California Mental Health Planning Council
Operating Policies and Procedures
Excerpts Related to Committee Functions

Committee Meetings

Committees may employ consensus as the method of decision making.

Requests from Members for Issues To Be Placed on Agenda

A Planning Council member may request that an issue be discussed during a Planning Council meeting through the following process:

- The member should consult with the Executive Officer or other staff prior to submitting a written request to place an item on the agenda
- The member must make a written request to the Executive Officer
- The member should provide background and any written material necessary to explain the issue
- The Executive Officer will consult with the Chairperson of the Planning Council who will place the issue on the agenda of the full Planning Council or refer the issue to the Executive Committee or to one of the standing committees

Committee Policies and Procedures

1. Each Planning Council member is required to serve on one functional committee and is encouraged to serve on one of the system of care subcommittees. Planning Council leadership will make assignments to the committees based on expertise as well as balancing the committees as much as possible by distributing consumers, family members, providers, consumer-related advocates, and state representatives.
2. Planning Council leadership will appoint a committee chair and vice chair annually in January.
3. To assist them in their work, committees may use state consultants or other consultants who are not Planning Council members but who possess special knowledge, skill, or background relative to the committee's jurisdiction. The Executive Officer must approve use of paid consultants. Subject to the approval of the Executive Officer and availability of travel funds, a committee chair may offer to pay the travel expenses for consultants.
4. The committee Chairperson, Vice-Chair, or Planning Council staff may decide on the need for a meeting. Planning Council staff will make meeting arrangements and notify committee members of the meetings by telephone or by mail. Planning Council staff will support committee activities by providing issue analyses, background documents, and other necessary materials.
5. Between committee meetings, committee chairs will inform the Planning Council staff of any significant developments relating to the committee's projects.
6. Committees may appoint members who are not Planning Council members to serve on their committees in order to enhance the expertise of the committee. These members are voting members of the committee.
7. Members who have non-voting status at the General Session of the Planning Council are given the right to vote at committee meetings.

Positions on Legislation

1. At the beginning of each calendar year, the Executive Committee will recommend a legislative platform to be adopted by the Planning Council. This platform is based on mental health policy and program issues on which the Planning Council has consensus.

   a. When staff identify newly introduced bills that fall within the Planning Council's legislative platform, these bills are assigned approved positions immediately and a position letter is sent to the author and appropriate committee chairs.

   b. These approved positions are noted on a cover sheet of the legislative bill file that is distributed to Planning Council member in a bi-weekly memo.

   c. Any Planning Council member who is concerned about a position taken on a bill that falls within the purview of the legislative platform may request that it be reevaluated by the Executive Committee

   d. If a bill is substantially amended, staff reviews the bill to determine if it is still within the purview of the legislative platform. If not, the bill will go back to the Legislation, Regulations, and Funding Committee for deliberation.

2. Staff will analyze other legislation that does not fall within the purview of the legislative platform and make recommendations on positions to the Legislation, Regulations and Funding Committee. When analyzing legislation, staff will consult with Council members concerning bills in their areas of expertise. Staff will recommend positions that are consistent with what they perceive to be the Planning Council's consensus on the issue.

3. 4. The Legislation Regulations, and Funding Committee adopts positions on all other bills by consensus. Those positions are:

   Support
   Support if Amended
   Oppose
   Oppose unless Amended
   Watch (neutral)

5. Staff will send position letters to legislators.

6. Planning Council members are responsible for reviewing those positions and notifying the Planning Council office of any concerns about the positions.

7. Planning Council members who are concerned about a position taken on a bill may request a copy of the bill from staff. If, after evaluating the bill, a Planning Council member is still opposed to the position adopted by the Legislation, Regulations and Funding Committee, staff will communicate those concerns about the bill to the Executive Committee for action.

8. The Executive Committee will reevaluate the positions on bills to which Planning Council members object. If the Committee upholds its original position, that position will stand. A Planning Council member may request a poll by mail of the whole Planning Council or that the bill be scheduled for discussion at the next meeting. In the interim, the decision of the Executive Committee will stand so that the Planning Council may be active in advocating for the bill.

9. If a bill is discussed by the full Planning Council, the Planning Council will decide which position to take by majority vote.

Requests for Support or Endorsements

The Planning Council does not endorse individuals for employment or public office. The Planning Council will consider supporting requests for endorsements of grants from organizations to whom the Planning Council is required by statute to give advice, from organizations whose requests are consistent with the principles and values in the *California Mental Health Master Plan*, and from organizations whose requests are consistent with our legislative platform. The Executive Committee will be consulted on all requests.

Attendance Policy

Planning Council Attendance

The Planning Council has established a policy of meeting four times per year. All members will be notified annually of the meeting schedule for the year. Planning Council members are expected to attend as many meetings as possible. If a Planning Council member misses two or more meetings in a 12-month period, the Chairperson of the Planning Council will send a letter to that member with a copy to the Director of the Department of Mental Health. The letter should clearly state that, by missing two meetings in a year, the member is not participating in 50 percent of the Planning Council's activities, and therefore, cannot adequately contribute. A member who misses three meetings in a 12-month period or does not actively participate in the Planning Council's activities will be referred to the Director of the Department of Mental Health who may ask that member to resign.

Attending a committee meeting or the Executive Committee meeting on Wednesday or one of the committee meetings on Thursday morning does not count as being in attendance at the full session on Thursday afternoon or Friday.

Committee Attendance

Committee meetings occur during 2-day Planning Council meetings and in between Planning Council meetings. Meetings held independently from the Planning Council meetings are usually scheduled based on a poll to determine the date that most members can attend. Committee members are expected to attend as many committee meetings as possible. The Planning Council's committees are an integral part of how the Planning Council conducts business. The purpose of having an attendance policy is to ensure that the Planning Council's committees can operate effectively and efficiently.

Attendance records from each committee meeting will be maintained. If a committee has difficulty achieving a quorum due to the continued absence of a committee member, the committee chairperson will discuss with the member the reasons for his or her absence. If the problem persists, the committee chair can request that the Executive Committee remove the member from the committee.