

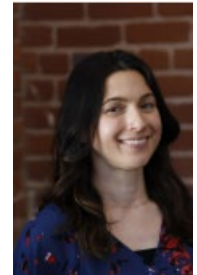
New Commission Staff

October 23, 2025

Abby Lavine

Research Scientist II

Abby holds a M.A. in Developmental Psychology from the University of California, Davis. Abby works on mixed-methods research and evaluation projects to support behavioral health outcomes, including an evaluation of an early childhood and maternal behavioral health initiative.

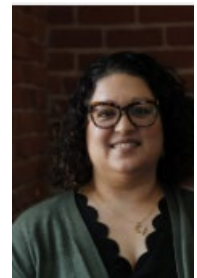


Before joining the Commission, she conducted large-scale studies of educational interventions and technology, provided technical assistance to support county-led behavioral health initiatives, and led research projects on early childhood mental health interventions. Abby is passionate about using data-driven insights and building engagement with community partners to improve behavioral health outcomes for children, families, and communities.

Melissa Velasquez

Human Resources Chief

Melissa Velazquez brings over 18 years of distinguished service in California state government, with deep expertise in human resources management, labor relations, and organizational leadership. She was recently appointed as the Commission's Chief of Human Resources, where she provides strategic oversight and guidance on performance management, employee relations, and workforce policy development.



Melissa's career spans several key state agencies, including CalSTRS, the California Military Department, the Department of Financial Protection and Innovation, CalRecycle, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's California Correctional Health Care Services, and the Employment Development Department. In each of these roles, she has led high-impact teams, developed and implemented HR policies, and served as a trusted advisor to executive leadership on complex personnel matters.

Melissa is known for her collaborative leadership style, her commitment to staff development, and her ability to navigate complex regulatory frameworks with clarity and precision. She is also a certified ergonomic evaluator and has led department-wide initiatives to improve workplace health and safety.

Melissa holds a reputation for integrity, professionalism, and a deep commitment to public service. Her leadership continues to strengthen HR operations and foster a culture of accountability, inclusion, and support across the organizations she serves.

Chris Lee

Research Scientist II

Chris Lee joins the Commission with a background in social welfare and applied research. Prior to joining the Commission, she served as a senior researcher with the Possibility Lab at UC Berkeley, working with government and community partners to help inform data-driven policy and programming. This followed several years of experience evaluating programs in support of young people and families involved with children and family services and collaborating with community colleges to help inform career and technical education programs with data and research.



Chris first began her career as a childcare worker supporting young people placed in emergency foster care and residential treatment settings and enjoys working at the intersection where research meets policy and practice, especially in support of our most vulnerable communities. Chris holds a Ph.D. and MSW in social welfare and a bachelor's degree in English.

Lindee Lane

Staff Services Manager II

Lindee Lane is an experienced social sector leader with a focus on youth development, community building, and human-centered solutions. Prior to consultancy Lindee held leadership roles within local government and statewide nonprofits in California for more than a decade, successfully reimagining systems to improve socio-economic outcomes at scale. She has designed and led innovative policies, programs, and broad-scale initiatives that center communities, particularly those on the margins, and connect them – and the organizations that serve them – to resources and meaningful opportunities to dream and thrive.



Appointed as the City of Sacramento's first Youth Development Policy Manager, Lindee established the executive Office of Youth Development where she led implementation of the City's first continuous quality improvement system to inform strategic citywide youth and family investments while creating clearer linkages across youth-serving systems and policies.

As a National Urban Fellow, Lindee earned her master's degree in public administration from the City University of New York, Baruch College while completing an executive mentorship residency at the City of Indy Mayor's Office of the Front Porch Alliance. She is a first-generation college graduate, earning her B.A. in History from California State University, Sacramento and is an alum of the CORO Youth Development Fellowship program.