



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

The Baird Center, Milwaukee, WI

NOTE: You must have a name badge to attend any meetings, sessions and receptions.
All times are in Central Standard Time (CST).

TUESDAY | SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

MEETING ROOM: N205 (2nd Floor)

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. | **Breakfast | Baird Ballroom Foyer (4th Floor)**

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. | **Agenda Overview, Ice Breaker, and Approval of Minutes**

Chris Barron, Committee Chair, Communications Director, Washington State Employment Security Department

1. Overview of Agenda
2. Ice Breaker
3. Approve Minutes: [February Meeting Notes](#) | [April Meeting Notes](#) | [July Meeting Notes](#)
4. Thank you to our 2025-2026 Committee Leadership Team!

2026 Comms Leadership Team



Chair
Chris Barron (WA)
chris.barron@esd.wa.gov



Vice Chair
Jessica Smith (CO)
jessica.smith@state.co.us



Vice Chair Nominee
Jonathan McNair (AL)
jonathan.mcnaire@labor.alabama.gov



Past Chair
Diane Watkins (DC)
diane.watkins@dc.gov

9:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. | **NASWA Updates**

- **Michelle Marshel**, Senior Director, Communications & Events, NASWA

9:45 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. | **Welcome to Wisconsin | Showcase**

- **Haley McCoy**, Communications Director, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | **Workgroup Updates**

Workgroup & Resources Updates – Need Members!

- **Onboarding Workgroup: Lisa Fitz-Coy (NASWA)**

- Outreach Workgroup: **Erin Turbitt (WY)** – Lead
- Resources Workgroup: **Dawn Dovre (SD)** – Lead
- AI Workgroup: **Michelle Marshel (NASWA)**
- Award Workgroup: **Cher Haavind (CO)** – Lead

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. | **Beverage Break** | **N206 Foyer**

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | **Making Change Stick: Practical Frameworks for Real-World Results**

- **Greg Chilson**, *Organizational Change Manager, Washington State Employment Security Department*

Lead change with confidence. This dynamic session helps communicators use proven change management frameworks to guide complex transitions, overcome resistance, and build lasting momentum. Packed with relatable examples from state-level initiatives, this presentation gives clear language, practical tools, and inspiring success stories you can use immediately — whether your agency has a formal change program or is just getting started.

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. | **Hosted Lunch** | **Baird Ballroom Foyer (4th Floor)**

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. | **First Annual PEAK Project: Building an Administrative Transition Playbook**

Led by the Committee Leadership Team, the Communications Committee's first annual Planning, Execution & Agency Knowledge (PEAK) Project will allow attending committee members to work collaboratively on a joint project in which they can bring back a valuable, customizable deliverable to use in their own states.

In this inaugural hands-on professional development session, committee members will collaborate to create an Administrative Transition Playbook featuring employee engagement strategies, leadership talking points and FAQs, media relations guidance, press release templates, and social media resources. Members are encouraged to bring any examples from their states that they wish to share.

Participants will help develop a practical, customizable toolkit, adaptable templates, and peer-developed best practices they can immediately use to support transition planning and communications efforts at their agencies.

3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. | **Beverage Break** | **N206 Foyer**

3:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. | **Administrative Transition Playbook Review**

Committee leadership will facilitate a discussion recapping the key ideas, strategies, and resources identified by each project team. The group will discuss common themes, promising practices, and opportunities for alignment across agencies. Insights from the discussion will be synthesized into a unified Administrative Transition Playbook that committee members can use and adapt within their own organizations to support effective administrative transitions.

4:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. | **Election of Vice Chair-Nominee**

The **Vice Chair-Nominee** position serves on the Communications Leadership Team for four years, serving in this position for one year, then moving to Vice Chair, Chair, and Past Chair. Each position is for a one-year term. The Leadership Team meets monthly and is charged with oversight and planning for the committee.

Interested candidates, please send your self-nomination, including your statement of interest and experience, to Lisa Fitz-Coy: lfitz-coy@naswa.org. We will also take self-nominations during the meeting.

4:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. | 2025-2026 Leadership Team, Committee Business & Looking Ahead

- **Jessica Smith**, 2026-2027 Chair, and Public Information Officer, Colorado Department of Labor & Employment
 - Committee Business:
Proposal to rename the committee the *Communications and Public Affairs Committee* and invite legislative directors and staff from state workforce agencies to participate. If approved by the committee, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for final approval.
 - 2027 Excellence in Communications Award
 - Upcoming Virtual Meetings
 - Preview SUMMIT Breakout Sessions

5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. | SUMMIT Welcome Reception | Exhibit Hall D (3rd Floor)

Upcoming Association Year 2027 Meetings

Winter Meeting

February 11, 2027
Washington, DC

Winter Policy Forum: Feb 10

Fall Meeting

September 2027
Atlanta, GA

SUMMIT Dates TBA

SUMMIT Communications Track Breakout Sessions

- Elevating Employer Communications: Strategies That Inform, Engage, and Drive Action
- Positioning for Success: Communications During Administrative Transitions
- Is Your Data Telling the Right Story? Communicating Labor Market Information to Non-Technical Audiences
- Elevate Your Story: A Social Media Roundtable

[View the Draft Agenda](#) | [Learn More & Register](#)