



2024 Diversity and Inclusion Liaison Annual Report

Prepared By

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Governor's Office for New Americans

Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs

Contents

2024 Diversity and Inclusion Liaison Annual Report.....	1
Introduction	3
The Minority Interagency Collaboration.....	4
Year in Review.....	5
July 24th Meeting.....	5
Other Activities	5
Meeting Questions and Methodology.....	7
Results of the Meeting.....	8
Recommendations Based on Findings	11
Status of 2023 Recommendations.....	11
2024 Final Recommendations.....	11
Conclusion.....	13
Appendix A: List of 2024 Diversity and Inclusion Liaisons (DILs)	14
Appendix B: List of Minority-Serving Organizations (MSOs) who attended the 2024 Annual DIL Meeting.....	15
Appendix C: 2024 Diversity and Inclusion Liaison (DIL) Annual Meeting Minutes	17
Appendix D: Cultural Competency Training Materials for Diversity and Inclusion Liaisons (DILs)	18

Introduction

During the 81st Legislative Session in 2021, Senator Melanie Scheible introduced Senate Bill 222, which was subsequently passed and enacted into law. This legislation, codified as Nevada Revised Statutes 232.0083– 232.0087, requires state agencies that engage with or provide services to minority groups to appoint a Diversity and Inclusion Liaison (DIL) within their organization, as feasible.

A DIL should fulfill four key roles:

1. Support their state agency in fostering effective communication and enhancing cultural competence to better serve minority groups.
2. Function as a liaison, maintaining continuous communication between their agency and members of minority communities.
3. Offer technical assistance on new programs and services aimed at improving accessibility for minority group members.
4. Collaborate with DILs from other agencies to enhance accessibility and inclusivity for these communities.

Additionally, the bill mandates collaboration between the Governor's Office for New Americans (ONA), the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity (NOMHE), and the Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs (NCMA). These entities are required to meet annually with DILs and Minority-Serving Organizations (MSOs) to develop recommendations addressing:

- Shared concerns between state agencies and minority groups.
- Opportunities for collaboration to enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of services for minority communities.
- The imperative for state agencies to eliminate racial discrimination in Nevada.
- Strategies to ensure that members of minority groups can access the programs and services provided by state agencies.

Finally, ONA, NCMA, and NOMHE are tasked with preparing an annual report detailing the outcomes of these meetings. This report is to be submitted to the Governor and the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the Legislative Commission by January 1 of each year.

The Minority Interagency Collaboration

The Minority Interagency Collaboration (MIC) is composed of the Governor’s Office for New Americans (ONA), the Department of Health and Human Service’s Office of Minority Health and Equity (NOMHE), and the Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs (NCMA). This partnership among minority-serving agencies in Nevada was established to execute the provisions outlined in NRS 232.0083–232.0087.

By formalizing this collaboration, the MIC ensures that DILs receive continuous preparation and support. This initiative has successfully created a sustainable network among the three entities, facilitating the implementation of this program while also serving as a resource for advancing other equity-focused initiatives.

This proactive partnership enables a coordinated approach, allowing the MIC to combine resources and efforts while embracing a unified vision and commitment to a shared objective. Our common goal is to guarantee that minority communities in Nevada have equitable and accessible access to the services, resources, and information provided by state government.

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Year in Review

The MIC convened an open meeting on July 24, 2024. This year's focus was on enhancing collaboration between state agencies and community organizations to further promote accessibility and inclusion for minority communities across Nevada.

July 24th Meeting

The annual meeting facilitated essential interactions between DILs and MSOs. Key participants included representatives from immigrant support organizations, health care entities, and educational institutions. Iris Jones, Director of the ONA, led a discussion emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts in addressing the needs of minority communities. Senator Scheible was invited as a guest speaker, shared her insights, and highlighted ongoing initiatives, future engagement opportunities, and potential amendments to the original legislation. Angie Rojas, from NCMA, led a dynamic guided discussion between DILs and MSOs. Participants shared best practices, challenges, and strategies for improving community outreach and support mechanisms between state agencies and the community. Public comments were encouraged throughout the meeting, ensuring that community voices were heard. Facilitated by Tina Dortch, Program Manager for NOMHE, this segment allowed attendees to share their perspectives and suggestions for improvements. The meeting concluded with an emphasis on collective action and a commitment to fostering lasting partnerships that uplift Nevada's minority communities. The collaborative spirit displayed throughout the meeting underscores the importance of working together to create a more inclusive future.

Other important details discussed in this meeting can be found in the appendices, which include:

- **Appendix A:** List of current DILs
- **Appendix B:** List of MSOs attending the 2024 DIL Annual Meeting

Other Activities

Between September and October 2024, the MIC enlisted various subject matter experts in cultural competency to offer five optional training opportunities for all DILs. The following optional training opportunities were offered:

1. **Diversity and Inclusion Liaison 101:** This training allowed DILs to learn more about their role and duties.
2. **Cultural Competency on Interacting with the LGBTQ Community:** This training provided information on inclusive terminology and guidance on best practice when interacting with the LGBTQ community.
3. **Cultural Competency on Interacting with People with Disabilities:** This training offered information on the different type of disabilities and how to properly serve this community based on their needs.
4. **Cultivating a Culture of Inclusivity:** This training provided information on how to better understand the meanings behind promoting diversity. Participants learned about the benefits of fostering equity, inclusion, and belonging, especially in the workplace.

5. **Systemic Racism:** This training provided background information on systemic racism, including examples of what it looks like in practice.

Lastly, additional items were distributed to DILs, listed below and in the following appendices:

- **Appendix C:** 2024 DIL annual meeting minutes
- **Appendix D:** List of resources available for DILs, including recordings on cultural competency trainings.

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Meeting Questions and Methodology

The DIL annual meeting was held online on July 24, 2024. To foster an active interaction between DILs and MSOs, the meeting focused on clarifying the statutory duties of DILs and the requirements for annual reports. Furthermore, the MIC facilitated a guided discussion where participants had the chance to discuss challenges and strategies to improve collaboration among DILs and MSOs. The questions asked were derived from the statues pertaining to the DIL initiative (NRS 232.0083- 232.0087). A total of 12 questions were asked, including two yes-or-no questions and 10 open-ended questions. Approximately four minutes were allocated for the discussion on each question, allowing two to three participants to share their input. The 12 questions were:

1. As a DIL, do you feel prepared to perform your role?
2. What are the barriers that DILs face to perform their role?
3. As a DIL, what tools do you need to be able to perform your duties?
4. Provide three ideas to collaborate with other DILs to increase accessibility and inclusivity of services to members of minority groups
5. As an MSO are you able to locate/identify a state agency's DIL?
6. As an MSO, what do expect from DILs?
7. What can state agencies do to promote effective communication with minority groups?
8. As an MSO, please provide one strategy to ensure that members of minority groups are able to access programs and services offered by state agencies and interact with state government.
9. What are some concerns when dealing with DILs and MSOs?
10. In order for the state to lead in best practices between DEI work, what recommendations would you have for state leaders and community partners?
11. What are your thoughts about how state government is handling systemic racism and structures of racial discrimination within the state?
12. What are some recommendations that state government could implement to eliminate these issues?

Results of the Meeting

There were 67 attendees during the 2024 DIL meeting. Thirty-six attendees identified as a DIL and 14 identified as MSO. A breakdown of the qualitative and quantitative results of the guided discussion between DILs and MSOs is presented below:

Question 1

As a DIL, do you feel prepared to perform your role?

Sixteen DILs indicated that they feel prepared to perform their role.

Question 2

What are the barriers that DILs face to perform their role?

Two major barriers were identified through this question. First, DILs have a difficult time accessing low-income communities to provide information on essential services and programs. Secondly, DILs said that there is not funding available to compensate DILs. Additional duties were assigned to DILs in addition to their existing job responsibilities. The lack of funding hampers their capacity to fully commit to their responsibilities and engage meaningfully with the community.

Question 3

As a DIL what tools do you need to be able to perform your duties?

Participants stated that it would be ideal to have a one-stop shop with resources and training material for state agencies to be able to train staff on being inclusive of all minority groups.

Question 4

Provide three ideas to collaborate with other DILs to increase accessibility and inclusivity of services to members of minority groups.

Overall, participants said that the Tribal Liaison initiative could serve as a model for the DIL efforts. This would require some cross-collaboration between Tribal Liaisons and DILs. Others suggested that the NCMA could open up a space during its recurrent public meetings for DILs to present information on state agencies' essential services and programs. The NCMA has been facilitating monthly roundtable discussion for the past year or so. The NCMA's vice-chair was present during the 2024 DIL annual meeting and agreed to explore the idea. Since the DIL annual meeting in July 2024, the NCMA has initiated discussions on how to move forward with this idea by adding it to the agenda of one of their monthly meetings for further discussion. The NCMA representative will share the next steps with all parties once they are finalized.

Question 5

As an MSO are you able to locate/identify a state agency's DIL?

Most MSOs reported ongoing challenges in locating state agency DILs. To enhance information accessibility, the MIC created a roster that includes the names, contact information, and website links of the DILs. This roster was shared with all meeting attendees and is also available in a designated Microsoft Teams space for the DILs. Furthermore, an updated version of the DIL roster exists in the ONA website.

Question 6

As an MSO, what do you expect from DILs?

It is important to note that there are still some confusions from MSOs as to what to expect from DILs. The MIC facilitators explained that the role of the DIL is to be the connection between state agencies and the community through MSOs. Annual meetings are meant to serve as a platform for DILs and MSOs to discuss matters of mutual concerns. While the NRS does not specify the duties of MSOs, they are part of this initiative as a connector between the communities they serve and the state. One of the attending MSOs inquired about how collaboration between DILs and MSOs could work, particularly regarding the potential for co-designing programs that involve representatives not only from the MSOs but also from the constituents served by the DILs in the planning and design of initiatives. Also, it was noted, that Nevada is fragmented and there are major gaps. The MIC acknowledged the MSO's concern and made note of it for future discussion on potential strategies to increase collaboration. It was recommended that the MIC could look at designing or co-designing methods and means to address the breaks in service delivery that have been identified through different discussions. This could address some needs of the state. This topic goes back to the infrastructure of service delivery in state government and how subject matter experts at the state agency can work with the minority serving organizations.

Question 7

What can state agencies do to promote effective communication with minority groups?

As part of the discussion, a DIL suggested creating some type of dashboard or a website that talks about what each state agency and MSOs are doing. This could be an opportunity for collaboration as well. Additionally, it was again suggested to include a dedicated agenda item at NCMA public meetings for DILs and MSOs to discuss their ongoing efforts and how they can support the community. An MSO stated that it could be hard for DILs to be successful if there is no clarity in what the MSOs are offering. MSOs can be non-profit organizations with different focus. It was suggested that the MIC could maintain a growing list of MSOs, which could expand year by year.

Question 8

As an MSO, please provide one strategy to ensure that members of minority groups are able to access programs and services offered by state agencies and interact with state government.

The following strategies were proposed by DILs and MSOs:

- DILs and MSOs attend community events to share information about their services.
- Integrate equity and inclusion into the policy development process utilized by all municipalities by conducting impact assessments and consulting with minority groups during the drafting and implementation phase. This could ensure that new policies and programs consider and address the unique challenges faced by minority communities.
- Ensure accessibility and promote open communication and transparency.
- Map DILs and MSOs based on areas of emphasis and priority. The state can potentially assist with this.
- Host more events that promote diversity and inclusion.

Question 9

What are some concerns when dealing with DILs and MSOs?

Based on discussion, the following concerns were shared by DILs and MSOs:

- Lack of clarity on what is expected of both DILs and MSOs.
- Limited understanding of the roles that DILs and MSOs play.
- Provisions of resources to eliminate barriers experienced by community members, such as transportation, childcare, and Internet access.
- Challenges when serving the community correctly. For example, no requests for services have come to the certain divisions since the initiative was passed in 2021. This could mean that the community doesn't know how to request information.
- Inadequate metrics or standards for what a successful DIL looks like.

Question 10

In order for the state to lead in best practices between DEI work, what recommendations would you have for state leaders and community partners?

Based on discussion, the following was recommended:

- Find a way to cross check state agencies and organizations on current standards to fill in gaps.
- Increase opportunities for collaboration and interaction as it is crucial and beneficial for this network.
- Develop some type of certification process for DILs where they can continue learning.
- Provide training to state leaders so they can be of better assistance to DILs to deliver proper services to the community.

Question 11

What are your thoughts about how state government is handling systemic racism and structures of racial discrimination within the state?

Based on the limited responses, DILs and MSOs agreed that it would be helpful to have examples of systemic racism and racial discrimination to know how to address those cases.

Question 12

What are some recommendations that state government could implement to eliminate these issues?

The administrator for the Equal Employment Opportunity Office within the Department of Administration said that one thing the agency is trying to do is to get out in the community more. They are participating in more training opportunities because knowledge comes from the top down. DILs and MSOs recommended to increase resources for training opportunities.

Recommendations Based on Findings

The 2024 recommendations presented in this section were developed based on the input received by the DILs and MSOs during the July 24 annual meeting. Given state agencies have engaged DILs for several years now, the discussion could be predicated on DIL and MSO attendees responding to 12 questions influenced by NRS 232.0083 - 232.0087. As in past DIL annual reports, development of the 2024 recommendations was also dependent upon the status of previous year's recommendations.

Status of 2023 Recommendations

Action was taken on two of the four recommendations made in 2023. Those are reflected below along with the description of the recognizable action taken.

1. Fund Diversity and Inclusion Liaisons

2. Enhance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Awareness at the State and Community Levels

During the third quarter of 2024, the MIC members held five trainings covering the objectives related to the provisions of NRS 232.0083–232.0087 in order to ensure familiarity of the DIL role. One of the trainings focused on the importance of culturally competent service delivery and general DEI awareness. Each training was recorded and stored on the Teams Group for asynchronous learning by current and future DILs.

3. Improve Visibility of Diversity and Inclusion Liaisons (DILs) on State Agency Websites

In 2024, the MIC performed an audit to ensure websites from all state agency having designated a DIL followed the NRS. Since the first year of the law's enactment in 2021, increased compliance with the provision requiring DILs be promoted on agency websites occurred. By 2024, 22 of the 56 agencies with DILs (39.3%) promoted them via their website as required by statute.

4. Engage Individuals from Rural Communities

2024 Final Recommendations

The MIC summarized the status of 2023 recommendations and results of the 2024 facilitated DIL / MSO discussion of the seven questions from NRS 232.0083 - 232.0087 into these final recommendations:

1. All DILs to complete two training opportunities, identified and/or designed to enhance their familiarity with their roles and improve their capacity to perform them effectively per provisions of NRS 232.0083 – 232.087:

- a. The pre-existing Customer Service section of State's ADA focused Supervisor Training module. These classes can be found in the Nevada E- Learning system. The website link is <https://nvelearn.nv.gov/moodle/>.
- b. The five newly recorded DIL 101 training modules representing input on relevant case scenarios and from subject matter experts on cultural competency principles. These recordings are only accessible to the DILs (See Appendix D).

2. DILs and MSOs to co-design methods improve state agency awareness of community needs and improve community awareness of municipal programming:

- a. To strengthen the collaborative nature of the DIL/MSO dynamic, use the annual meeting to revisit questions designed to frame community-level needs and identify responsive public resources and to workshop equitable implementation strategies.

3. Expand DIL – MSO interaction beyond the annual meeting to maximize resource sharing:

- a. Define intersecting and existing opportunities that allow DILs to join MSOs along with the communities they represent.

4. Improve Visibility of Diversity and Inclusion Liaisons (DILs) on State Agency Websites

- a. Increase compliance rate among those agencies who have assigned a DIL.

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Conclusion

The 2021 law requiring state agencies within Nevada’s Executive Branch to designate a Diversity and Inclusion Liaison (DIL) ensures that programs and services are accessible and inclusive for minority communities in the state. To continue to strengthen and support the DILs, the 2024 annual meeting focused on bringing the unique perspective of the sponsor of the bill, Sen. Melanie Schieble, and facilitating a guided discussion among DILs and Minority-Serving Organizations (MSOs) to gain insight on how they can collaborate to better serve the community. The feedback provided during the annual meeting led to the four recommendations discussed in this report. These recommendations from DILs and MSOs led to action plans to increase accessibility, inclusivity, and collaboration between minority communities, DILs, and MSOs.

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Appendix A: List of 2024 Diversity and Inclusion Liaisons (DILs)

The list of the DILs gets updated annually. The yearly meeting serves as a method to collect updated information from all the DILs across the state. To find the most updated list, visit the Governor's Office for New Americans' website at https://ona.nv.gov/Programs/Diversity_and_Inclusions/.

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Appendix B: List of Minority-Serving Organizations (MSOs) who attended the 2024 Annual DIL Meeting

Agency/Organization	Contact Name	Contact Email	Contact Phone Number	Contact Website
REACH	Luis Aceves	luis@reachlv.org	786-315-6791	https://reachlv.org/index.php/es/
Puentes	Guy Puentes	guy.g@puenteslasvegas.org	702-250-8055	https://puenteslasvegas.org/pages/about-us
Shades of Queening Women's Empowerment Group	KaPreace Young	kapreace.young@washoeschools.net	775-685-4113	https://www.shadesofqueenimg.com/programs
Washoe County School District	Leslie Balzer	leslie.balzer@washoeschools.net	702-927-4642	https://www.washoeschools.net/Page/189
Washoe County School District	Cassandra Hayes	cassandra.hayes@washoeschools.net	775-789-3437	https://www.washoeschools.net/Page/189
Southern Nevada Health District	Xavier Foster	fosterx@snhd.org	702-759-0783	https://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/about-us/general-information/
Anthem Nevada Medicaid	Valerie Luevano	valerie.luevano@elevationhealth.com	775-444-5402	https://mss.anthem.com/nevada-medicaid/benefits/medicaid-benefits.html
High Sierra Area Health Education Center (AHEC)	Ricardo Rubalcaba Paredes	ricardo@highsierraahec.org	775-287-3319	https://www.highsierraahec.org/
Nevada Health link at Dignity Health	Adela Victorino	adela.victorio@dignityhealth.org	702-616-4904	https://www.nevadahealthlink.com/
High Sierra Area Health Education Center	Nicholas Chiang	nicholas@highsierraahec.org	7755074022	https://www.highsierraahec.org/
UNR Med Pacific AETC-NV	Victoria Young	victoriay@med.unr.edu	775-312-0442	https://paetc.org/about/local-partners/nevada/?ER2=55

100 Black Men Las Vegas	Gentry Richardson	gentry@100bmlv.org	702-720-1273	https://100blackmenlasvegas.org/
Helping Hands of Vegas Valley	Nina Gallagher	nina.gallagher@hhov.org	702-575-4749	https://dh.hhov.org/

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Appendix C: 2024 Diversity and Inclusion Liaison (DIL) Annual Meeting Minutes

Anyone can find the 2024 DIL Annual Meeting draft minutes in the Governor's Office for New American's website at <https://ona.nv.gov/Meetings/2022/Meetings/>. They keep a record of all the DILs' previous meeting minutes and agendas as well.

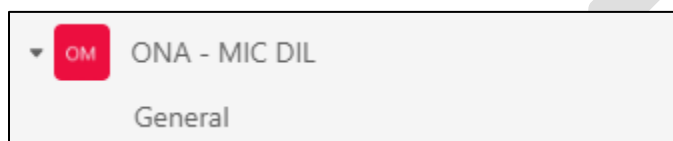
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Appendix D: Cultural Competency Training Materials for Diversity and Inclusion Liaisons (DILs)

In collaboration with different community partners, the MIC coordinated a series of optional trainings for DILs. The goal was to increase their knowledge on different topics related to cultural competency. The training opportunities were recorded and are available internally. DILs can access these recordings via their designated Microsoft TEAMS (See Figure 1). The recordings can be found in a folder titled “DIL Training Materials and Resources”. DILs can click access those materials by using this link. Resources including recordings are organized by category. Topics included are:

- Diversity and Inclusion Liaison 101
- Cultural Competency on Interacting with the LGBTQ Community
- Cultural Competency on Interacting with People with Disabilities
- Cultivating a Culture of Inclusivity
- Systemic Racism

Figure 1: Name of DILs Microsoft Teams



There are other training materials that DILs can review to gain more knowledge on different topics related to cultural competency. NOMHE has a list of resources on its website, which can be accessed by using the following link: https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/CHA/MH/Toolkit/CCtrainings_Noreq/.