

Proposed Amendments – 4/14/09

This proposal would replace the current by-laws.

CONNECTICUT FAMILY SUPPORT COUNCIL

BY-LAWS

The following are the by-laws of the Connecticut Family Support Council established in accordance with the General Statutes of Connecticut by P.A. 94-228.

ARTICLE I. RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the council are those established under the provisions of the General Statutes of Connecticut, Sections 17a-219c as follows:

1. There is established a Family Support Council to assist the Department of Developmental Services and other state agencies that administer or fund family support services to act in concert and, within available appropriations, to
 - a. establish a comprehensive, coordinated system of family support services,
 - b. use existing state and other resources efficiently and effectively as appropriate for such services,
 - c. identify and address services that are needed for families of children with disabilities, and
 - d. promote state-wide availability of such services. C.G.S.Section 17a-219c(a)

2. The council shall:
 - a. gather input and develop a vision and guidelines for family support services in Connecticut;
 - b. review existing program policies, procedures and funding mechanisms for conformity to the guidelines and make appropriate recommendations;
 - c. monitor the implementation of the guidelines and recommendations;
 - d. report to the Governor and the General Assembly on an annual basis regarding the status of family support services, including the implementation of the guidelines and recommendations;
 - e. advocate for family support services in accordance with the guidelines;
 - f. compile and distribute information on family support services within public and private agencies; and
 - g. perform such other duties as are related to the advancement of family centered supports, policies and services. C.G.S.Section 17a-219c(b)

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

The council shall consist of twenty-seven voting members including:

1. **The Commissioners of Public Health, Developmental Services, Children and Families, Education and Social Services, or their designees, the Child Advocate, the executive director of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, the chairperson of the State Interagency Birth-to-Three Coordinating Council, as established pursuant to section 17a-248b, the executive director of the Commission on Children, and family members of, or individuals who advocate for, children with disabilities. C.G.S.Section 17a-219c(a)**
2. **The family members or individuals who advocate for children with disabilities shall comprise two-thirds of the council and shall be appointed as follows: Six by the Governor, three by the president pro tempore of the Senate, two by the majority leader of the Senate, one by the minority leader of the Senate, three by the speaker of the House of Representatives, two by the majority leader of the House of Representatives and one by the minority leader of the House of Representatives. C.G.S.Section 17a-219c(a)**
3. **Members shall be appointed for a term of four years. C.G.S.Section 17a-219c(a)**
4. **Council members shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred. The costs of administering the council shall be within available appropriations in accordance with sections 17a-219a to 17a-219c, inclusive. C.G.S.Section 17a-219c(a)**
5. **Connecticut Family Support Network staff members are encouraged to participate in Family Support Council meeting discussions.**
6. **A member may resign at any time by giving written notice to the co-chairpersons of the council and the member's appointing authority.**

ARTICLE III. OFFICERS

1. **The council shall select its own chairperson. C.G.S.Section 17a-219c(a)**
2. **The council's structure for officers shall be to establish two co-chairpersons and a secretary. The three officers shall constitute the executive committee of the council. Officers shall be elected for a period of one year or until their successor is elected, and may serve for more than one term.**
3. **The co-chairpersons shall:**
 - a. **Serve as liaisons to state agencies that serve on the council**
 - b. **Chair council meetings**
 - c. **Set agendas and calendars**
 - d. **Sign off on council statements**
 - e. **Designate ad hoc committees of the council, as needed**
 - f. **Ensure that all council responsibilities are met in a timely fashion**
 - g. **Assist in the establishment of goals and priorities of the council**
 - h. **Solicit input and advice from council members concerning their duties.**

4. **The co-chairpersons or their designees shall:**
 - a. **Participate in outreach activities, including presentations at conferences and outreach to parent organizations**
 - b. **Serve as liaisons to the statewide coordinator of the Connecticut Family Support Network**
 - c. **Represent the views of the council in the community and to public officials.**
5. **The secretary of the council shall be responsible for the content of the minutes of meetings and their distribution to council members. The secretary shall see that notices of meetings and agendas, along with minutes of the previous meeting are distributed to members prior to council meetings. The secretary or another member designated by the co-chairpersons shall preside at meetings in the absence of both of the co-chairpersons.**
6. **Except as provided by Articles III and VI, individual council members may make personal statements on public matters but may not speak for the council unless authorized to do so by the majority vote of the council.**

ARTICLE IV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. **Officers of the council shall be elected at the annual meeting of the council and shall serve for a term of one year. The officers of the council shall be elected from among the council members. The co-chairpersons of the council shall be members who are appointed as family members or individuals who advocate for children with disabilities.**
2. **The co-chairpersons shall, with the approval of the council, appoint a nominating committee, consisting of three council members, at a meeting preceding the annual meeting. The nominating committee, based on its canvassing of the council membership, shall nominate a slate of proposed officers that shall be circulated to the members with the notice of the annual meeting. Any council member shall have the right to make nominations for any office from the floor at the annual meeting.**
3. **A vacancy in the office of co-chairperson or secretary may be filled for the remainder of the original term of office, by an eligible council member, upon a majority vote at a council meeting at which a quorum has been constituted.**

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

1. **The council shall meet at least quarterly. C.G.S. Section 17a-219c(a)**
2. **The first meeting held after the first day of July in each year shall be designated as the annual meeting.**

3. **Special meetings may be called by the co-chairpersons for consideration of special matters to be noted in the call of the meeting. Notice must be given at least 24 hours in advance.**
4. **A quorum of the council is constituted when:**
 - a. **a minimum of one-third of the voting members of the council, excluding vacant appointments, are present; and**
 - b. **a minimum of one-third of those voting members appointed as family members or individuals who advocate for children with disabilities, excluding vacant appointments, are present.**
5. **Council action shall require a majority vote of those members present at a meeting at which a quorum has been constituted.**
6. **Conduct of meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 10th Edition (2000), except as herein otherwise provided.**

ARTICLE VI. STANDING AND AD HOC COMMITTEES

1. **There shall be the following standing committees of the Connecticut Family Support Council:**
 - a. **The Executive Committee of the council shall consist of the co-chairpersons and the secretary. The Executive Committee shall act on behalf of the council between meeting dates when the situation requires. Any such action shall be reported to the council at its next scheduled meeting.**
 - b. **The Nominating Committee shall perform the tasks assigned to it by these bylaws.**
 - c. **The council or co-chairpersons may designate ad hoc committees:**
 - i. **Appointments to ad hoc committees shall be made by the co-chairpersons.**
 - ii. **The powers of ad hoc committees shall be advisory and limited to making recommendations to the council, unless specifically authorized by the co-chairpersons or the council.**

ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

The bylaws of the council may be amended, or repealed, by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any meeting of the council at which a quorum is constituted, provided written notice of any proposed amendment shall have been mailed or electronically sent to each member at least thirty days prior to such meeting.

CONNECTICUT FAMILY SUPPORT COUNCIL

POLICIES

The following policies shall govern the meetings of the Connecticut Family Support Council.

Meetings

The council shall meet at least quarterly. The council practice is to hold eleven monthly meetings. The co-chairpersons may reschedule meetings when they deem it necessary to do so. The agendas and locations of meetings shall be posted on the Department of Developmental Services website. The co-chairpersons may make telephone conference calling available for members to participate electronically in council meetings.

Meeting Attendance

A schedule of meetings shall be announced at least once per year and disseminated to all council members. The council co-chairpersons shall notify the Commissioner or director of any agency in the event that the agency representative is absent from four consecutive meetings. The council co-chairpersons shall notify the appointing authority in the event that any family member or individual who advocates for children with disabilities is absent from four consecutive meetings.

Conflict of Interest

Whenever a member believes that a matter to be voted upon would involve a conflict of interest, that member shall so announce and shall abstain from voting on the matter. Whenever the possibility of a conflict of interest is thought to exist, whether by the member involved or by any other member, that possibility shall be brought to the attention of the council.

Vacancies

The co-chairpersons shall notify the appropriate appointing authority or Commissioner regarding a resignation or vacancy on the council and request an appointment of a new member or designee to the council.