

Coalition For Elder Justice in Connecticut Steering Committee

Bylaws of the Steering Committee Ratified

Article 1. Purpose

The Coalition of Elder Justice in Connecticut (the Coalition) is a multidisciplinary, statewide group of private and public stakeholders working together to educate, prevent abuse and protect the rights, independence, security, and well-being of older adults in Connecticut.

Article 2. Mission Statement

Leverage a multidisciplinary statewide group of private and public stakeholders to educate, prevent abuse and protect the rights, independence, security, and well-being of older adults.

Goals

- Raise awareness of justice initiatives focused on older adults.
- Support statewide collaboration and development of potential solutions to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and address other issues related to justice for older adults.
- Promote the rights and autonomy of older adults.

Definitions

“Member” or “Member Organization” means a state department, private entity, or individual who has a desire to promote the rights of older adults and advocate for the prevention of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation and who has signed up for membership by completing and submitting an application form.

“Representative” means an individual on the Steering Committee who represents a Member Organization with a vested interest or concern in matters affecting older adults.

“Steering Committee” means the committee of the CEJC responsible for overseeing the Coalition's mission, goals, and all initiatives related to advancing justice for older adults.

“Action Team” means a group of individuals consisting of Steering Committee Representatives and Coalition members, appointed by the Steering Committee, who are tasked with undertaking initiatives that support the Coalition's mission.

Article 3. Steering Committee Representatives

3.1 Voting Member Organizations. . The Steering Committee will be comprised of ten (10) to twenty (20) voting Member Organizations each represented by one

Representative. Together, they provide support, guidance, and oversight of progress on behalf of the Coalition. The Coalition will embrace inclusivity and seek to represent diverse interests, geographic areas (of the state), age, racial and ethnic groups, as well as individuals with varying abilities.

- 3.2 Member Organizations on the Steering Committee may include: state agencies or departments, private entities, and/or individual(s) with a vested interest or concern in matters affecting older adults.
- 3.3 Steering Committee Member Organizations. The Co-chairs shall nominate an individual or entity to be a Member Organization on the Steering Committee. Upon a motion of any Member Organization Representative, and confirmation the addition of the nominated individual or entity does not exceed the number of voting representatives permitted in Article 3.1., the Representatives of the Steering Committee shall vote to add the individual or entity as a Member Organization in accordance with Article 6.3.
- 3.4 Each Member Organization of the Steering Committee shall designate a primary Representative, and an alternate to attend quarterly meetings (if the primary representative is unavailable). Representatives of agencies, departments, or groups do not need be approved by the Steering Committee.
- 3.5 Steering Committee Co-chairs shall be elected by the Steering Committee Representatives in accordance with Article 7.
- 3.6 A Secretary shall be elected by the Steering Committee Representatives in accordance with Article 7.
- 3.7 Within 60 days of becoming a Representative of a Member Organization on the Steering Committee, each Representative will receive orientation materials designed to familiarize them with the purpose and goals of the Steering Committee. The Co-chairs or their designee shall take responsibility for ensuring that the orientation materials are provided, and that each new Representative receives an orientation about the goals and work of the Coalition.
- 3.8 Ex Officio Members. The Steering Committee may appoint ex officio, non-voting Representatives. These Representatives shall not be included in the count of Steering Committee Representation for the purposes of the requirements outlined in Section 3.1.

Article 4. Terms of Steering Committee Membership

- 4.1 Representatives of Steering Committee Membership Organizations shall serve a term of two years.

4.2 There is no limit on the number of terms a Representative may serve.

4.3 The term of a Representative shall be automatically renewed at the end the second calendar year of the Representative's appointment, unless the Member Organization notifies the Co-chairs of their wish to appoint a new Representative, or the Member Organization withdraws from participation in the Steering Committee.

Article 5. Duties of Steering Committee Representatives

5.1 A Representative of each Steering Committee member organization is expected to attend all regular meetings. After three (3) unexcused absences or failures to designate an alternate to attend on his/her/their behalf, the Steering Committee Co-Chairs, in their discretion, may remove the individual or entity. To be excused, a Representative shall notify a Co-chair either electronically or in writing before or immediately after the meeting.

5.2 Before an alternate can serve, their name must be submitted to at least one of the Co-chairs, along with an indication of whether they will act as the Member Organization's Representative for a specific meeting or the remainder of the Representative's term. An alternate will hold the same voting privileges as the originally appointed Steering Committee Representative.

5.3 A Representatives of a Member Organization on the Steering Committee shall serve as a liaison to the broader group of consumers, providers, advocacy organizations, and state agencies they represent.

Article 6. Conduct of Meetings

6.1 Steering Committee will meet no less than 4 times per year. As a public led organization, all meetings will be conducted in compliance with state Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirements. Meeting dates, agendas and meeting minutes shall be provided to Representatives on the Steering Committee via email and posted on the Secretary of State's website in accordance with FOIA.

6.2 A quorum shall be met when a simple majority (51%) of voting Representatives of the Steering Committee Member Organizations are present. A simple majority (51%) of those in attendance is required for the approval of motions.

6.3 Approval of two-thirds of those voting Representatives in attendance is required for any amendments to the bylaws and election of new Steering Committee Co-chairs and Secretary.

6.4 Voting Representatives shall declare their affiliations and any real or perceived conflict of interest prior to discussing or voting on a motion.

6.5 To the maximum extent feasible, meetings will be held at times and locations that are accessible to all. Upon request, materials will be made available in alternative formats to the extent possible.

6.6 Upon request and in compliance with state and federal laws, the Coalition may provide reasonable accommodations related to accessing meetings.

Article 7. Officers and Elections

7.1 Co-chairs

7.1.1. Terms of Co-chairs: Co-chairs shall be elected in alternating years for a two-year term, subject to the approval of the Steering Committee. A Co-chair's term may be renewed for two additional years. However, no Co-chair shall serve more than two successive terms. When their term as Co-chair has ended, they may remain as a Representative member of their Member Organization on the Steering Committee.

7.1.2. One Chairperson shall be selected to be Representative of a state department or public agency, and one Chairperson shall be a Representative of a private organization that supports older adults.

7.1.3. Elections for Co-chairs shall take place during a 4th regular Steering Committee meeting on or about October of each calendar year. A nominee shall be elected in accordance with Article 6.3.

7.1.4. If a Co-chair must step down prematurely due to circumstances such as illness, unexpected retirement, or a job change, the Nominating Committee will present a proposed successor at the next scheduled meeting following the Co-chair's resignation. A nominee shall be elected in accordance with Article 6.3.

7.2 Secretary

7.2.1 Term of the Secretary: A Secretary will be elected for a two-year term, subject to the approval of the Steering Committee. A Secretary's term may be renewed for two years.

7.2.2 The Secretary may be selected from the Representatives of either a state department or public agency. The Secretary, however, is not required to be a Representative of the Steering Committee Member Organizations. A Secretary may be elected from the general Coalition membership. In such case, the Secretary shall not have voting privileges.

7.2.3 Election of the Secretary shall take place during a 4th regular Steering Committee meeting on or around October, every other calendar year. A nominee shall be elected in accordance with Article 6.3.

7.2.4 The Secretary's responsibilities include distributing meeting agendas, recording meeting minutes, and ensuring that agendas and meeting minutes are posted in accordance with sections 1-200, 1-225 to 1-232, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes.

7.2.5 If the Secretary is absent from a meeting, the Co-chairs shall appoint a Steering Committee Representative to temporarily assume the Secretary's responsibilities as needed.

7.2.6 If a Secretary must step down prematurely due to circumstances such as illness, unexpected retirement, or a job change, the Nominating Committee will present a proposed successor at the next scheduled meeting following the Secretary's resignation. A nominee shall be elected in accordance with Article 6.3.

Article 8. Committees

8.1 Standing Committees

Standing Committees will be established to carry out the goals and objectives of the Steering Committee. The Committees shall have such authority and shall perform such duties as the Steering Committee shall hereafter determine.

There shall be the following Standing Committees:

8.1.1. Nominating Committee- The Nominating Committee shall nominate for the positions of Steering Committee of Co-chairs and Secretary in accordance with Article 3 and Article 7.

8.1.2. By-Law Committee- The By-Law Committee will review and make recommendations for revisions to the Steering Committee bylaws every fall in odd numbered years.

8.2 Action Teams

The Coalition Action Teams are established by the Steering Committee to carry out initiatives that support the Coalition's mission.

8.3 Composition and Duties of Action Teams

- 8.3.1** The Co-chairs of the Steering Committee shall appoint an Action Team chair. The chair of each Action Team will serve as a designated liaison between the Action Team and the Steering Committee.
- 8.3.2** Coalition members may serve as Action Team Members but at least one member of each Action Team must be a Representative of the Steering Committee.
- 8.3.3** Each Action Team shall meet as needed to complete their assigned tasks and provide regular updates to the Steering Committee.