

Mi Via Advisory Committee (MVAC) Quarterly Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2026, 12:30-3:30 PM
Meeting Location: Teleconference

1-Attendance and Introductions, Patricia “Trish” Gull 12:30-12:35

- ◆ Members are asked to state their name and role in Mi Via. Keep in mind each person will only have approximately 20 seconds to do this.
 - The meeting was officially brought to attention by Committee Chair Patricia “Trish” G. at 12:31 PM.

Member	State Staff	Absent	Presenter/Guest
Judy Sena	Selina Leyba, DDSD Community Programs Bureau Chief	Denise Balderas	Johanna Armendariz, CNRAG
Yvette Griego	Elaine Hill, DDSD Mi Via Waiver Program Manager	Manuel Lardizabal	Tracy Perry, ACQ
Patricia “Trish” Gull	Krystal Armijo, DDSD Mi Via Program Coordinator		Angelique Tafoya, Alta Mira Specialized Family Services
Shannon Eckert	Alicia Otoló, DDSD Mi Via Program Coordinator		
Chinda Lucoski	Inez Dominguez, DDSD Mi Via Program Coordinator		
Stevie Bass	Ana Orona, DDSD Mi Via Program Coordinator		
Tim Gardner	Christina Lucero, TPA Staff Manager		
Donna Brooks			
Elaine Palma			
Leon Revel			
Charles Clayton			

2-Review Agenda & Previous Meeting Minutes, Trish 12:35-12:40

- ◆ **Members will amend or approve agenda as needed and vote**

Leon R. motioned to approve the 1/22/26 agenda as written.
Charles C. seconded.
All voted in favor.
No further discussion or opposition.
Motion passed.

- ◆ **Members will amend meeting minutes as previously submitted prior to meeting as needed and vote on changes**

The Committee did not recommend any amendments to the 10/23/25 meeting minutes.

- Stevie B. commended the writer and stated that the meeting minutes were well written.
- Elaine H. clarified that Alicia O. serves as the MVAC Administrator and is responsible for taking meeting notes.
- Leon R. inquired about the process of submitting written comments for the record.
- Trish G. advised Leon R. to submit written comments directly to the MVAC Chair, who would ensure the information is shared appropriately.
- Elaine H. informed Trish G. that a question was raised in the chat from Tracy Perry regarding whether the meeting minutes could be shared with the Advisory Council on Quality Supports for People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (ACQ).
- Trish G. asked if it is standard practice to share meeting minutes with the ACQ.
- Stevie B. explained that meeting minutes are generally not shared; however, the ACQ Liaison can provide relevant information as needed.
- Leon R. stated that his practice is to share information whenever possible and requested confirmation from the MVAC regarding the sharing of meeting minutes.
- Stevie B. clarified that any information intended for the ACQ should be shared with Leon R. during MVAC meetings so that he may report back any relevant information when attending ACQ meetings.
- Trish G. inquired whether approved minutes are posted publicly on the Health Care Authority (HCA) website.
- Elaine H. confirmed that final approved meeting minutes are available on the HCA website.

Leon R. motioned to approve the minutes as written.
Charles C. seconded.
All voted in favor.
No discussion or opposition.
Motion passed.

3-Housekeeping, Elaine Hill 12:40-12:45

◆ Public comment sign-up

- No requests were made to speak during the public comment period.

4-Membership Committee Updates, Donna Brooks 12:45-1:00

- Donna B. stated that several MVAC membership positions remain vacant and noted that ongoing challenges include limited outreach avenues for recruiting new members.
- Donna B. reported continued issues with the HCA website.
- Donna B. stated MVAC meeting minutes beyond 2024 are not accessible.
- Donna B. explained that the Mi Via page on the HCA website is difficult to locate and appears inaccessible through standard website navigation.
- Donna B. noted that the MVAC bylaws currently posted on the HCA website are outdated (dated January 26, 2023), despite updated bylaws being presented to the MVAC on April 25, 2024.
- Donna B. provided an update regarding the Mi Via newsletter and stated that she prepared an article for inclusion in the spring; however, to her understanding, no newsletter has been issued to date.
- Donna B. explained that current recruitment efforts rely primarily on word of mouth and support from Mi Via consultants.
- Donna B. requested assistance from DDSD to encourage consultants to help disseminate information and promote MVAC applications.
- Donna B. thanked DDSD staff for updating the MVAC membership list and clarified that Chinda L.'s term was renewed for three years, with an expiration date of July 2028 (not 2027).
- Donna B. stated members with terms expiring in July of this year include Yvette G. and Tim G. and both were encouraged to submit new applications should they wish to renew their membership.
- Donna B. clarified that of the 17 total MVAC membership positions, two vacancies currently exist, with two additional terms expiring in July.
- Donna B. expressed optimism that full MVAC staffing could be achieved by the end of the year.

- Elaine P. asked whether DDSD could address the identified issues or who should be contacted to have them resolved.
- Elaine H. stated that Selena L. responded in the chat requesting that the article be sent again to DDSD, noting that there wasn't any publication of the newsletter for several months.
- Elaine H. further stated that DDSD is actively working on website updates and will include the updated bylaws.
- Donna B. noted that the website includes a table of contents for an MVAC orientation packet containing 11 documents, which she had not previously seen.
- Donna B. stated that this aligns with a previous suggestion made by Leon R. regarding orientation materials for new MVAC members.
- Stevie B. asked when newsletter content beyond March 2025 would be published.
- Selena L. explained that the newsletter was redesigned and republished in December 2025 and will now be published on a bi-monthly basis rather than monthly.
- Leon R. asked whether it would be helpful for consultants to have brief, standardized language or materials to share with new Mi Via participants describing the MVAC, including its purpose, current activities, and relevant website information.
- Stevie B. asked whether consultants would be informed during their consultant meetings to notify participants about MVAC membership opportunities.
- Elaine H. stated that she can include this reminder during the DDSD consultant meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 29, 2026.
- Leon R. asked whether consultants could share a one-page informational sheet about the MVAC with new Mi Via participants, noting that the ACQ has a similar document that provides a clear overview of information available to participants.
- Stevie B. asked who would be responsible for developing the informational sheet, specifically whether it should be created by an MVAC member or by state staff.
- Charles C. stated that he is willing to draft a one-page document as a starting point and will circulate it to the MVAC for review.
- Trish G. noted in the chat that Chinda L. received an email regarding a "register account" page from an individual identified as Eugene Vigil at the HCA and expressed concern that it might be a scam.
- Elaine H. confirmed that Eugene V. is an HCA employee and stated that she would follow up to verify whether the email was legitimately sent.

5-Member Response to Updates from the Health Care Authority/Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (HCA/DDSD), Trish 1:00-1:30

- ◆ **Members will have a chance to provide their feedback on prepared summaries sent by HCA/DDSD**
 - Elaine H. reviewed the HCA/DDSD PowerPoint presentation sent to the MVAC prior to the meeting.
 - Charles C. noted that training compliance reports may not fully reflect trainings completed by Mi Via participants and families, as some trainings do not appear in the University of New Mexico Center for Developmental Disabilities (UNM-CDD) Training Hub portal.
 - Charles C. stated that Visions Case Management will collect examples over the next month and provide them to DDSD.
 - Elaine H. noted that the examples will be forwarded to DDSD's Training & Knowledge Management Bureau.
 - Stevie B. suggested that DDSD staff conducting health and wellness visits also be responsible for completing home studies for Mi Via participants receiving in-home living support (IHLS) services.
 - Stevie B. raised a question regarding how significant environmental concerns identified during a home study would be addressed if a family is unable to afford necessary remediation.
 - Elaine H. stated that there are many nuances associated with home study requirements and clarified that these discussions are occurring to gather feedback and determine possible next steps.
 - Charles C. stated that oversight of Mi Via participants has already significantly increased, noting current requirements of 12 in-person visits annually, including at least four home visits, compared to prior standards.
 - Charles C. expressed concern that implementing home studies would add an unnecessary additional layer of oversight.
 - Charles C. stated that Visions Case Management would like DDSD to ensure consultant agencies fulfill their responsibilities.
 - Charles C. explained that sufficient oversight mechanisms already exist and indicated that the state should better leverage the oversight currently in place.
 - Elaine P. asked whether home studies are being considered at this time or if DDSD has already determined this as a future direction.
 - Elaine H. clarified that no determination has been made and that DDSD is considering the potential implementation of home studies, with the topic open for discussion and feedback.
 - Elaine P. suggested that the state utilize existing sources of information rather than adding an additional visit requirement for participants and families.

- Leon R. asked how home studies would be funded and whether costs would be taken from a participant's annual budget.
- Leon R. also inquired how home studies might impact the role of consultants who are already conducting in-home visits and reporting.
- Elaine H. stated that these questions have been documented and will be forwarded to DDSD leadership for consideration.
- Leon R. asked how new and current participants can be educated to understand the differences between waiver programs, noting the importance of this information.
- Leon R. suggested including this content in the one-page informational sheet being developed by the MVAC.
- Donna B. stated that if home studies were implemented, they could be subjective and have the potential to become very thorough, in-depth visits.
- Yvette G. stated that home studies could create inconvenience for participants and families and may contribute to increased anxiety and stress.
- Trish G. asked whether a home study would be conducted as part of a health and wellness check or separately.
- Elaine H. clarified that a home study is not the same as a health and wellness check.
- Stevie B. asked if there is a deadline for providing feedback on the Mi Via Service and Support Plan (SSP).
- Elaine H. stated that she would reach out to Claudia Rice, DDSD Constituent Support Manager, to obtain this information.
- Leon R. asked whether guidance, including examples, will be provided on how the new gross receipt tax (GRT) funds can be used to address access barriers, particularly in rural areas.
- Charles C. explained that GRT funds are available through the budget via revision and can be used to access any available Mi Via services.
- Elaine H. confirmed this information and stated that GRT funds may be used for services that are approved or provided through the Mi Via waiver.
- Charles C. explained that not every service with a vendor previously included gross receipts tax (GRT) in its calculation; however, on January 1, an automatic update was implemented, removing GRT from vendor services and reflecting it separately in the FOCoSonline system.
- Charles C. stated that this update has affected the total amount of funds available to participants for goods and services and noted that the automatic GRT update has created complications with significant implications for budgeting services involving vendors.

- Charles C. stated that Visions Case Management will continue to assist families in escalating issues to Conduent but asked who to contact if the escalation does not resolve the problem.
- Selina L. stated that concerns can be sent to Melanie Buenviaje, DDS Deputy Director, and provided her email address in the chat.
- Leon R. asked how the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) rate study will be evaluated to ensure it translates into meaningful access for participants, particularly those in rural and tribal communities.
- Elaine H. stated that the link to the rate study will be shared with the MVAC via email.
- Stevie B. complimented the state on providing a thorough presentation during the meeting.

6-Current/Upcoming Issues facing Mi Via, Trish 1:30-2:00

- ◆ **Members will have a chance to ask questions and provide feedback**
 - **MVAC Bylaws discussion**
 - **Schedule Bylaws Committee meeting**
 - Elaine H. reported that a response was received from Eugene V. and advised that the MVAC should not open any emails appearing to be from him, as they were not sent by him.
 - Donna B. confirmed the members of the MVAC Bylaws Committee as Trish G., Stevie B., Elaine P., Leon R., and herself.
 - Donna B. stated that a meeting is needed and raised a question regarding who has access to schedule meetings using Google Teams.
 - Donna B. asked whether state staff are required to attend Bylaws Committee meetings.
 - Elaine H. clarified that Bylaws Committee meetings are limited to MVAC members but stated that DDS is available to help as needed.
 - Leon R. shared that he received a letter from Conduent regarding an information security breach and advised MVAC members to exercise caution if they receive suspicious or questionable emails.
 - Selina L. stated that DDS has a Chief Information Officer who handles information security breaches.
 - Selina L. explained that once DDS is made aware of a breach, the situation is evaluated, addressed appropriately, and impacted parties are notified as needed.

- Trish G. asked for clarification on who should be contacted if a questionable email is received.
- Selina L. advised MVAC members to continue reporting concerns to Elaine H. or herself so they can be escalated accordingly.
- Donna B. volunteered to schedule the Bylaws Committee meeting.
- **Follow-up on Vineland discussion**
 - Elaine P. confirmed that she provided Trish G. with a summary of the Vineland Assessment Manual for submission to DDSD for review and determination regarding whether the information may be shared with Mi Via participants and families.
 - Trish G. stated that she would forward the information to DDSD.
- **Stipends for MVAC**
 - Trish G. reported that she was informed by Scott Doan, DDSD Deputy Director, that the stipend request for MVAC members will be submitted, with the expectation that MVAC members may begin receiving payment in 2027.
 - Trish G. announced that, due to personal reasons, she will step down as MVAC Chair for the remainder of her elected term and stated Donna B. has agreed to serve as Chair until the next election.
 - Trish G. clarified that she intends to remain an MVAC member.
 - Donna B. stated that, according to the MVAC Bylaws (Article 7, Officers, Section 2), the Chairperson may resign from their position without resigning from the committee.
 - Donna B. noted that a Vice Chair may be elected at the April MVAC meeting.
 - Donna B. expressed well wishes to Trish G. and shared her encouragement and optimism for the MVAC moving forward.

7-Member Recommendations for Mi Via 2:00-2:15

- ◆ **Members will have the opportunity to share ways they have identified that Mi Via might be improved and/or simplified. Members are asked to make sure their suggestions are framed in a positive way, and to include potential solutions. Members are asked to make sure their improvements address issues affected by multiple participants, and not just one individual.**

- Donna B. stated that the attorney she recommended to present on special needs trusts at the October MVAC meeting is available to present at an upcoming meeting.
- Donna B. added that if the MVAC would like to hear the presentation, she can arrange it and welcomed suggestions for additional topics to be covered.
- Elaine P. suggested incorporating a Q&A section into the Mi Via newsletter to reach a broader audience.
- Stevie B. noted that several items discussed at the last meeting were not completed and suggested revisiting them to ensure they are addressed.
- Stevie B. stated that while the MVAC discussed creating a to-do list at the end of meetings, it was not determined who would be responsible for completing it and asked whether this would be handled by DDS staff or an MVAC member.
- Stevie B. volunteered to maintain the to-do list, noting that she already does so for all MVAC meetings.
- Elaine H. asked for clarification on how the MVAC would like items captured on the to-do list.
- Stevie B. clarified that the to-do list serves as a follow-up record of all items discussed during the meeting and stated that she will send the list to Elaine H. for distribution within DDS.
- Stevie B. requested that a representative from Palco be invited to a future meeting to discuss ways to make paystubs more informative and useful for Mi Via participants and families.
- Stevie B. noted ongoing issues with federal income tax withholding for caregivers and suggested that Palco could improve the educational value of paystubs.
- Selina L. stated that DDS is working with Conduent to develop a new paystub and requested that specific recommendations be sent to her via email.
- Selina L. also reported that DDS received a step-by-step guide from Conduent to help participants, EORs, and providers understand each section of the paystub, which will be shared with the MVAC.
- Stevie B. requested a discussion on additional funding and asked whether funding is reviewed annually or every three years.
- Stevie B. asked if someone has been identified to develop new MVAC member training materials.
- Donna B. suggested that the MVAC orientation packet on the HCA website could serve as a starting point.
- Stevie B. inquired who would be responsible for developing the materials and suggested that it may be more appropriate for state staff to complete this task.

- Elaine H. stated that she would take this request to DDS leadership.
- Donna B. stated she would take the lead on working with state staff to assemble the 11 documents identified in the table of contents and have them posted on the website.
- Stevie B. asked for an update on the Socialization and Sexuality Education (SSE) service as a standalone waiver service.
- Selina L. stated that DDS is planning to submit a waiver amendment to implement SSE as a standalone service and advised MVAC members to watch for official notices regarding public comment opportunities.
- Leon R. asked whether the MVAC would consider holding educational meetings as working sessions rather than formal meetings, noting the effectiveness of listening sessions conducted by ACQ.
- Charles C. stated that some families have expressed concern about the rotating nature of in-home assessors.
- Charles C. noted that having a new assessor each year can be challenging and uncomfortable and that finding a way to provide more consistency in staffing would be beneficial for families.
- Elaine P. suggested that follow-up items be added to the next meeting agenda to ensure they are addressed and documented.
- Charles C. agreed with this approach.

8-Advisory Council on Quality Supports for People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (ACQ) Liaison Update, Leon Revel 2:15-2:30

- ◆ Members will hear about topics at recent ACQ meetings that are of interest to Mi Via participants
- ◆ Members will have the opportunity to propose topics that the ACQ liaison will share on behalf of the MVAC at the next meeting of the ACQ
 - Leon R. reported attending his first ACQ meeting in early January.
 - Leon R. discussed the importance of ensuring MVAC meeting minutes are shared across all lines and identified this as a personal goal.
 - Leon R. stated that topics of discussion included stipends for MVAC members and the HCBS rate study.
 - Leon R. noted that there was an opportunity to provide input on the rate study, and stated he submitted comments, which

he will share with the Chair for dissemination to the MVAC as appropriate.

- Stevie B. asked Leon R. whether he felt welcomed by the ACQ.
- Leon R. stated that he was impressed by the ACQ and shared that he was voted in as an official board member.
- Leon R. advised the MVAC that email is his preferred method of communication for any information members would like him to convey as this allows him to relay it accurately.
- Leon R. emphasized his commitment to maintaining strong, consistent communication and ensuring information continues to flow effectively between the MVAC and ACQ.
- Tim G. stated that both the MVAC and ACQ are fortunate to have Leon R. involved and serving as a liaison between the groups.
- Tim G. noted that the MVAC strives to uphold the legacy established by Stevie B., highlighting her as an example of how community members can effectively and assertively use their voices.
- Tim G. reiterated his position from previous meetings that stipends for MVAC members have been required per ACQ Bylaws for several years.
- Tim G. expressed concern that if payments begin in calendar year 2027 rather than fiscal year 2027 (starting in July), MVAC members would face an additional six-month delay.
- Trish G. confirmed, based on her email communications with Scott D., that the stipend request is on track for FY27.

9-Public Comment, Elaine Hill 2:30-2:45

- ◆ **Nonmembers who have signed up for comment at the beginning of the meeting will have an opportunity to speak**
 - No requests were made to speak during the public comment period; however, a comment was provided in the chat by Angelique Tafoya of Alta Mira Specialized Family Services.
 - Elaine H. read Angelique Tafoya's comment regarding home studies, which emphasized the importance of considering the intentions behind the requirement for completing initial home studies.
 - Angelique T. stated that a single home study is insufficient unless it is regularly monitored and updated annually, referencing the detailed guidance in the DD waiver standards and suggesting similar specifics should apply to the Mi Via waiver.

10-Proposed New Business, Trish 2:45-3:00

- ◆ Members will have an opportunity to suggest topics of interest for future MVAC meetings to include special guests, trainings, areas of concern or celebration, etc.
 - Stevie B. reiterated her interest in having a representative from Palco discuss paystubs.
 - Stevie B. also suggested inviting an attorney to provide information on trusts and having a speaker address the process for accessing additional funding.

11-Final Comments and meeting adjourned, Trish 3:00-3:30

- ◆ Members will have an opportunity to say any last comments not already addressed in the meeting
 - Leon R. inquired whether an email would be sent with options and times for the Bylaws Committee meeting.
 - Donna B. confirmed that she would email the committee members to schedule the meeting.
- ◆ Members will vote to adjourn meeting

Leon R. motioned to adjourn the meeting.
Charles C. seconded the motion.
No discussion or opposition.
Meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm

- ◆ Due to weather and connectivity issues, Leon R. submitted comments via email to MVAC Chair Trish Gull following the 10.23.25 MVAC meeting; however, these comments were not forwarded to HCA/DDSD for inclusion in the meeting minutes. Leon R. has requested that his comments be formally incorporated into the meeting minutes as part of the official record. He provided a copy of his original email to HCA/DDSD on 2.4.26. Leon R.'s original comments are included in the box below:

MVAC–Key Points for Committee Dialogue (Oct 2025)
Please know, my points are observations and considerations, not positions, I know everyone here has a full plate, and I want to thank HCA and DDSD for all they do to keep Mi Via strong and I just want to help ensure families, especially in rural and tribal areas, understand and access the supports available to them.

My questions are intended to promote understanding and fairness

for all participants. I'm not asking for more support for one group over another but for a system that ensures every participant's assessed needs are met, even when rural and tribal logistics make service delivery harder.

Questions to HCA and DDS leadership. I believe our common goal is to strengthen communication, transparency, and confidence in the waiver renewal process, not to assign oversight. Each question aims to improve understanding and ensure participant needs remain at the center of all decisions.

Priority Discussion Areas

1. Service Protection

Families sometimes find Mi Via information difficult to follow, especially when it involves policy or funding updates, like the renewal. Clear, simple communication helps everyone stay on the same page to avoid confusion and anxiety among participants.

- Proposed action: can waiver updates be shared in plain language so families can easily understand their options and responsibilities. A one pager that could include short summaries or visual guides, acronyms, budget reflections, developed jointly with HCA, DDS, and consultants, to support consistent messaging across the program.

- Proposed action: can Mi Via process include an optional communication consent process check, so participants can authorize their consultants to receive updates, notices, or plan information when needed. This keeps consultants and families aligned and reduces paperwork errors without limiting participant independence.

3. Budget Equity and IBAs

Rising provider rates and inflation can outpace IBA adjustments, reducing service hours and the overall impact of participant budgets. These shifts affect families statewide, especially where costs vary by region.

- Proposed consideration: Encourage HCA and DDS to continue reviewing IBAs through their established processes, using real-world data such as inflation trends and provider rate studies, to help keep budgets aligned with service costs.

- Proposed consideration: Support transparent, plain-language updates that explain how rate adjustments or cost-of-living factors

influence participant budgets. This helps families plan ahead and builds trust through understanding.

- Proposed consideration: Recommend coordination with other state agencies such as Workforce Solutions, Transportation, and Indian Affairs to track external cost pressures that affect rural and tribal communities. Sharing this information during key budget discussions or legislative sessions could provide valuable context for decision-makers.

4. Access and Rural & Tribal Logistic

Families in rural and tribal areas often face fewer providers, longer travel distances, and higher service delivery costs. These challenges are not about preference—they reflect logistical realities that affect access for many across New Mexico.

- Proposed action: can HCA and DDS explore flexible service models that address provider shortages and long distances, such as telehealth, mobile supports, and self-directed hiring. Request that data on provider availability and wait times be reviewed regularly to identify service gaps early, ensuring resources are directed where they're most needed. These insights can help inform future waiver planning and budget recommendations submitted through HCA and DDS to the Governor's Office.

5. Quality and Participant Feedback

Mi Via remains one of New Mexico's strongest examples of family-driven choice. Its success depends on staying connected to the experiences of those it serves. This is not about oversight or additional layers of review, it's about collaboration by choice.

- Proposed consideration: can HCA and DDS explore simple, participant-focused ways to see how self-direction supports individual goals, such as whether families can find needed providers or maintain consistent services through the year.

- Proposed consideration: Support voluntary listening sessions where participants, consultants, and family caregivers can share successes and ideas for improvement. These gatherings should focus on partnership and learning, not evaluation.

- Proposed consideration: Recommend that feedback shared through these sessions be summarized in plain language for both families and the committee, showing progress and keeping everyone motivated to move forward together.

The Mi Via program thrives when families, consultants, and state partners work together. These points are shared in the spirit of collaboration, not as formal questions or directives. They are meant to keep communication open and ensure the program continues to grow with the needs of New Mexicans.

- How can IBAs stay responsive to inflation and provider costs while maintaining flexibility for participants?
- What lessons can we learn from the new Additional Funding review process to support families with complex needs?
- How can communication reach every family, especially those with limited broadband, technology, or language access?
- What strategies are most effective for helping rural and tribal families maintain consistent services despite workforce shortages?
- How can we continue to celebrate what Mi Via does well while identifying small, practical improvements through ongoing dialogue?