



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Office of the Governor

### Commission to Examine Racial Inequity in the Law

#### AGENDA

Thursday, May 21, 2020

1pm – 3pm

Via WebEx

[Recording available here](#)

1. Call to Order
  - a. Cynthia Hudson called the meeting to order
  - b. Commissioners in attendance:
    - i. Cynthia Hudson
    - ii. Andy Block
    - iii. Birdie Jamison
    - iv. Carla Jackson
    - v. Jerrauld Jones
    - vi. Hank Chambers
    - vii. Mike Herring
    - viii. Jill Hanken
    - ix. Leslie Chambers Mehta
  - c. Commissioners not in attendance: none
2. Public Comment
  - a. Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander thanked the Commission for its work and shared her hope that the Commission is renewed for another year by the Governor because the work remains so vitally important.
3. Administrative Items
  - a. Vote on meeting minutes: approved  
Abstentions: Leslie Mehta
4. Debrief on legislative Process for Phase I
  - a. Jessica Killeen shared with the Commission the end result of the Commission's report recommendations. All bills proposed to repeal race-based Acts of Assembly as recommended by the Commission passed the General Assembly unanimously and were subsequently signed by the Governor.
5. Remarks and [Presentation by Coronavirus Health Equity Leadership Taskforce](#)



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Dr. Janice Underwood presented on behalf of the Taskforce. The taskforce is made up of the following experts in three agencies (Governor's Office, VDH and VDEM).

- a. Dr. Janice Underwood | Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer , Office of the Governor
- b. Alaysia Hackett | Special Assistant to Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, Office of the Governor
- c. Sable Nelson-Dyer | Acting Director, Office of Health Equity, VDH
- d. Curtis Brown | Chief Deputy State Coordinator, VDEM
- e. Dr. Lauren Powell | Equity Consultant, VDEM

The Taskforce is working to assess needs and gaps, both vertically and horizontally, felt by minority communities regarding access to healthcare. The broader Health Equity Task Force, which the Leadership Taskforce represents, is at the top of the Coronavirus Unified Command. This includes state agencies and advocacy groups. The Taskforce is focused on the following three buckets: Equity Education, Community Engagement, and Internal Collaborations.

### Key presentation takeaways:

- Virginia is the only state that proactively created a Health Equity Task Force. It was formed March 13, 2020. Task Force is operational and uses a whole government approach.
- Sable Nelson: discussed what has been done so far with a focus on using data and paying close attention to vulnerable communities. Based on that data the Taskforce is tailoring approaches taken to each individual community. More info can be found on VDH's website – how to apply a health equity lens (for agencies and contract tracers). Black, Asian, Latinx, Rural, Disability. Collect data. Submit questions ahead of time and summarize info into an FAQ.
- Working with all the state agencies, Health Equity Task Force sat down with every state agency to help craft their proposal, then created a document to support those proposals for the CARES Act funding.

The Taskforce will be hosting a townhall at 7pm [on May 21<sup>st</sup>] on ABC8 to hear Virginians' concerns.

### 6. Presentation from University of Virginia Researchers

Law students from the University of Virginia [presented](#) information on racial disparities in Virginia in the following areas as assigned by the Commission, and submitted a [policy memo with recommendations](#) for the Commission to consider:

- a. Kelsey Massey – Housing
- b. Juliet Buesing & Christopher Yarrell – Education
- c. Trust Kupupika – Voting



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- d. Wes Williams – Criminal Justice
  - e. Andy Block – the effects of COVID on the minority community
7. Phase II Process Discussion & Next Steps
- a. Cynthia Hudson and the Commissioners thanked the students for all their hard work, as well as the members of the Health Equity Work Group.
  - b. Birdie Jamison invited the students to come to another legislative Commission meeting to share the same presentation with that group.
  - c. Jill Hanken also thanked the students and the task force members, and asked that the Commission continue to look into injustices in the area of healthcare. The Commission agreed to continue to look into that area.
  - d. Judge Jones urged that the next phase of should focus on educational disparities.
  - e. The Commission will examine Education & Criminal Justice at the next meeting in June.
8. Adjournment
- a. The Commission adjourned and plans to meet in June to discuss Criminal Justice and Education issues and will meet again in July to discuss Voting, Health and Housing issues. Dates for these meetings were to be determined.