

---

**State of Vermont**  
**Vermont Commission on Women**  
126 State Street  
Montpelier, Vermont 05633-6801  
[women.vermont.gov](http://women.vermont.gov)

[phone] 802-828-2851  
[toll free] 800-881-1561

**Vermont Commission on Women**  
**Meeting minutes**

November 15, 2024 | 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Virtual meeting only

**Commissioners present:** Chair Esther Charlestin, Hazel Brewster, Kate Lucier, Alex Hilliard, Sophia Rabe, Aleta Sprague, Linda Joy Sullivan and Susan Sussman

**Commissioners absent:** Heather Bouchey, Kellie Campbell, Brenda Churchill, Nancy Kaplan, Annie Mackin, Ashley Messier, Kelly-Rue Riso

**Advisors present:** Katie Salina of Let's Grow Kids, Margaret Overman of Vermont Works for Women

**Staff:** Cary Brown, Ellie Lane, and Emily O'Hara

**Presiding:** Esther Charlestin

**Recording:** Ellie Lane

---

**1. Meeting called to order**

Meeting called to order at **9:00 a.m.**

**2. Approve Agenda**

Postponed due to lack of quorum.

**3. Approve minutes of October, 2024**

Postponed due to lack of quorum.

**4. Welcome & Introductions**

Esther welcomed everyone and created space for people to check in.

**5. Committee meetings in breakout rooms**

The committees went into breakout rooms and discussed their work.

**6. Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion work**

Esther led an activity with the group. The group did a virtual privilege walk and discussed the activity afterward.

**7. Committee reports**

Workplace Equity

The committee has decided to focus on rejuvenating the Equal Pay Compact, and to work on providing new opportunities for EPC signers. They will be sending out an email to signers, and will be reaching out with new opportunities, as well as offering one-on-one conversations. They will be hosting an online evening event about new equal pay legislation, and the compact. VCW is also collaborating with VWW on an event in March on pay equity.

**State of Vermont**  
**Vermont Commission on Women**  
126 State Street  
Montpelier, Vermont 05633-6801  
**women.vermont.gov**

[phone] 802-828-2851  
[toll free] 800-881-1561

Em developed a great document that highlights how people can get involved with VCW and our partners, and Kellie drafted an op-ed that will promote that document.

#### Reproductive Justice & Sexual Health

The group decided to change our name to the Reproductive Justice & Sexual Health Committee, and has committed to drafting a statement that recognizes and honors the origin of the reproductive justice movement, and includes everyone while recognizing the disproportionate impact of threats on reproductive health for women. Aleta is going to start drafting an initial draft and is welcoming any input in the meantime.

#### Women in the Criminal Legal System

The group is working to schedule a visit to the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility and an opportunity to meet with women who are incarcerated there. Em is going to work together with Cary to draft some paragraphs to contribute to the stakeholder report to the legislature being assembled by the stakeholder group convened by the DOC.

### **8. VCW Advisory Council**

A vote on adding new advisory council members was postponed due to a lack of quorum.

### **9. Updates**

Instead of a large event in January, staff suggested having Commissioners take on connecting with local legislators and introducing VCW. This could be by email, inviting them for a cup of coffee, or having a local community conversation with staff support. The group discussed options for events and engagement with legislators, including sharing our priorities via email early in the session. The Commission will send a broad email to all legislators and have Commissioners do individual follow-ups with their legislators.

Our next meeting will be an advisory council focused meeting to hear from them about their legislative priorities.

VWW received a WANTO grant for women in non-traditional careers. VWW is hiring a Trailblazers Program Manager as well as a part-time gender equity services coordinator. They launched an inclusive hiring toolkit and hoping to start educating workplaces about that. VWW is thinking about creating an affinity space for women in the trades.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.**