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On the Web: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/news.htm>

DWD Secretary Appoints LeAnna Ware to Oversee Equal Rights Division

Longtime Civil Rights Bureau Director Returns from Retirement to Lead Division

MADISON – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today announced the appointment LeAnna Ware as Administrator of the agency's Division of Equal Rights (ERD), effective August 23.

"I am pleased that LeAnna Ware will be overseeing our Equal Rights Division that is charged with protecting the fundamental rights of our state's workforce," Secretary Gassman said. "LeAnna brings a wealth of experience to this role and she will be a tremendous asset to the agency's management team."

Ware's previous tenure with DWD dates to 1975 in the Division of Worker's Compensation. Within two years, she took a position in ERD and held investigative and supervisory roles. In 1992, she became Director of the Civil Rights Bureau, responsible for investigating and resolving complaints of discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations, as well as enforcement of the Family and Medical Leave Act. She remained the Bureau's director until she retired from state civil service in December 2009.

In addition to her work in Equal Rights, Ware also served as a member of the Madison Equal Opportunities Commission and is a founder of the Dane County Fair Housing Council. In addition, Ware currently is President of the Dane County chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

Ware succeeds outgoing ERD Administrator Jennifer A. Ortiz, who is becoming an Administrative Law Judge in the DWD's Division of Unemployment Insurance this month in Milwaukee. Ortiz worked for 17 years as an attorney and supervisor with the Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee Inc. prior to her appointment as ERD Administrator in 2006.