ADVANCING ACCESS & EQUITY

2023 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR

Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities



State of Delaware Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities

September 30, 2023

The Honorable John Carney Governor State of Delaware Tatnall Building, William Penn Street 2nd Floor, Dover, DE 19901

Dear Governor Carney:

On behalf of the Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities, I am pleased to submit our Annual Report, as required by Title 16, Chapter 96 of the Delaware Code.

During State Fiscal Year 2023, there were 280 people with disabilities employed in the set-aside contracts overseen by the Commission. That is a 4% increase from the previous fiscal year. The employment of people with disabilities under the janitorial services set-aside contract has remained relatively stable, while the number of people employed as temporary employees increased by 10% since the last fiscal year. This gives me hope that the marketing and training efforts for temporary employment that the Commission has endorsed are beginning to have an impact.

We ask that you review the Executive Summary on page 2 of this report for the key indicators of the continued success of this important disability employment program:

- the number of people with disabilities who were employed in the State Use program over the course of the fiscal year;
- the number of people who obtained competitive employment during the year;
- the number of hours worked; and
- the cumulative and average wages earned.

Please join me in recognizing the importance of Delaware's "state use" law by mentioning it in any press releases or tributes that you may issue about October's designation as National Disability Employment Awareness Month 2023. The federal Office of Disability Employment Policy chose "Advancing Access and Equity: Then, Now and Next" as its theme this year, to celebrate the passage a half century ago of the Rehabilitation Act. That Act has been vitally important in prohibiting discrimination based on disability in employment by federal agencies, federal contractors, and recipients of federal funds, and in the delivery of federally funded programs and activities.

We look forward to working collaboratively with the Ability Network of Delaware and others to 1) increase temporary employment services FY 2024, 2) expand these valuable services, which are performed for the state of Delaware and 3) advocate for new opportunities that the state's community rehabilitation programs are eager to explore, such as the call center opportunities.

I want to thank you for your ongoing support of the Commission's work and its efforts to provide opportunities under state contracts for people with disabilities to gain work experience and move towards greater independence. The four success stories that are highlighted in the last few pages of this report say it all – these are meaningful jobs, which can provide a good start towards a career and self-sufficiency for people with disabilities.



Respectfully yours,

Clint Walker, Chair, Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities

Cc: The Honorable David Sokola, Senate President Pro Tempore
The Honorable Valerie Longhurst, Speaker, House of Representatives
The Honorable Josette Manning, Secretary, Delaware Health & Social Services
The Honorable Sarah McBride, Chair, Senate Health, Children, & Social Services Committee
The Honorable Kerri Evelyn Harris, Chair, House Health & Human Development Committee

WHO WE ARE



The Commission for **Statewide Contracts** to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (Commission) serves to further the policy of the state concerning employment for individuals with visual impairments and other disabilities. The intent of the Commission is to provide opportunities for Delawareans with disabilities to achieve maximum personal independence through useful and productive employment in an expanded and constant market for their products and services.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annual report highlights the impact on the employment of people with disabilities of set-aside contracts overseen by the Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities. There was a year-over-year increase from SFY 2022 to SFY 2023 in the number of employees with disabilities participating in the State Use Program (from 269 to 280). The wages earned by these employees increased (from \$3,048,866 to \$3,079,270). The hiring of janitorial workers with disabilities continued to be relatively stable, with a small increase in the number of people with disabilities who were placed through the Temporary Employment Services contract. We continue to believe that the reduction over the last three years in the use of this contract was due to the closure of state offices during the first two years of the pandemic and the subsequent turnover in the state agencies of personnel responsible for requesting temporary employees. The average wage per hour increased from SFY 2022 to SFY 2023 from \$12.25 per hour to \$13.66 per hour. Gains were seen in the average wages per hour paid to all employees with disabilities, which increased by over 10%. In addition to the wages listed in this report, health insurance and other benefits were provided to the employees.



\$3,079,270

wages earned by people with disabilities



225,469

total labor hours of people with disabilities



\$13.66

average hourly rate

CONTRACTED SERVICES



Ability Network of Delaware (A.N.D.) is the Central Nonprofit Agency that was selected by the Commission to manage two set-aside contracts: Temporary Employment Services and Janitorial Services. Under Title 16, Chapter 96 of the Delaware Code, A.N.D. manages the contracts established with the Commission and Government Support Services. A.N.D. subcontracts these services to community rehabilitation programs (CRPs).

Ability Focused Professional Services, Chimes, Conexio Care, Galt Foundation, DPI Staffing, Easterseals of Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore, Elwyn, Fedcap, Goodwill of Delaware and Delaware County, and ServiceSource are the CRPs who employed people with disabilities and others to perform the work that was done under the set-aside contracts in SFY 2023.

In cooperation with state agencies that refer people with disabilities for employment exploration and job placement, this program helps CRPs find work that matches the skill levels of people they support, with any training and job coaching that may be needed.

TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

This contract affords A.N.D. the opportunity to facilitate the placement of well-qualified candidates into temporary employment roles in 12 set-aside positions. This offers people with disabilities a variety of work experiences in positions that are important to the state agencies that utilize them. The 116 individuals with disabilities who worked under this contract gained valuable work experience while performing a critical service in the clerical, food service, case management, and other positions.



\$1,397,852

wages earned by people with disabilities



90,119

total labor hours of people with disabilities



\$15.51

average hourly rate



<u>The Galt Foundation</u> began providing temporary employment services as an A.N.D. partner in October 2022. Galt has been providing similar employment services for people with disabilities in Oklahoma and Oregon.



<u>Goodwill of Delaware & Delaware County</u> has a long history as an A.N.D. subcontractor. As one of the first subcontractors of A.N.D., Goodwill has been a tremendous supporter of the State Use program and contributed greatly to the program's growth over the years.

JANITORIAL SERVICES

A.N.D.'s community rehabilitation program partners provide essential cleaning services in 80 buildings located throughout the state with a total cleanable space of 2,449,115 square feet. There were 164 employees with disabilities who were employed as janitors during SFY 2023.



\$1,681,419

wages earned by people with disabilities



135,349

total labor hours of people with disabilities



\$12.42

average hourly rate







L-R: Peggy Meade and Juanita Suhaimi, Jeff O'Lonnell, and Nadine Mason



<u>Fedcap</u> is a large multi-state rehabilitation service provider that offers vocational training and employment supports in Delaware and other states to people who have barriers to employment. Fedcap cleans 23 buildings with a total of 1,114,309 square feet.



<u>Goodwill of Delaware and Delaware County</u> provides job training programs and employment placement services to people with disabilities, as well as those who lack education, job experience, or other challenges to finding employment. Goodwill cleans 23 buildings with a total of 686,135 square feet.



<u>ServiceSource</u> is another large, multi-state rehabilitation services provider. They clean the Carvel State Office Building in the heart of downtown Wilmington, one of the largest multi-tenant buildings in Delaware, with a total of 302,250 square feet.



<u>Easterseals of Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore</u> is a multi-service provider that assists individuals with significant disabilities who want to secure and/or maintain employment by providing services through individual or group supported employment. Easterseals cleans 14 buildings with 165,963 square feet.



<u>Chimes</u> is a large provider of residential and vocational services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Delaware and other states. Their programs provide employment and educational experiences that help people access the greater community. Chimes cleans 8 buildings with a total of 108,893 square feet.



<u>Ability Focused Professional Services</u> is a new CRP that began providing service in 2023, as a disadvantaged business enterprise. AFPS cleans 6 buildings with a total of 53,013 square feet.



<u>Conexio Care</u> provides a comprehensive array of health care, housing, and employment services to help individuals and families to achieve their goals and enhance Delaware communities. Conexio Care cleans 2 buildings with 15,000 square feet.



<u>Elwyn</u> is human services organization with operations in Delaware and other states serving individuals with a wide range of intellectual, physical, behavioral and developmental disabilities. Elwyn cleans 1 building with 3,552 square feet.



Alexander Roberts & Alvin Emory

s a person with a disability, Alvin Emory made a living by cleaning and disinfecting for 30+ years before beginning to work under a subcontract with A.N.D. about 9 years ago. Alvin was able to use his lifelong work experience to help his co-workers with disabilities learn the skills needed to become proficient custodial workers. In this mentoring role, Alvin regularly takes the time to show his co-workers the proper use of chemicals; where to locate critical information like Safety Data Sheets; and how to accurately record the inventory of paper products and other cleaning supplies.

Alexander Roberts is one of the custodial workers who has been mentored by Alvin.

Alex started off working in buildings cleaned by Ability Focused Professional Services (AFPS) a few hours a day. As Alex learned how to perform the required tasks, his productivity increased, which gave him the opportunity to work more hours.

Through on-the-job training and job shadowing, Alex has developed greater attention to detail as well as the stamina needed to meet his goal of working full time. Now, Alex can identify areas in his work that need improvement and he is able to correct them with only minimal coaching from Alvin, to ensure his work meets quality standards. These milestones are critical to Alex's growth as a custodial worker, but also as he has become a tax-paying member of his community. Through Alex's hard work and dedication and the ongoing mentorship he is receiving, Alex is moving towards economic independence.

The Commission congratulates Alvin and Alex for working together as a team to produce quality janitorial services for the state of Delaware.





Everett Council

his past year brought about some positive changes for me. After Elwyn's facility-based work program closed in the spring of 2022, I was left without work, so I began attending the Point of Hope Day Program in Wilmington. Then, Elwyn reconnected with me at around Christmas time last year to tell me they found me the perfect job that would allow me to work part-time and still attend my program at Point of Hope.

I have only been on the job at the Veteran's Cemetery in Bear for eight months, but I feel like I am still learning something new every day. I work every

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Sometimes, I start cleaning various parts of the cemetery, but then I must adjust my work due to the number of services or due to the weather, to make sure all cleaning is done correctly. My job coach assists me each step of the way.

I feel good and want to thank everyone who has been helping me.

The cemetery staff treat me well, my job coaches from Elwyn encourage me to do my best, and they show me how to do my job better. I like my job and want to stay at the cemetery as long as I can. I can shop now and buy clothes for when I go out to dance with my friends. I feel good and want to thank everyone who has been helping me.

— Everett Council, as told to Eric Johnson, Elwyn Supervisor





LaToya Johns

ong before Galt Foundation recruited her for a Temporary Employment Services position, LaToya had a bustling career in the insurance industry, working in that field from the age of 18 onward. The demands of the profession required her to be on the road and working long hours for many years.

After acquiring disabilities later in life, however, she needed to transition out of the insurance field and into a different career. Galt was able to support her career goals by placing her as an Administrative Specialist with the Division of Public Health Laboratory. In this role LaToya has been instrumental helping the department with answering the phones, receiving

in-person visitors, and with many other support duties. This has allowed the Division to focus on their deadlines and mission.

LaToya says that she enjoys doing what it takes to make the work of her Division of Public Health Laboratory coworkers easier. Her supervisor has reported that LaToya has been doing a fabulous job, and as she has become confident in LaToya's abilities, she has been able to assign her new tasks,. Her supervisor reports that LaToya has been a huge help to both her and the Division's Office Manager.

In her new position, because LaToya has had the flexibility and understanding of her co-workers, it has allowed her to take care of her health needs, while being able to provide valuable support services to the Division. She is excited to continue to learn and grow in her new position.





Stephanie Milbourne

ur unit with the Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance (DMMA) handles numerous Medicaid programs for Delaware's most vulnerable population, the elderly and disabled. We serve both Kent and Sussex counties, and three of these Medicaid programs are only handled in our office and are statewide.

We are an extremely busy office processing Medicaid & SNAP eligibility, and we maintain a high volume of cases. Stephanie Milbourne came to us from Goodwill a couple of years ago when we needed an Operations Support Specialist. She did a fantastic job in that position. She assisted

clients and her coworkers with kindness, compassion, and professionalism. She was eager to learn and always assisted where needed.

Stephanie has since been promoted twice and is now a Social Worker/Case Manager. Stephanie makes sure she shows up to work daily, finishes tasks assigned to her and takes the initiative to make things run smoothly. No matter the task, Stephanie will tackle it and put her heart and soul into it. She is a pleasure to be around, which boosts morale, and she always has a calming, positive attitude. Stephanie has been instrumental in archiving for my unit, as well as another unit within DMMA. She is also a member of our Procedure Manual revision for two of our Medicaid programs. Stephanie is a dedicated and awesome asset within my unit.

We are truly grateful to have her.

— Testimonial submitted by Kathleen Passwaters, DMMA Supervisor





THE IMPORTANCE OF SET-ASIDE CONTRACTS IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

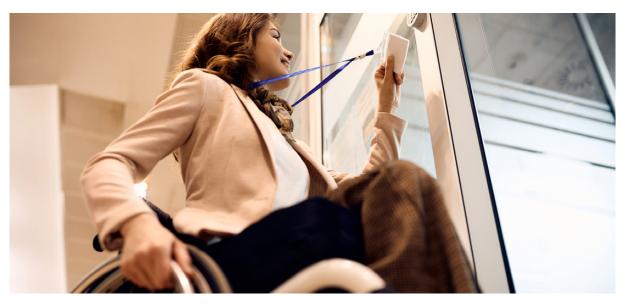


In 1971, Congress passed the Javits–Wagner–O'Day (JWOD) Act, which expanded the scope of the federal set-aside program, requiring certain supplies and services be purchased from nonprofit agencies employing persons who are blind or have other severe disabilities. The federal set-aside program is now called AbilityOne and is responsible for employing approximately 40,000 people with disabilities nationwide. About half of the states in the country, including Delaware, passed laws like the JWOD Act, requiring that products and services be purchased from non-profit agencies employing people with disabilities.

In a report published by the <u>State Use</u>
<u>Program Association</u> in January 2023, which included data from Delaware and 14 other

states, 22,707 people with disabilities were employed in "State Use" programs, with \$216,408,231 in wages paid to people with disabilities. Eighty-three (83) percent of this work was performed by people with disabilities in good-paying service jobs such as assisting customers at DMVs, doing document imaging, providing janitorial services, and working in a variety of positions in temporary employment.

Despite multiple government efforts and compelling reasons for hiring people with disabilities, their rates of employment remain unacceptably low. The employment statistics issued by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy in August 2023 showed that for people ages 16 and over, the Labor Force Participation Rate for people with disabilities was 24.9% vs. the rate for people without disabilities, which was 68.4%. The Unemployment Rate for people with disabilities (7.4%) in August 2023 was more than twice that of people without disabilities (3.8%). These statistics demonstrate a continuing need for set-aside programs to help assure job opportunities exist for people with disabilities, along with all other programs that support their employment.



ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF SET-ASIDE CONTRACTS

In 2019, A.N.D. commissioned <u>an independent economic study</u> of the impact on the state economy of spending on social services and of employment under the set-aside contracts. It found that during State Fiscal Year 2019, wages earned by participants employed under the set-aside contracts, which were spent in their local communities, generated an additional \$5.1 million of economic activity in the state economy. This spending supported 35 additional jobs in local communities and generated an additional \$240,000 tax revenues to the state government (see the table below). Furthermore, the earnings of these individuals replaced some of the federal and state benefits which the participants would have otherwise received.

ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACTS OF EMPLOYMENT IN A.N.D.'S SET-ASIDE CONTRACTS	
# Participants Employed in SFY 2019	689
Aggregate Wages Earned by Participants	\$4.5 million
Economic Impact from Wages Spent in Local Communities ¹	\$5.1 million
Additional Employment Supported	35
Additional Labor Income Earned	\$1.5 million
Additional State Tax Revenues Generated	\$240,000

1 The four rows in this section of the table refer to the economic multi plier effect in the State's economy (i.e., the effect of participant wages spent in local communities, which benefits Delaware citizens who are not employed under the setaside contracts).

SOURCE: A.N.D. (2018), IMPLAN (2019)

A similar study of the economic impact of New York's set-aside program was conducted by the <u>Rockefeller Institute</u> <u>of Government</u> in 2019. The economic multiplier effect of that state's set-aside contract was summarized as follows:

- NYSID contracts generated \$133,787,721 in labor income, including employee salaries and wages,
 the value of employee benefits, and proprietor income. According to NYSID data, the disabled workforce
 earned \$68,734,567 in wages for these contracts, accounting for 51% of the total labor income.
 The remainder of the income would be allocated to the nondisabled workers and fringe benefits such
 as healthcare, retirement benefits, and tax payments.
- To fulfill the contracts, Member Agencies and Corporate Partners must purchase supplies and other
 inputs that generate additional economic activity in the supply chain. These indirect effects on the
 supply chain support 330 additional jobs and \$54,535,322 in economic output.
- Employment generates spending power for workers who pay rent, buy food, and patronize local businesses. Individuals with disabilities generally spend their money at local businesses, meaning that the money they earn is more likely to contribute to their local economy. Employee spending in the economy supports an additional 588 jobs and generates \$90,237,692 in economic output.





TEMPORARY STAFFING SOLUTIONS FOR YOU!

Ability Network of Delaware (AND) is the exclusive contract holder to various temporary employment positions for agencies like yours. We provide job opportunities for people with disabilities—our candidates are vetted with a proven track record of excellence.

ANNOUNCING

Our exclusive set aside positions now have new flexible pay rates!

Accounting Technician	\$11.75 – \$14.69
9	
Administrative Specialist I	\$11.75 – \$15.67
Administrative Specialist II	\$12.70 – \$16.71
Administrative Specialist III	\$13.51 – \$17.82
Data Entry Technician	\$11.75 - \$14.69
Sr. Data Entry Technician	\$13.36 - \$20.04
Operation Support Specialist	\$11.75 – \$13.78
Social Worker/Case Manager	\$11.75 - \$26.23
Supply, Storage and Distribution Clerk I	\$11.75 – \$13.78
Clerical Assistant	\$11.75 – \$13.50
Telephone Operator	\$11.75 – \$13.50
Housekeeper	\$11.75 – \$13.78
Food Service Worker	\$11.75 – \$13.50
Food Service Director	\$16.67 - \$24.82
Records Management Specialist	\$13.36 – \$20.04

Request a position today!

Click here to fill out a job request.

QUESTIONS?

We have compiled a new FAQ resource page that answers the most frequently asked questions about the set aside program and hiring individuals with disabilities.

Go to our new FAQ page!

INTRODUCING OUR NEW PARTNER

GGalt

At the end of 2022, A.N.D. onboarded a new provider to fulfill the rising employment needs of state agencies in Delaware. Galt Foundation

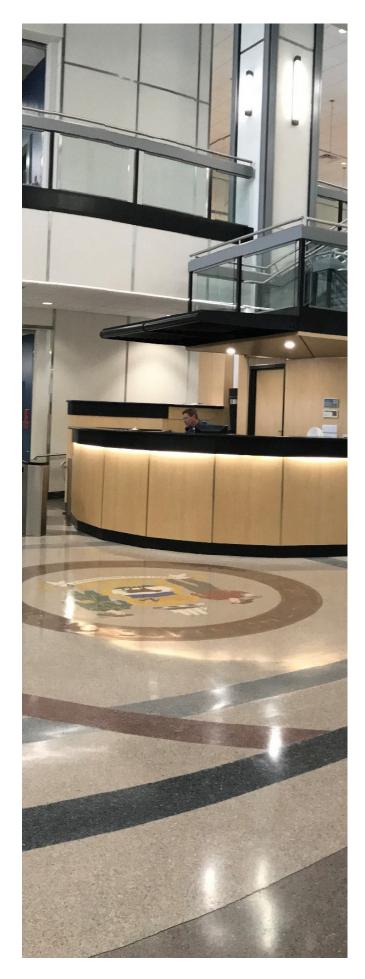
matches great organizations with motivated employees. Galt's extensive experience in job placement increases A.N.D.'s potential to place more individuals with disabilities into new jobs.

Learn more about A.N.D.'s Temporary Employment Services

Contact Matt Curcio, Director of Employment Supports

TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES MARKETING

On April 18, 2023, an e-mail was sent to all state agencies to promote the use of temporary employment services set-aside positions. The marketing message developed by A.N.D. included the new pay and bill rates for temporary employees that were approved by the Commission effective January 1, 2023 (see the excerpt to the left), as well as a frequently asked question document to provide state agencies with information about how Galt and Goodwill source candidates, onboard the employees, and how A.N.D. produces invoices based on weekly time sheets that are approved by the state supervisors.



PLACES WHERE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WORK AS PART OF THE STATE USE PROGRAM

(A partial list)

STATE AGENCIES THAT USE TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health

Division of State Service Centers

Division of Social Services

Division of Public Health

Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance

Division of Developmental Disabilities Services

Division for the Visually Impaired

Division of Professional Regulation

Department of Safety & Homeland Security

Department of Education

Department of Transportation

Department of Finance

Department of Corrections

Department of Justice

JANITORIAL SERVICE LOCATIONS

Herman Holloway Campus

Beau Biden Readiness Center

Biddles Toll Plaza

Newark Toll Plaza

Dover Toll Plaza

Leonard L. Williams Justice Center

Carvel Building

Tatnall Building

Public Archives

Richardson & Robbins

Thomas Collins Building

Georgetown Division of Motor Vehicles

Lit I A I I I I I D I I I

Highway Administration Building

Georgetown Courts

Troop 2, Delaware State Police

Troop 5, Delaware State Police

State Fire Schools

New Castle County Fire Marshall

Kent County Court House

Fernhook Community Health Center

Department of Correction: Probation and Parole

Absalom Jones

Delaware Veterans Cemetery

Millsboro Veterans Cemetery



FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR DELAWARE'S "STATE USE" PROGRAM

The AbilityOne Commission, which oversees the federal set-aside contracts, has been exploring the impact of a reduction in the direct labor hour ratios – specifically, by reducing the ratio from 75% to lower ratios. The Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities has sought information about these efforts, but there is nothing available to guide Delaware state policy in this regard at this time.

The Commission continues to have an interest in exploring solutions to the transportation issues faced by people with disabilities who work under the two state set-aside contracts. Currently, public transportation options include regular bus service and paratransit service operated by **DART First State and the Delaware Transit Corporation**. In some cases, the fixed route bus service does not provide employees working under the set-aside contracts with a schedule that gets them to their workplace in a reasonable amount of time or at a reasonable hour. Any delays in the service can also result in a late arrival to work. The Commission would like to understand whether other transportation options may currently exist or may be developed to better meet the needs of these employees.

The Commission plans to create a video of a training for state employees that would help them understand the mandatory use provisions in the law as they relate to Temporary Employment Services positions that have been set-aside. An outline has been developed and a practice session was held. During FY 2024, members of the Commission, the staff of the Ability Network of Delaware, and the two subcontractors for Temporary Employment Services will conduct a training with state employees via Zoom that will be recorded and converted to a YouTube video, which will enable the information to be shared on websites and direct e-mails with state employees responsible for securing these services.





The Commission thanks these dedicated employees of Ability Network of Delaware for coordinating the work of the participating Community Rehabilitation Programs. LEFT: Kristy Trudel is A.N.D.'s Customer Service Manager. RIGHT: Matt Curcio is A.N.D.'s Director of Employment Supports.



2022-23 COMMISSION MEETING DATES & MEMBERS

July 19, 2022 | August 16, 2022 | September 20, 2022 | September 28, 2022 | October 18, 2022 | November 15, 2022 | December 20,2022 (Canceled) | January 3, 2023 | February 21, 2023 (Canceled) | March 28, 2023 | April 18, 2023 | May 16, 2023 | June 20, 2023

VOTING MEMBERS

Mr. Clint WalkerChair, Member of the publicMr. Doyle DobbinsVice-Chair, Member of the publicMr. Peter KorolykDirector, Government Support Services

Ms. Cynthia FairwellDeputy Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation RepresentativeMr. Jamie JohnstoneDeputy Principal Assistant (Department of Finance)ended July 2022Mr. Nathan RobyDeputy Principal Assistant (Department of Finance)July - October 2022Ms. Melissa MarlinDeputy Principal Assistant (Department of Finance)began January 2023

Ms. Cindy FarmerMember of the publicVacantMember of the public

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Ms. Deborah Talley Director, Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI)

Ms. Jill Morrison Designee for DVI

Mr. Thomas Cook Executive Director of Ability Network of Delaware (A.N.D.)

Ms. Jackelyn Gemenden CRP Representative began April 2023

SUPPORT STAFF

Ms. Michele Hamilton Administrative Specialist III, Office of the DVI Director

COMMISSION FOR STATEWIDE CONTRACTS TO SUPPORT EMPLOYMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Biggs Building, 1901 N. Dupont Highway, New Castle, DE 19720, 302.255.9810

<u>Click here</u> to see previous years of the Commission's Annual Report to the Governor.