

# **Behavioral Health Advisory Council Bylaws**

## **Article I - Name**

The name of the organization shall be the Behavioral Health Advisory Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) to the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, (hereinafter referred to as the Department).

## **Article II - Purpose**

The purpose of this Council shall be to utilize a forum of stakeholders to advise the Department in the planning and implementation of a behavioral healthcare system that is person and family-centered.

## **Article III - Membership**

### ***Section I - Representation of Membership***

This Council shall consist of a representation that fairly offers the Department, Individuals affected by the Behavioral Health System, the Community, the Providers and other Stakeholders, an equal voice of recommendations for providing a comprehensive behavioral health care system.

#### **Section 1a - Criteria for Membership**

The Secretary of DHHR, or his/her designee (someone with oversight authority for DHHR), shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member and shall be in attendance at meetings on a regular basis. Other appropriate DHHR staff shall attend regularly as resources to the Council.

Organization or agency representatives (other than Department), and their alternates, shall be appointed by member agencies or organizations which represent individuals impacted by the behavioral health system (primary and secondary), the community, and providers. Applicants for membership which are made after March 21, 2001, must make written application to the Secretary of the Advisory Council (see Terms of Membership below). Each application shall be reviewed by the Advisory Council Membership Committee and presented to the Advisory Council to render a decision on the applicants request for membership. Representatives of the Council are required to embody at these Council meetings the issues and

concerns of a broad group of constituents rather than those of a single organization or entity.

Individual members will include 1 adult and 1 adolescent [or parent/guardian] who have disabilities in these categories: substance abuse, mental health and developmental disability. An individual member is defined as a person from the above categories with an emphasis on people who have utilized the services of the behavioral healthcare system. The individual may not represent nor be employed by a behavioral healthcare organization or service provider.

Individuals may not send alternates.

*Section 1b -- Composition of voting membership*

The following is the desired membership. Voting membership shall include representation of the following categories:

Up to eight (8) statewide Organizations representing individuals affected by the behavioral health service system;

Up to eight (8) statewide Provider/Professional organizations;

Up to Four (4) statewide Organizations that include representatives of both above groups (ie. coalitions);

Six (6) Individuals that have been affected by the behavioral health system (emphasis on individuals who have utilized public services).

*Section 1c - Criteria for Voting Membership*

Members representing the Department shall not have a vote in matters of the Council. Only those designated representatives of member organizations and individual members shall have one vote.

*Section 1d - Terms of Membership*

The term of office for those representatives currently serving shall continue until they are replaced by the member organization or so choose to no longer serve on the Council. Individual members shall be afforded the same terms as above. The Council Membership Committee will review applications for membership as vacancies occur and/or as a need for additional representation is identified.

Members are expected to attend meetings on a monthly basis (organizational members may send the designated representative or alternate). Three consecutive absences will result in removal from membership. If an organization or individual member is removed, they may reapply for membership.

*Section 1e - Membership Committee*

A standing Membership Committee shall be appointed by the chairperson to review applications for membership to the Council. New applications will be reviewed as vacancies occur. Recommendations will be made to the full council for approval.

### ***Section II - Administration***

The Council supports the participation of members by ensuring that council meetings and activities are fully accessible and providing accommodations to Council members with disabilities. It is each council member's responsibility to request necessary accommodations. Accommodations will be provided at all Council meetings and activities once a council member confirms with Council staff that they will be attending the meeting or activity.

The Council supports individual members by providing reimbursement for reasonable expenses necessary to participate in Council meetings. The administrative year for the Council shall run in conjunction with the State fiscal year.

The Department shall provide administrative support to the Council including, but not limited to:

- Meeting locations
- Technical support
- Clerical support and staff
- Distribution of minutes and other materials as requested by the Council
- Alternate formats of all materials distributed to the Council

### ***Section III - Resignations***

A member of the Council may resign by written notice to the Department with a copy to the Council Chairperson.

### **Article IV - Officers**

The officers of the Council shall be elected by the Council and shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and a Secretary to be elected from within the Council membership. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be elected from the voting membership. The officers will serve a term of one year.

### **Article V - Meetings**

Meetings may be called at any time by the Department, Council Chairperson, or upon written request of any 3 representatives. Meetings are open to the public.

## **Article VI - Quorum**

A simple majority of the voting membership of the Behavioral Health Advisory Council will constitute a quorum. The Council will use consensus as the primary decision-making process. Alternative decision-making processes may be determined by the Council officers as appropriate.

## **Article VII - Subcommittees**

The Council may appoint subcommittees as needed to accomplish business. The subcommittees are short term and may meet as needed outside the full Council. Minutes of these meetings will be dispersed at the next full Council meeting.

## **Article VIII - Amendment of Bylaws**

The Council may amend the Bylaws with a quorum present as needed to meet the goals and objectives outlined for the Council. Provided that written notice of the proposed amendment(s) shall be sent to the voting members at least ten (10) days prior to any meeting at which action to amend the Bylaws is proposed.

Enacted 6/20/2000  
Revised 10/17/2001  
Revised 05/21/2003