



Department of Human Services – Colorado WINS

Partnership Agreement

I. Background

On November 2, 2007, the Governor signed Executive Order D-028-07 to implement reforms designed to enhance the delivery of services and products to the people of Colorado and intended to make state government more effective, efficient, reliable, and accountable. The success of these reforms depends on the ability to partner with and fully engage the State workforce. State employees possess unique insights, skills, and ingenuity about the public services they provide. By establishing a formal employee partnership program similar to practices undertaken in the private sector, state government managers and frontline workers will be able to jointly craft workplace goals and expectations and to collaborate on strategies to achieve those goals.

II. Vision Statement

The Partner's vision is for a superior system that efficiently delivers high quality services to people of Colorado through beneficial partnership with employees and management.

III. Mission Statement

The Partnership's mission is to promote a culture that encourages employees and department managers to collaboratively engage each other in a mutually accountable process to produce more efficient, reliable, and effective services and solutions for the people of Colorado. This environment will allow issues and opportunities to be addressed at the most appropriate level of the Department.

IV. Structure

- A. The Partners, CDHS management and Colorado WINS in its role as the certified employee organization, agree on a shared vision using the Partnership process to address working conditions of employees, resolve issues between

employees and management, and identify ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department. The Partnership will become the way business is conducted at the Department, with the Employee-Management Partnership formally integrated into existing operational structures of the Department at the facility or division level.

B. In line with this vision, the Partners will establish an Operations Committee that will oversee the functioning of the Partnership in the department.

C. The Departmental Partnership Team will continue to use the interest-based process to negotiate improvement in working conditions, address projects of department-wide importance, and ratify agreements from Employee Management Committees (EMCs) if appropriate.

D. Integrating the Partnership into the regular operations of the Department begins with the establishment of Employee Management Committees. These Employee Management Committees will be the core of the Partnership and will include Colorado WINS members and management within the boundaries of a facility or division, as determined by the Operations Committee.

E. Employee Management Committees will participate in achieving the goals identified in the mission and vision statements, and consistent with the intent of the Executive Order.

F. The Operations Committee is responsible for providing assistance and resources necessary to develop effective strategies necessary to achieve the goals of the Partnership within available resources. The Operations Committee is responsible for: identifying appropriate Employee Management Committees, appointing State/Colorado WINS co-chairmen; providing training and facilitation where appropriate; and, developing an overall implementation strategy for the process.

G. Colorado WINS is responsible for appointing partnership unit employees who are involved in the EMC and the Department is responsible for appointing management employee participants.

H. Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) may be invited to participate in Employee Management Committee meetings if their expertise is needed to effectively explore an issue.

V. Quality Improvements

The Department faces both challenges and opportunities in its future brought on by its extensive mission and the current budgetary constraints. The Partners agree that the Partnership provides the structure for addressing many of those challenges and maximize opportunities.

The Partners are committed to the challenge of bringing quality improvements through both organizational performance improvement and public service improvements.

A. Organizational Performance Improvements: The Partners are committed to improving the organizational performance through changes in organizational culture, developing and investing in staff, engaging employees at all levels, recognizing and reducing duplication, ensuring mutual accountability for performance, and developing and fostering Facility/Division Employee Management Committees.

B. Public Service Improvements: The Partners are committed to working together to achieve the objectives of the vision and mission statements. The Partners agree to pursue an employee-management partnership strategy in which each EMC will create a plan to implement the critical elements of public service quality improvement. Such elements include:

1. Developing a shared sense of purpose and identity among employees in each facility or division and how that unit contributes to the mission of the Department;
2. Maintaining and creating open communication between the Partners;
3. Improving the quality of the internal and external work product and services;
4. Ensuring an environment where the constructive expression of diverse viewpoints is respected, consistent with the Department's Code of Conduct;
5. Developing the skills and potential of employees to prepare them to actively participate in quality improvement efforts;
6. Developing techniques and tools to effectively identify and diagnose problems and make appropriate recommendations for resolution; and
7. Developing appropriate measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the Partnership.

VI. Addressing Facility or Division Issues

A. An effective procedure for resolving issues and identifying opportunities in the workplace is essential to the long-term success of the Partnership. Solving workplace concerns quickly and by those most involved is essential to establishing a more productive work environment and thus reducing conflicts, grievances, and client complaints.

B. The Partnership process will be a system to quickly identify and resolve workplace issues through the interest-based process by the Employee Management Committees for problems and opportunities relevant to their workplace.

C. The Operations Committee will monitor the process and final recommendations will be made to, reviewed and approved by the Departmental Partnership Team. Those recommendations will then be submitted to the Department's Executive Director for consideration.

VII. Definitions:

A. **Departmental Partnership Team (DPT)** – The collaborative workgroup tasked with developing and implementing the employee partnership for the Colorado Department of Human Services. The group is comprised of Colorado WINS officials, elected employee members, the Department's senior management, and the Governor's Designee for Employee Partnerships. Employees on the DPT will be given the appropriate release time to participate in the DPT and related subcommittee meetings. This group will also be assigned issues that: a) can not be resolved at the workplace level; 2) are beyond the scope and purview of the Facility/Division Employee Management Committees, including State-wide issues and Department-wide; or 3) any other issues that affect the Partnership. This team operates through a committee structure to address broader issues (See Attachment A):

Human Resources Committee
Direct Care-24/7 Committee
Communications Committee

B. **Operations Committee** – The Operations Committee is a sub-group of the Departmental Partnership Team tasked with the strategic planning and oversight of the larger group. This sub-group also deals with issues that require immediate action between regularly scheduled meetings of the departmental committee. (See Attachment B).

C. **Employee Management Committees** – These committees are designated to address issues and opportunities at the workplace level. The Operations Committee has agreed to confirm the number of EMCs and composition of each. These committees are comprised only of State management, appropriate SMEs, and authorized Colorado WINS employee representatives. Colorado WINS representatives will be elected or appointed members. State managers may continue to meet with existing employee groups, but only EMCs can represent employees in the Partnership agreement. (See Attachment C).

VIII. Employee Management Committees

Employee Management Committees are integral to the success of the Partnership. EMCs will allow for front-line staff and management to work together at their facility to improve services and working conditions, and address issues and opportunities at the most appropriate organizational level. EMCs help to open lines of communication between management and employees, creating a more engaged workforce. Establishing EMCs at the various facilities within DHS will reduce the number of issues that subcommittees will be tasked to negotiate. EMCs need to work within the parameters established this document.

A. Employee-management committees are to be used to leverage the skills and talents of both parties to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the specific work unit. Issues over which management at a facility does not have decision-making power may not be addressed. If an issues arises that should be addressed above the facility/division level, it should be submitted to the Departmental Partnership Team.

1. EMCs shall be formed at either the location or, if appropriate, the operational level. The EMC shall be empowered to work on relevant issues to that location or operational level. In order to build a broad, knowledgeable team, only one EMC shall be formed per location or operational level.

2. To ensure consistent policies and procedures are followed throughout DHS, EMCs will not be used to work on Human Resource or fiscal policies. These issues shall be directed to the Departmental Partnership Team or the Department of Personnel and Administration as appropriate.

3. EMCs co-chairs will ensure balanced representation between DHS and Wins representatives. It will be up to each EMC to determine the composition of representation. Any disputes will be forwarded to the Operations Committee for resolution.

4. EMCs will report annually to the Departmental Partnership Team issues, activities, resolutions and opportunities for improvement for activities undertaken in the last fiscal year. To facilitate this reporting, EMCs should maintain a written record of significant accomplishments throughout the year.

B. Both management and employees will make a good-faith effort to work collaboratively to address issues that are facility/division-specific and can be resolved in the respective EMC.

C. If issues are brought to EMC that are appropriate and cannot be resolved at EMC, they may be submitted by employees or management to the Departmental

Partnership Team on the Partnership Improvement Submittal Form (See Attachment D.)


D. The Partners in the EMC will be held mutually accountable for upholding, implementing, and communicating agreed-upon solutions. Implementation of all recommendations is subject to available resources.

E. Employees on the EMC will be given the appropriate release time to participate in their respective EMCs. Management is to be notified at least two weeks in advance of any scheduled meetings affecting on-duty staff to allow for scheduling accommodations. Denial of any request requires the approval of the respective Department Deputy Executive Director and communication to the appropriate Colorado-WINS representative.


F. EMCs should initially be held at minimum on a monthly basis or more frequently as decided jointly by management and employees, depending on circumstance and work schedules. EMC may mutually agree to meet less frequently as circumstances dictate.

G. EMCs should feel empowered to meet in between regularly scheduled meetings if a facility/division-specific issue arises that needs immediate attention.


Agreed to on October 22, 2009 by:



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