

CONNECTICUT ADULT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PLANNING COUNCIL BYLAWS

Article I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Adult Behavioral Health Planning Council, hereinafter referred to as the "Planning Council."

Article II: VISION and MISSION

Vision

The Planning Council will be recognized as a strong voice in the continuous improvement of Connecticut's mental health and substance use treatment and recovery system and be responsive and respectful to the needs and desires of people receiving treatment and recovery services.

Mission

The Planning Council will advise, advocate, and make recommendations to the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), as well as perform the duties specified in the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Block Grant authorizing legislation in the Public Health Services Act (42 USC – 300x).

Article III: PURPOSE & FUNCTION

The Planning Council serves as the advisory body to the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) on its application and plans for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Community Mental Health Block Grant (CMHSBG) and Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Block Grant (SUPTRBG). The Planning Council serves as a forum for communication among key constituencies and state agencies having a strong interest in issues that affect persons identified at risk for or having a substance use disorder and/or mental health conditions. The Planning Council promotes partnerships among state agencies, providers, boards, consumers, and families to address the mental health and substance use disorder service needs of Connecticut residents.

Article IV: AUTHORITY & DUTIES

Under Section 1914 of the Block Grant Agreement, the State will establish and maintain a Planning Council to perform the statutorily defined duties which are to:

1. Review the combined Community Mental Health Block Grant (CMHSBG) and Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Block Grant (SUPTRBG) plan;
2. Serve as an advocate for adults with mental health conditions and/or substance use disorder;
3. Monitor, review, and evaluate, not less than once each year, the allocation (i.e., resources and/or funding) and adequacy of behavioral health services within the State;

The Council will:

1. Advise and make recommendations to Connecticut's Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS),
2. Advocate for persons with mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders and for recovery oriented, integrated, community-based systems supporting the highest quality of life;

3. Act as requested by the DMHAS Commissioner or his/her designee.

Article V: MEMBERSHIP

SECTION ONE: Membership Composition

Federal legislation requires that persons who are in recovery, family members of persons in recovery, and other advocates who are not employed by state agencies or service providers to compose 50% or more of the Planning Council membership. In addition, Federal legislation requires states to include in their membership one representative from each principal state agency with responsibilities for education, vocational rehabilitation, criminal justice, housing, social services, Medicaid, mental health/substance use, and aging. The following representatives shall meet these requirements.

1. **Persons in Recovery:** Persons in recovery from a mental health condition and/or substance use disorder. Individuals can be current or former consumers of mental health and/or substance use disorder services. The Planning Council shall seek to maintain four or more members of this category.
2. **Family Members:** Parent or other family member of an individual(s) with a mental health condition and/or substance use disorder. The Planning Council shall seek to maintain four or more members of this category.
3. **Other Advocates:** Individuals advocating on behalf of persons in recovery who are not state employees or providers of mental health or substance use disorder services. The Planning Council shall seek to maintain four or more members of this category.
4. **Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations (RBHAOs):** One designee appointed by each of the regional advocacy organizations. The RBHAOs are strategic community partners who work across the behavioral healthcare continuum to assess and advocate for the behavioral health needs of children, adolescents, and adults across the regions. Each RBHAO is responsible for a range of planning, education, and advocacy activities within one of DMHAS' Uniform Service Regions.
 - a. Region 1: The HUB
 - b. Region 2: Alliance for Prevention Wellness
 - c. Region 3: SERAC
 - d. Region 4: Amplify, Inc.
 - e. Region 5: Western CT Coalition
5. **Required State Agency representatives:** One representative appointed by each principal state agency with statewide responsibilities for education, vocational rehabilitation, criminal justice, housing, social services, Medicaid, mental health/substance use, and aging.
6. **Service Providers:** Individuals who provide mental health and/or substance use disorder services, or representatives of an organization that provides these services.
7. **Ad Hoc Representatives:** The Planning Council may invite additional persons as Ad Hoc representatives to assist in meeting its purpose. Representatives of various constituency groups or other experts in the mental health or substance use field may be asked to join as ad hoc

representatives; they may participate in both plenary and committee meetings of the Planning Council as well as special committees of the Council. Ad Hoc representatives may be members of the community, as well as the private/public/state government.

8. **Open Meetings:** Planning Council is an open meeting. The Chairperson has the discretion to limit public participation of guests who are not on the agenda to a few minutes at the beginning or end of the meeting, or to allow public participation in discussion.

SECTION TWO: Membership Terms

To ensure robust and sustained participation of Planning Council membership, and to ensure the skills and experience of members are retained, no term limits are currently in place for general members.

SECTION THREE: Appointment of Planning Council Members

The Chairperson shall solicit nominations of Persons in Recovery, Family Members of Persons in Recovery, Advocates, and Service Providers for Planning Council membership. The Chairperson shall review submitted nominations and present nominees to the Planning Council for a vote of approval by simple majority.

SECTION SIX: Conflicts of Interest - Transparency and Disclosure

Prospective members will be asked to disclose all organizational affiliations as part of the membership nomination process. Members shall refrain from using their position on the Planning Council to advocate for the granting of funds to an organization with which they are affiliated.

SECTION SEVEN: Resource Persons/DMHAS Staff

The DMHAS Block Grant State Planner shall serve as the Primary Resource staff to the Planning Council. The DMHAS Primary Resource Staff is responsible for working with the Chairperson, other DMHAS staff, and other Planning Council members to conduct the activities of the Planning Council.

In addition, DMHAS will appoint staff with expertise in prevention, treatment and recovery services for substance use and mental health to the Planning Council. These staff will attend Planning Council meetings with the purpose of providing information, resource, and expertise regarding the DMHAS service system. These staff will attend all Planning Council meetings and provide information, but do not have voting privileges.

Additionally, the Planning Council will have regular access to staff who implement the State Block Grant Plan and who shall have “standing” resource/liaison responsibility to provide information to the Planning Council.

Article VI: OFFICERS

The officers of the Planning Council shall be chairperson and Vice Chair. The chairperson of the Planning Council must not be a state employee as defined by federal legislation in the membership criterion. At least one officer position shall be filled by a person in recovery, a family member of someone in recovery, and/or an advocate who is not employed by a state agency.

SECTION ONE: Duties of Officers

- A. Chairperson:

The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings. S/he shall be responsible for developing and approving meeting agendas with support of the Vice Chair and the Block Grant State Planner. S/he shall receive and disseminate all nominations for new membership from the Vice Chair. S/he shall initiate and preside over Planning Council agenda items and decisions requiring a vote from membership. S/he shall represent the Planning Council in various meetings at the request of the Block Grant State Planner. S/he shall also review and sign all official correspondence from the Planning Council.

B. Vice Chair:

The Vice Chairperson shall serve in the role of Chair and shall hold all the powers of the Chair when that official is unable to preside at meetings. S/he shall be responsible for developing meeting agendas with support of the Block Grant State Planner. S/he shall solicit all nominations for new membership. S/he shall represent the Planning Council in various meetings at the request of the Block Grant State Planner. Along with the Chair, s/he shall review and sign all official correspondence from the Planning Council. With support from the Block Grant State Planner, s/he shall alert Planning Council members and interested persons to program resources, training events, information seminars, etc., which are available from a variety of sources.

SECTION TWO: Term of Office

The term of each officer is three years. An individual may serve up to two consecutive terms as officer. Upon the end of an officer's term or when an officer is no longer able to serve in their role, nominations for a replacement will be solicited by the Vice Chair and/or the Block Grant State Planner. Nominees will be reviewed by Planning Council membership. If multiple nominees are submitted a popular vote of the presiding membership, excluding said nominee(s), will decide which nominee is elected. If only one nominee is submitted, a simple majority vote of the presiding membership will be used to decide whether the nominee is elected.

Article VII: MEETINGS AND QUORUMS

SECTION ONE: Regular Meetings

Planning Council shall meet not less than four (4) times a year. The dates, time, and agenda shall be determined by the Planning Council Chairperson in consultation with council members and designated DMHAS staff. Notice of all Planning Council meetings containing the date, time, location, and agenda shall be provided to all members at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

SECTION TWO: Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Planning Council Chairperson, with at least 7 days advance written notice to all officers and members. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson based on a request from Planning Council members or DMHAS.

SECTION THREE: Quorum

A quorum for conducting a meeting of the Planning Council shall not be required, however, when meeting attendance is less than 50% of the membership, those present shall determine by majority vote whether actions/decisions may be approved by a majority vote of members present or deferred until a majority of members are present.

SECTION FOUR: Confidentiality

To provide Planning Council members a safe and secure environment, no personal stories and/or personal information shall be shared outside of meeting proceedings unless expressly allowed by the member that shared such information.

SECTION FIVE: Attendance and Removal of Planning Council Members

Planning Council members and officers who have three absences in a twelve-month period may be subject for removal and may be replaced with another member who fits the same demographic profile. The Planning Council Chairperson may consider mitigating circumstances and will determine whether to remove or retain members who have missed three meetings.

Article IX: VOTING PROCEDURE

All actions requiring approval of the Planning Council shall be decided by a simple majority vote of those members present and eligible to vote, unless otherwise specified in these bylaws (See Article VII, Section Three).

Article X: RULES OF ORDER

Planning Council operates through the use of a consensus model; however, the rules of order contained in Roberts' Rules of Order may be used to govern the deliberations of this Planning Council.

Article XI: CONFLICT RESOLUTION

When two (2) or more members have a conflict to such a degree that the Planning Council's proceedings are disrupted, the Chairperson and Vice-Chair will meet with and attempt to resolve the conflict between the parties. If the member (or members) refuse(s) to resolve the conflict they may be asked to exclude themselves from the Planning Council until they can return as a productive member(s) or the conflict has been resolved on its own.

Article XI: AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to the By-Laws must be submitted in writing to the Planning Council Chairperson at least 30 days prior to the next scheduled meeting. Changes in bylaws require an approval vote of three-fourths (3/4), once a majority (51%) of voting membership is present.