

REFUGEE CHILD WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE BY- LAWS

ARTICLE I – Name

Section 1: Organization Name

The name of the organization is the Refugee Child Welfare Advisory Committee.

ARTICLE II – Statutory Authority, Principles and Roles

Section 1 – Statutory Authority

ORS 418.941 creates an advisory committee to advise the Department of Human Services (DHS) on the development and administration of welfare policies, programs and practices that affect refugee children and their families. Members shall be appointed and serve at the pleasure of the Director of DHS.

The Refugee Child Welfare Advisory Committee (Committee) is subject to Oregon's public meeting laws (ORS 192.620 to 192.690).

Section 2 – Role of DHS

It is the role of the Department of Human Services to:

1. Provide timely, accurate information to the Committee regarding policy and Program, budget, training and legislative issues that involve child welfare Services to refugee children and their families;
2. Work with local government, private entities, other agencies, other branches of government and members of refugee communities as partners in development and delivery of child welfare services to refugee children and their families;
3. Consult with and request the assistance of the Committee in making decisions that affect child welfare services to refugee children and their families whenever possible;

4. Provide staffing for Committee meetings and subcommittee meetings including needed administrative support when resources allow.

Section 3 – Role of Committee members

Committee members shall represent and advocate for the interest of refugee children and their families through the following activities:

1. Represent the interest of their agency, institution, branch of government and/or community related to the provision of culturally appropriate services to refugee families and keep them informed of the work of the Committee;
2. Provide consultation and advise regarding the culturally appropriate placement of refugee children and availability of resources for refugee children and families.
3. Provide to the Committee timely, accurate information regarding the impact of policy, program, budget and legislation changes with their agencies, branches of government, institutions, and/or communities that affect refugee child welfare families;
4. Develop recommendations for consideration by DHS Children, Adults and Families (CAF) Deputy Director in the area of child welfare, refugee children and families;
5. Represent the broad interest of child welfare services, refugee stakeholders, including clients, staff and providers;
6. Provide opportunities to receive information about child welfare issues from the refugee community;
7. Attend case staffing meetings, and quarterly planning meetings.

ARTICLE III – Membership, terms, vacancies and voting

Section 1 – Membership

Membership shall consist of no more than **14** members including those from stakeholders' groups and DHS staff. DHS membership may include up to **5** representatives from Children, Adults, and Families, Mental Health and other program areas of DHS. Members may also include representatives of other state agencies, representatives of professional or civic or other public or private organizations, other branches of government and representatives of refugee groups interested in child welfare services to refugee children and their families;

Members will be appointed by the Deputy Director of DHS/CAF in cooperation with the Committee.

Members, other than members employed in full-time public service, will be reimbursed for their expenses incurred in the performance of their duties by the Department of Human Services. Such reimbursements will be subject to the Department of Administrative Services Oregon Accounting Manual, Statewide Travel Policy (40.10.00.PO) and Department of Human Services, Travel Policy and Procedures (DHS-040-009 and DHS-040-009-01). Members who are employed in full-time public service may be reimbursed for their expenses incurred in the performance of their duties by their employing agency. (See ORS 292.210 and 292.220)

Section 2 – Terms of Office, Vacancies and Reappointments

1. Members shall serve terms of minimum two (2) years beginning with the first meeting of their appointed service;
2. Members may serve **subsequent** terms, with recommendation from the DHS/CAF Assistant Director and approval by the DHS Director;
3. Positions vacated at the end of a term will be filled as described in Section 1 of this Article;
4. Members wishing to withdraw from the Committee shall notify the DHS Director and DHS/CAF Assistant Director in writing;

5. Members are expected to attend all meetings of the Committee. Absences must be noted to the Chair or the Chair's designated DHS staff in advance. Failure to attend three or more meetings without notifying the Chair or designated staff may result in removal from the Committee.
6. Appointments to fill unexpired terms will be made as outlined in Section 1 of this Article. An individual who is appointed in such a manner will serve the remainder of the original appointee's term;

Section 3 – Voting

Members will have voting privileges and shall be expected to act as a link to the broader refugee community outside of DHS. All **DHS members DO NOT have voting rights.**

Section 4 – Interested Persons

All persons with an interest in the activities and planning of the Committee at quarterly meetings are encouraged to attend and receive information. Such individuals shall not have voting privileges at Committee quarterly meetings. Attendance to case staffing's due to confidentiality laws, are limited to DHS & committee members.

ARTICLE IV – Meetings and Procedures

Section 1 – Meetings

1. Per statute, the Committee shall meet at least once every three months or as scheduled by the committee chair. **If there is no business to conduct, the chair may cancel a scheduled meeting;**
2. Meetings shall follow Oregon's public meeting laws (ORS 192.620 to 192.690).
3. Monthly case staffing's are scheduled on the 4th Wednesday of the month, subject to cancellation due to no case for review, two days prior.

Section 2 – Quorum

General business can be conducted by a majority of members present at the meeting. Recommendations require at least half of the number of active members of the committee to be present.

Section 3 – Procedures

1. The official year of the Committee begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of each year;
2. Committee action & recommendations shall be by formal voting.
3. Procedural conflicts shall be resolved according to *Roberts Rules of Order*;
4. Minutes of each Committee meeting shall be taken and distributed.

Article V – Officers

The officers shall consist of the Chair, appointed by the DHS Director at the recommendation of the Committee for a two-year term. **When the Chair is absent, the DHS liaison will preside.**

1. Committee Chair
Duties of the chair person:
 - A. Preside over regular Committee meetings;
Represent the Committee to the refugee community and to DHS;
2. DHS/CAF Liaison
DHS will provide a liaison to the Committee. Duties of the liaison will be to:
 - A. Assist the Chair ensure the Committee carries out its duties effectively;
 - B. Represent DHS and the Committee at interagency meetings;
 - C. Communicate policy and practice issues to the DHS Program Managers;
 - D. Facilitate communications between the Committee and DHS's Central, SDA and local offices;

- E. Notify Committee chair when a refugee child, who falls within provisions of the Act, comes to their attention;
- F. Ensure collection of data about DHS's placement of refugee children;
- G. Coordinate development and dissemination of the annual report on refugee children and their families;
- H. Convene meetings and notify members;
- I. Distribute meeting notes.

ARTICLE VI – Conflict of Interest

Committee members shall declare any direct interest or potential financial gain for any issue to be discussed. Conduct of members shall be consistent with ORS 244.010 – 400 and the Oregon Government Standards and Practices Laws.

ARTICLE VII – General

These bylaws may be amended by majority vote of the members present at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Committee members shall have two weeks notice prior to voting on proposed amendments to the bylaws.

Approved by RCWAC April 2012