

Governing Rules of the Disability Rights Florida PAIMI Advisory Council

I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the **PAIMI Advisory Council**, hereinafter referred to as the "Council."

II. Purpose of the Advisory Council

As required under the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI) Act, 42 U.S.C. 10801 et seq., the purpose of the Council is to:

- A. Advise Disability Rights Florida staff and the governing authority on policies and priorities to be carried out in protecting and advocating for the rights of individuals with mental illness in Florida.

- B. Complete a section of the annual PAIMI program performance report that describes the activities of the Council and its assessment of the operation and quality of services of the PAIMI Program.

- C. Work with the governing authority of Disability Rights Florida and the PAIMI program staff members jointly to develop the annual statement of objectives and priorities for the PAIMI program.

- D. Educate the public about the purpose, priorities and activities of the Council and Disability Rights Florida.

III. Political Neutrality

The Council shall be non-political, shall neither support nor oppose any party or candidate for public office, and shall take no position on matters of governmental policy or legislation, other than those that are relevant to its purposes.

IV. Composition of the Council and Membership Criteria

A. The Council shall be comprised of at least 7 members and no more than 13 members. The exact number of members of the council shall be determined at the discretion of the council. All members shall be residents of Florida. No paid employee of Disability Rights Florida may serve on the Council.

B. Council members shall include attorneys; mental health professionals; individuals from the public who are knowledgeable about mental illness, and the advocacy needs of persons with mental illness and have demonstrated a substantial commitment to improving mental health services; a provider of mental health services; individuals who have received or are receiving mental health services, and family members of such individuals.

C. At least sixty percent of the membership of the Council shall be comprised of individuals who have received or are receiving mental health services or who are family members of such individuals. At least one family member shall be a primary care giver for an individual who is currently a minor child or youth who is receiving or has received mental health services.

D. Membership shall reflect the racial and ethnic composition of the state. Continuing efforts shall be made to include members of racial and ethnic minority groups on the Council.

E. The Chair of the Council shall be an individual who has received or is receiving mental health services or who is a family member of such an individual.

F. At a minimum, the Chair of the Council must also be a member of the Disability Rights Florida governing authority, if there is a multi-member governing board; however, there is no limit on the number of members who may also be members of the governing board.

G. Council members must have a commitment to promoting the legal and civil rights of persons with mental illness and advocating for their personal choices.

V. Nominations and Appointments to the Council

A. Nominations of individuals to serve on the Council will be solicited from Council members, and from established mental health family support, self advocacy or consumer support, advocacy and provider organizations in Florida, but shall not be limited to these groups.

B. The Council shall by a majority of a quorum, appoint new members to the Council and who, to the extent possible, shall be diverse, including people of color, recipients or former recipients of mental health services, people who have physical disabilities, and people from different geographic locations in the state.

C. The Council shall deliver its decision (on appointees) to the Disability Rights Florida Executive Director and the governing authority for comment.

D. The terms of Council members shall be staggered and for four years. A member who has been appointed to a four year term has the option of seeking appointment of a consecutive 2 year term. Reappointment to the Council cannot occur 2 years after the expiration of the term.

E. New members shall receive training and orientation prior to the start of their term of office.

F. Vacancies on the Council shall be filled within 120 days of notice of said vacancy.

VI. Resignation and Removal from the Council

A. A Council member may resign at any time by giving a written or verbal notice to the Council. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon receipt of the notice, and acceptance of the resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

B. Upon notice to the member and a majority vote of a quorum of the Council, a member may be involuntarily dismissed from the Council for the following reasons:

1. for failing to effectively support the Council in its mission;
2. for failing to attend three consecutive meetings during any 12 month period without prior notification or for non-medical reasons;
3. when a conflict of interest renders an individual unqualified to serve on the Council for example, when a member becomes a paid employee of Disability Rights Florida; or
4. when the member is no longer a resident of the state.

VII. Election of Officers

A. The officers of the Council shall consist of a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson. All officers shall be elected by a majority of a quorum of the members of the Council.

B. The Council shall conduct elections (the “Annual Elections”) for Chair, Vice Chair and membership of the Executive Committee and the Nominating Committee during the last scheduled meeting of the Fiscal Year.

C. From time to time as necessary during the course of the Fiscal Year, the Council shall conduct elections to fill vacant positions (“Interim Elections”) as soon as practicable at a special meeting by phone or other available means of communication or at the next scheduled meeting of the Council.

D. The persons elected Chair, Vice Chair and to membership of the Executive Committee and Nominating Committee at the Annual Elections will assume office at the first meeting of the following Fiscal Year. Persons elected to fill vacant positions at Interim Elections will take office immediately.

VIII. Responsibilities of Officers

The Chairperson (or, in his or her absence, the Vice Chairperson) shall chair Council meetings and shall be responsible for assisting Disability Rights Florida staff in establishing the time and agenda for Council meetings and in communicating to the governing authority the Council's recommendations, input and activities.

IX. Meetings

A. A minimum of three regular meetings shall be held each fiscal year. All meetings will be held in locations which are accessible to people with mental, physical and sensory disabilities. All meeting notices, agenda items and support data shall be distributed at least one week prior to each of these meetings and shall be provided in accessible formats upon request. Interpreter services shall be provided upon the request of any committee member or guest of the meeting, if a request is made at least one week prior to the meeting date.

B. The Council shall hold its organizational meeting in the month of September.

C. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or upon the written request of three (3) Council members.

D. A quorum shall be established when a simple majority of all Council members are in attendance (in person or by telephone). Vacant positions on the Council shall not be counted in establishing a quorum. Lack of a quorum shall not prevent the Council from conducting a meeting.

E. The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order will be relied on in guiding the meetings of the Council to the extent applicable.

F. The minutes of the Council's meetings shall be the official record of the Council. The minutes shall be distributed to all members of the Council within one week prior to the next meeting.

G. All meetings of the Council shall be open.

H. The Chair of the Council shall be given the opportunity to raise issues of concern to the Council at each regularly scheduled meeting of the governing authority.

X. Committees

A. Executive Committee.

1. The Council shall have an Executive Committee consisting of 5 members. The Chair and Vice Chair shall automatically be members of the Executive Committee. The Council shall elect 3 other members to serve on the Executive Committee.
2. The Executive Committee may act on behalf of the Council on issues requiring the Council's immediate attention. An Executive Committee meeting shall be on an ad hoc basis and the committee shall report any decisions it has made or actions it has taken to the Council by mail in a timely fashion and at the next scheduled meeting or a special meeting called for the purpose of apprising the entire council of such decisions or actions.
3. If a member of the Executive Committee is unable to complete his or her term as a committee member for any reason, the Council shall elect another member to the Executive Committee for the remainder of the Fiscal Year.

B. Nominating Committee.

1. The Council shall have a Nominating Committee consisting of 5 members. The Chair and Vice Chair shall automatically be members of the Nominating Committee. The Council shall elect 3 other members also to serve on the Nominating Committee.
2. The Nominating Committee shall ensure that the make-up of the membership of the Council is in conformance with the requirements of Section IV. The Nominating Committee shall review and make recommendations to the Council as to applicants for council membership.
3. If a member of the Nominating Committee is unable to complete his or her term as a committee member for any reason, the Advisory Council shall elect another member to the Nominating Committee for the remainder of the Fiscal Year.

C. Ad Hoc Committees.

1. The Council may establish ad hoc committees to investigate areas of interest to the Council and report back to the Council. If committees require resources to operate, the Council will need to obtain approval.
2. Committee proceedings and findings may be recorded in writing to the Council or may be presented verbally and made part of the minutes of the general Council meeting.
3. The Council Chairperson shall select the committee members, taking into consideration members' willingness and interest in serving, expertise, commitment of time and their representation of the various constituencies. Together all of the committee members shall elect a Chairperson of the respective committees.
4. Ad hoc committees may invite the participation of non-Council members when their expertise or knowledge may help with their work or mission.

D. A list of all committees and committee members shall be distributed to all Council members.

E. Committees shall serve at the pleasure of the Council and shall be disbanded upon completion of their mission, or by a majority vote of the Council.

XI. Confidentiality

Council members shall not be entitled to client information. It is the obligation of Disability Rights Florida to maintain confidentiality of client information.

XII. Action on Behalf of the Advisory Council.

A member of the Council shall not purport to take any action, enter into any transaction, or issue any correspondence on behalf of the Advisory Council, unless the action, transaction or correspondence has first been reviewed and approved by the Advisory Council. A member shall send copies of any approved correspondence to the Chair and the Director, and keep the Chair and Director fully apprised as to any approved action or transaction taken by the member on behalf of the Advisory Council.

XII. Agency Responsibilities

A. Disability Rights Florida will pay all necessary costs to enable the fullest possible participation of members in Council activities, consistent with Disability Rights Florida policy. Disability Rights Florida shall establish policies and procedures for reimbursement of expenses of Council members, taking into account the needs of individual members, available resources, and applicable restrictions on the use of grant funds. Reimbursement will be made consistent with federal cost principles.

B. Depending on the amount of available resources, Disability Rights Florida may reimburse Council members for costs related to transportation, parking, meals, hotel, per diem expenses, and distribution of copies of the minutes, agendas and all other materials to the members of the Council. Disability Rights Florida may also provide Council members with stipends or subsistence allowances, and pay for day care or child care (or its equivalent for the child's travel and subsistence expenses) for their dependents with mental illness or developmental disabilities.

C. Disability Rights Florida shall provide the Council with reports, materials and fiscal data to enable review of existing program policies and priorities (priorities are goals which receive resource allocation) and performance outcomes. Such submissions shall be made at least annually and shall report expenditures for the past two fiscal years, as well as the projected expenses for the next fiscal year, identified by budget categories (e.g., salaries and wages, contracts for services and administrative expenses) and proposed priorities, including the amount allotted for training for each member of the Council and staff.

XIII. Amendments

These operating procedures may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Council at any regular or special meeting of the Council, providing that such amendment has been submitted in writing to all Council members not less than one week prior to the meeting.

XIV. Effective date

These governing rules will take effect immediately upon approval by a majority of the members of the Council.

APPROVED AND MADE EFFECTIVE BY VOTE OF THE COUNCIL AS OF
SEPTEMBER 20, 2012.

PAIMI ADVISORY COUNCIL

Chair, PAIMI Advisory Council