

SMALL BUSINESS COMPLIANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

May 21, 2026

Members Present: Laura Griffin, Samantha Harmon, Jeremy Hancher, Richard Burrell, Dale Kaplan (Virtual), Walter Schroth (Virtual), Eric Kuijpers (Virtual), Donald Poligone (Virtual)

Members Absent: Rebecca Oyler

Call to Order and Introductions

The Small Business Compliance Advisory Committee's (SBCAC or Committee) May 21, 2026 meeting was called to order by Jeremy Hancher, at 10:01 a.m. in the Rachel Carson State Office Building, Room 105, Harrisburg. Several in attendance also joined via Teams conference call.

Members of the Committee and attendees in Room 105 introduced themselves.

Administrative Items

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

The February 12, 2026, draft meeting minutes were approved as written.

Public Comment Period

Two individuals signed up in advance of the meeting to provide the following summarized comments. The written comments were sent to the SBCAC members in their entirety after the meeting.

Karen Feridun, Co-Founder, Better Path Coalition and No False Climate Solutions PA

We oppose the plans to rescind the Pennsylvania Heavy-Duty Diesel Program. Loosening diesel emission standards for vehicles threatens to weaken regulations on other critical pollution sources, such as the backup turbines utilized by the booming data center industry. Amid federal environmental rollbacks, Pennsylvania must strengthen its own clean air protections.

Barbara Brandom, Concerned Health Professionals of PA, under the auspices of the Physicians for Social Responsibility

Air pollution from heavy-duty diesel engines poses severe public health risks. Pennsylvania's enforcement of strict California Air Resources Board (CARB) emission requirements has been suspended since 2021. Addressing this regulatory gap and strengthening emission rules is essential to protect public health and mitigate one of the leading global environmental threats.

Informational Items

Environmental Management Assistance Program (EMAP)

Jeremy Hancher, EMAP Program Manager, provided an update on EMAP activities for the first quarter of 2026 (January 1 to March 31).

DEP referred an automotive service facility to EMAP for assistance with the Pump and Plug program. This is a grant program to reimburse eligible owners of non-upgraded underground storage tanks for proper product pumping, interior cleaning, and fill-pipe grouting/closure. The facility's total project/reimbursement request across their eligible tanks is valued at \$15,000.

A chocolate manufacturing business found EMAP's info by searching on DEP's website while researching small business assistance. The inquiry translated into a client engagement and an onsite assessment was conducted. On top of stormwater issues, EMAP discussed and assessed air quality issues.

Air quality permitting and compliance inquiries focused on air permitting applicability for generators, rock crushers (stationary and mobile), paint booths, dryers, dry cleaners, automotive shops, and other small industrial and service operations, including SOOP renewals and air monitoring questions.

Non-air-related requests for Water, Waste, and Environmental Management included residual waste management and reporting (Form 26R), medical and chemical waste disposal, dry-cleaning solvent regulations, wastewater and stormwater permitting, drinking water permits, and water treatment systems. EMAP received multiple requests relating to Small Business Advantage Grant eligibility, HVAC and energy efficiency incentives, alternative financing and loan options, and industrial property development.

Mr. Hancher announced that Kaplan's Careful Cleaners, of Camp Hill, was selected as recipient of the 2026 Small Business Environmental Assistance Program's Stewardship Award, recognizing exceptional leadership in pollution prevention, sustainability, and peer mentoring. The award centers on a project led by SBCAC Committee Chair, Dale Kaplan, and his daughter, Alana Kaplan. Together, they successfully transitioned their family business away from hazardous perchloroethylene (Perc) dry cleaning equipment to an environmentally friendly aqueous cleaning system. In completing this project, they not only created a healthier environment for their employees and customers, but they will also realize thousands of dollars in annual operational savings through reduced costs associated with solvent purchases, waste fees, and compliance.

Small Business Ombudsman (SBO) Report

DEP SBO, Samantha Harmon, shared that Pennsylvania's Small Business Environmental Assistance Program was recognized with the 2026 Small Business Environmental Assistance Program's Excellence Award. The award recognizes outstanding leadership, innovation, and excellence in providing environmental assistance to small businesses.

Ms. Harmon provided a status update on the Small Business Advantage Grant program (SBAG), an annual program for energy efficiency and pollution prevention and natural resource protection assistance. There should be a full list of 2025-2026 grants executed by the end of May, and there are plans to make public announcements of the awards. The 2026-2027 SBAG program is expected to open in mid-July 2026. Amounts and eligibility for the program are expected to remain unchanged. There are efforts underway to update the program documents to improve accessibility and make them easier to understand for the layperson.

The Pollution Prevention Assistance Account (PPAA) loan program has \$1,754,426 available as of March 30, 2026.

There was some committee discussion regarding DEP employee recruitment in response to Ms. Harmon's mention of recently representing DEP at local high school career fairs.

Draft Proposed Regulation to Rescind 25 Pa. Code Chapter 126 Subchapter E – Pennsylvania Heavy-Duty Diesel Program

Catherine Menke, Air Quality Program Specialist for DEP Air Quality, presented on the Draft Proposed regulation to rescind the heavy-duty diesel program. If finalized, Pennsylvania would no longer follow the standards for heavy-duty diesel by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and rather follow federal standards.

Ms. Harmon asked why this is being rescinded now, instead of after litigation between CARB and EPA is over. Mr. Trowbridge indicated that harmonization between CARB and EPA appears unlikely, and a decision to rescind was chosen to provide more certainty to the regulated community until the regulatory landscape on this matter becomes more certain.

Mr. Hancher asked if there are potential small business impacts of the rescission. Ms. Menke indicated that the rescission would likely reduce complications for small businesses. Small businesses looking for a heavy-duty diesel generator would not have to confirm that the unit is CARB certified, and this also makes it easier for dealers of such equipment.

Draft Proposed Regulation 25 Pa. Code Chapters 121 and 127

Luke Zeisloft, Air Quality Engineering Specialist, presented on Draft Proposed Rulemaking for Administrative Amendments to 25 Pa. Code Chapters 121 and 127, relating to changes in the language specific to air quality general permits. The provisions in the proposed rulemaking govern how applications for authorization to use air quality general permits are reviewed, the timelines involved, and under what circumstances applications are approved or denied.

Mr. Schroth and Mr. Burrell inquired about the timeline for the permitting process and that it might be difficult for small businesses to meet some of the timeline requirements.

Mr. Wenrich responded that that timelines are set by statute, and DEP is simply incorporating language of the statute into Pennsylvania's code.

Mr. Hancher asked if there has been a public comment period for this proposed regulation. Ms. Griffin said there will be a public comment period, although there are still many steps left prior to DEP's submission for public comment, and thus it will be months until the public comment period opens. Those interested in being notified of when the public comment period opens can use DEP's eNOTICE website to sign up for notifications associated with air quality items or regulations, including advanced notice of the opening of a public comment period.

Annual Monitoring Network Plan

Bryan Oshinski, DEP Environmental Group Manager, presented an overview of the Bureau of Air Quality's Annual Monitoring Network Plan. This plan is a federal requirement for all states for the establishment of an air quality surveillance system consisting of various types of air quality monitors that are appropriately sited and operated and have a clear purpose. Mr. Oshinski detailed changes to Pennsylvania's plan and provided reasoning for the addition and re-establishment of specific monitors in 2026. DEP's 2026 Annual Monitoring Network Plan will open for a 30-day comment period in June 2026 on DEP's eComment website.

Ms. Harmon asked if there are any upcoming National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) revisions that influence the Annual Monitoring Network Plan. Mr. Oshinski replied that nothing currently from the NAAQS is influencing the changes.

Election of Officers

As Chair Kaplan was having some technical difficulties during this part of the call, the election of officers was postponed until the following meeting.

Ms. Griffin plans to reach out to counsel and determine the appropriate process for committee elections and share this with the Committee.

Other Business and Discussion

Deborah Wehr shared information on DEP's Guidance for the Application of Regional Civil Penalty Assessment Procedures. This is an internal technical guidance document that the Division of Compliance and Enforcement uses when businesses are not complying with the law. When a notice of violation is received, this policy is used to determine penalty amounts. There have been no public comments, and it will now continue through the approval process to be published as a final technical guidance document.

Adjournment

The SBCAC meeting was adjourned at 11:41 p.m.

The next SBCAC meeting is scheduled for August 20, 2026.