

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **New Hampshire Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders**

The New Hampshire Council on Autism Spectrum Disorder, hereafter “the Council,” has been established by the New Hampshire Legislature in order to promote comprehensive, high quality education, health care, and services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families in a manner consistent with the findings, recommendations, and values set out by the New Hampshire Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders (*May, 2008*).

### **I. Membership**

1. Pursuant to RSA 171-A: 32, section I, the members of the council shall be as follows:

- (a) The governor, or designee.
- (b) The commissioner of the department of education, or designee.
- (c) The commissioner of the department of health and human services, or designee.
- (d) The director of the division of public health services, department of health and human services.
- (e) The bureau chief of the bureau of developmental services, department of health and human services.
- (f) The bureau chief of the bureau of behavioral health, department of health and human services.
- (g) The director of the division of instruction, department of education.
- (h) The director of the division of career technology and adult learning, department of education.
- (i) The director of the Institute on Disability, University of New Hampshire, or designee.
- (j) A special education director, appointed by the New Hampshire Association of Special Education Administrators, Inc.
- (k) The president of the New Hampshire Medical Society, or designee.
- (l) A representative of the New Hampshire Developmental Disabilities Council, appointed by the council.
- (m) A representative of the Autism Society of New Hampshire, appointed by the society.
- (n) An individual who has an autism spectrum disorder, appointed by the governor.
- (o) A family member of a person who has an autism spectrum disorder, appointed by the governor.
- (p) A representative of the Community Support Network, Inc., appointed by such organization.
- (q) A representative of the New Hampshire Psychological Association, appointed by the association.

2. *Ex-officio* members may be appointed to assist and support the work of the Council.

## II. Tenure of Members

1. Council members are appointed to staggered 2-year terms. Members appointed under RSA 171-A: 32, section I (a), (c), (e), (g), (i), (k), (m), (o), and (q) will be reconfirmed or replaced beginning September, 2009; members appointed under said statute, section I (b), (d), (f), (h), (j), (l), (n), and (p) will be reconfirmed or replaced beginning September, 2010. There is no limitation as to the number of consecutive terms a member may serve.
2. As vacancies occur, the Council chair seeks a replacement member as soon as practicable and in accordance with said statute and without alteration in the schedule stipulated in Section II (1) above.
3. Council members have all voting rights and privileges granted by their appointment.

## III. Duties of the Council

1. Pursuant to RSA 171-A: 32, section II, the Council is charged by law to:
  - (a) Provide leadership on training, policy, research, and coordination of supports and services for individuals and their families.
  - (b) Provide information to families and individuals with autism spectrum disorder about evidenced-based and promising practices for community-based education, support, and treatment.
  - (c) Collaborate with schools and other service systems to identify exemplary supports and services and promote successful practices throughout New Hampshire.
  - (d) Provide mediation, when needed, to ensure that individuals with autism spectrum disorders receive appropriate supports and services.
  - (e) Increase resources for individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families by accessing federal and state grants and pursuing development opportunities through foundations, corporations, and planned giving.
  - (f) Serve as an information clearinghouse for individuals, families, and providers seeking diagnosticians, behavioral specialists, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists, and others who have expertise in working with individuals with autism spectrum disorders.
  - (g) Encourage the establishment of regional collaboratives with representation from educational, health care, and community service providers to ensure that individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families receive necessary services.
  - (h) Make an annual report beginning on April 1, 2009 to the governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, the president of the senate, the commissioners of the department of health and human services and department of education, the members of the house committees on education, health, human services and elderly affairs, and finance, and the members of the senate committees on education, health and human services, and finance.

## IV Operating Procedures

### 1. Meetings

- (a) The Council operates under Robert's Rules of Order.
- (b) Council meetings are held on alternate months beginning with January. Additional meetings may be called by the chair, as necessary.
- (c) A period for public comment is included on the agenda at all Council meetings.
- (d) The September meeting of the Council is its Annual Meeting for the purposes of electing officers and establishing policies and procedures for Council governance not otherwise stipulate in NH law.

### 2. Officers

- (a) A chair is selected by a majority of the Council members for a term of one year at the Annual Meeting. The chair presides at all meetings, plans and organizes meetings, prepares the agenda, reviews minutes, assists in preparing required documents, and signs all official documents on behalf of the Council. The chair is responsible for representing the council in all venues unless otherwise determined by the Council; the Chair may designate another member of the Council or the Director of the Council to represent the Council as needed.
- (b) The Council also elects a vice-chair for a term of one year simultaneous to the selection of the chair. The chair may request assistance from the vice chair in any of his or her duties.

### 3. Committees

- (a) The Council may establish committees/subcommittees, as needed, to carry out the work of the Council. Such committees may include Council members, *ex-officio* Council members, and other individuals who can contribute to the work of the committee. Any committee so established is chaired by a member of Council, whether appointed under RSA 171-A: 32, section I or *ex officio*. Committees receive their charge from the Council and report on their work, recommendations, and/or conclusions as requested by the Council chair.
- (b) The chairs of all Council committees / subcommittees will meet monthly to coordinate the work of their various groups.

### 4. Public Right to Know

- (a) Pursuant to NH RSA 91-A, all Council meetings and the meetings of any subcommittee constituted by the Council are open to the public. Said meetings will be held in accessible facilities. Interpreters and other necessary services are provided at Council or Council committees / subcommittee meetings for members or participants so long as said services are requested within a reasonable time in advance of the meeting.
- (b) The Council maintains an independent website to provide public access to its membership list, plans, proceedings and other matters. The date and location of all Council meetings and

the meetings of Council committees / subcommittees will be posted on the Council website in accordance with state law, Title VI, 91-A. Minutes of each Council meeting are prepared and published on the Council website in accordance with timeliness under state law, Title VI, 91-A.

- (c) Minutes from meetings of the Council committees / subcommittees are available to the public upon request to the chair of the Council.
- (d) The agenda and minutes are sent to all Council members one week in advance of a meeting. Minutes and agendas may be sent electronically and/or by mail. Minutes are approved by the chair and the Council prior to publication in their final form on the Council website.
- (e) Having met its obligation under RSA 171-A: 32, section II (h) to provide the Governor and others with an annual report, the Council will provide the same parties with a report of similar nature on June 1, 2009 and annually thereafter. This report will be made available to the public on the Council's website.
- (f) These policies and procedures are available to the public on the Council's website.

5. Administrative Support

- (a) Pursuant to RSA 171-A: 32, section III, administrative support is provided to the Council by the NH Department of Health and Human Services. The Council may appoint a Director to assist the NH Department of Health and Human Services in providing said support and performing other duties as requested by the Council. The Director serves *ex officio* as a member of the Council and may be compensated for his or her work.
- (b) With the exception of the Council's Director, Council members serve without compensation. However, as funds are available, the Council may provide reimbursement to members for their reasonable travel expenses.

6. Changes to these policies and procedures

- (a) The Council may change the policies and procedures described here in by majority vote, with the exception of those set out in RSA 171-A: 32 or other relevant state laws.

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ by vote of the New Hampshire Council on Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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Chair, NH Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders

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Vice Chair, NH Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders