey data into digestible social media content for better public engagement.
  - A proposal was made for a streamlined distribution system to make sharing updates more efficient.
- **Insurance Diversity Index on the Horizon:**



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- The Insurance Diversity Index will track the progress by analyzing companies' movement between levels of distinction (Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum).
- New reporting metrics include supplier diversity data for businesses owned by persons with disabilities, per Assembly Bill 1140 (Committee on Insurance, Chapter 204, Statutes of 2023)
- **Next Steps:**
  - Updates will be shared at each quarterly meeting, with progress reports beginning in 2025.
  - Task Force members are encouraged to review the strategic plan ahead of the next meeting to provide feedback.

**X. 2024 Insurance Diversity Summit Recap**

An Kim, Manager, Insurance Diversity Program (CDI)

- Expressed appreciation for the Task Force's involvement and support.
- Despite technical issues preventing full survey participation, overall feedback was positive, with attendees rating the summit highly and recommending it to others.
- Acknowledged the contributions of community partners, including Meet Long Beach, the Port of Long Beach, and New Start Housing Development.
- Recognized keynote speakers:
  - Telisa Yancy, Enterprise President, American Family Insurance Group
  - Mayor Rex Richardson, City of Long Beach
  - Maria Salinas, CEO, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
  - Dr. Shirley Weber, California Secretary of State
- Noted areas for improvement that planning committee will put into consideration for future Summits

Julia Juarez, Deputy Commissioner, Community Relations & Outreach (CDI)

- Requested to finalizing the 2025 summit date as soon as possible to facilitate planning and coordination.
- Suggested creating a planning committee of Task Force members to improve event execution and secure financial and logistical support from partners.
- Stressed the importance of building relationships with partner organizations to enhance attendance and funding opportunities.

Chandara Phanachone, Chief, OIDI (CDI)

- Event Date Coordination
  - Task Force members to send their major event dates to A. Kim, who will compile them for scheduling.
- Community Partnerships
  - Nonprofit partners can facilitate community partnerships, including hospitality
  - A partnership prospectus will be developed to outline opportunities for 2025
- Planning & Logistics
  - A Task Force meeting on January 28th will include a discussion on the summit.
  - Improved venue logistics, signage, and scheduling to be prioritized.

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Chair Mark Morales, Insurance Diversity Task Force

- Upcoming Events:
  - 2025 Supplier Diversity Symposium – March 13, 2025
  - California Hispanic Chambers Legislative & Economic Outlook – December 5, 2024

**XII. Future Meeting Agenda Items**

Due to a lack of quorum at the September 12th quarterly meeting, the second quarterly meeting minutes were not approved.

- Motion to Approve adding the September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes to the March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting agenda: Marquita Thomas (IDTF Member)
- Motion Seconded: Annalisa Barrett (IDTF Member)

Additional topics suggested:

- January 28th Meeting: To include a discussion on the 2025 Insurance Diversity Summit.
- Department Report: An update on office initiatives and their impact on the Task Force.

**XIII. Public Comment**

Anis Taylor, from Snap Refund, expressed appreciation for diversity efforts but highlighted the lack of tangible opportunities for small business in the insurance industry.

**XIV. Adjournment**

Motion to Adjourn: Jose Plascencia (IDTF Member)

Seconded: Marquita Thomas (IDTF Member)

Meeting adjourned at 12:12 P.M. PST