

**BYLAWS OF THE
MILWAUKEE CHILD WELFARE PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL**

ARTICLE I.

AUTHORITY

SECTION 1.01. Authority. The Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council (Council) is created by s.15.207(24), Wis. Stats. Pursuant to s.15.03, Wis. Stats., the Council is attached to the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF). The Council is a state designated Citizen Review Panel and is expected to meet the requirements of the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) 42 U.S.C. s. 5106a(c).

ARTICLE II.

POWERS AND DUTIES

SECTION 2.01. Powers and Duties. Pursuant to s. 48.562(1), Wis. Stats., the Council shall do all of the following:

- (ag) Hold at least one public hearing each year at which the council shall encourage public participation and solicit public input regarding the child welfare system in Milwaukee County.
- (am) Recommend policies and plans for the improvement of the child welfare system in Milwaukee County and submit its recommendations with respect to those policies and plans to the department under par. (dm).
- (b) Recommend measures for evaluating the effectiveness of the child welfare system in Milwaukee County, including outcome measures, and submit its recommendations with respect to those measures to the department under par. (dm).
- (c) Recommend funding priorities for the child welfare system in Milwaukee County and submit its recommendations with respect to those funding priorities to the department under par. (dm).
- (d) Identify innovative public and private funding opportunities for the child welfare system in Milwaukee County and submit its recommendations with respect to those funding priorities to the department under par. (dm).
- (e) Advise the department in planning, and providing technical assistance and capacity building to support, a neighborhood-based system for the delivery of child welfare services in Milwaukee County.

Pursuant to s. 15.09(5), Wis. Stats., the Council shall advise the Secretary of the Department of Children and Families, and shall function on a continuing basis for the study, and recommendation of solutions and policy alternatives regarding the child welfare system in Milwaukee County.

ARTICLE III.

MEMBERS

SECTION 3.01. Membership. Pursuant to s. 15.09 and 15.207(24)(a), Wis. Stats., the Council shall consist of the following members:

- 1) Three members of the Milwaukee County board nominated by the Milwaukee County executive.
- 2) One representative to the assembly appointed by the speaker of the assembly.
- 3) One representative to the assembly appointed by the minority leader of the assembly.
- 4) One senator appointed by the president of the senate.
- 5) One senator appointed by the minority leader of the senate.
- 6) Ten members who are residents of this state, not less than six of whom shall be residents of Milwaukee County
- 7) The Milwaukee County district attorney or his or her designee.
- 8) The presiding judge of the children’s division of Milwaukee County circuit court.

ARTICLE IV.

ORGANIZATION

SECTION 4.01. Chairperson.

(a) Chairperson appointment. Pursuant to s.15.207(24)(b), Wis. Stats., the Governor shall designate one of the members referenced above in Article III, section 3.01(f), as chairperson of the Council.

(b) Chairperson tenure and term. The chairperson’s term may be renewed for successive years by the Governor.

- (c) **Authority and duties of the chairperson.** The chairperson shall call and preside over all Council meetings. The chairperson may also call special meetings. The chairperson shall give notice of each Council meeting as set forth in these bylaws. The chairperson shall determine the date, location, and manner of full council meetings.

SECTION 4.02. Council Members.

- (a) **Member tenure and term.** Pursuant to s. 15. 207(24)(a), Wis. Stats., the members of the Council appointed under section 3.01(1) and (6) shall be appointed for 3-year terms.
- (b) **Authority of members.** Council members shall have the authority to attend and participate in all Council meetings, to vote on any matter before the Council, and to participate in standing committees and vote on any matter before the standing committee if the Council member is a member of that standing committee.
- (c) **Resignation.** Any member may resign at any time. Such resignation shall be made in writing to the Governor or to the Chairperson of the Council, with a copy to the Department, and shall take effect at the time specified therein. If no time is specified, it shall take effect on the date of its receipt by the chairperson of the Council, who shall record the resignation noting the date. The acceptance of a resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.
- (d) **Attendance requirement.** Members are expected to personally attend Council meetings, and meetings of the standing committees to which they belong. If they cannot attend a meeting, they are expected to notify the committee chair or the Division’s administrative office in advance of the meeting. For purposes of this provision, attendance by a designated representative shall constitute attendance by the member. If the member, for whatever reason, cannot attend enough meetings to be an effective member of the Council, they are expected to notify the Division or the committee chair. If the Council member misses two or more Council meetings in a calendar year, the chairperson will contact the member regarding their willingness to continue on the Partnership Council. If a member has two or more unexcused absences from Council meetings and/or standing committee meetings or any combination thereof in a year, and if the member does not submit a letter of resignation, the chairperson may send a letter to the Governor recommending that the absent member be removed from the Council and replaced by a new appointment. Determination of excused and unexcused absences shall be at the discretion of the Chairperson.

- (e) **Designated Representatives.** A Council member may send a representative in that member's stead to attend any meeting. Such a representative does not have the authority to vote in Council proceedings but may participate in discussions on the member's behalf.

SECTION 4.03. Meetings. The Council shall meet four times annually and shall also meet at the request of the Secretary of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and may meet at other times on the call of the chairperson of the Council or a majority of its members.

- (a) **Frequency.** The Council will meet four times annually to provide education on child welfare issues; to receive reports from the standing committees; to hear from individuals and organizations from the community, through community forums, about their concerns or recommendations on ways to continue to improve the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services; to receive reports on the programs, policies and operations and budget of the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services and related developments in the Department of Children and Families; and to exercise any of the powers and duties set forth in Article II, Section 2.01 of these bylaws.
- (b) **Special meetings.** The Council chairperson, the Secretary of DCF, and/or a majority of the Council members may call special meetings, as needed.
- (c) **Annual Meeting.** The Council's statutorily required annual meeting shall take place at a meeting so designated by the Council each year, at which time it will receive an annual report of the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services.
- (d) **Meeting by video conference or telephone conference calls.** Meetings may be convened in person, by videoconference or conference call, or by a hybrid of any of these options. A member of the Council may fully participate in council meetings via videoconference or conference call as long as the member is able to identify themselves as a council member to the other meeting attendees and members of the public during the meeting. Public access to these meetings shall be accomplished by both providing the login information in the meeting notice as well as broadcasting the meeting from the Department's facilities.

SECTION 4.04. Quorum. A majority of the membership of the Council constitutes a quorum to do business, and a majority of a quorum may act in any matter within the jurisdiction of the Council.

SECTION 4.05. Voting and Manner of Acting. The act of a majority of the members of the Council present at a Council meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Council. Council members may cast votes in person or by video or telephone. Members must participate in the full discussion of an agenda item in order to cast a vote.

The Council shall keep a record of the motions and roll call votes at each Council meeting. If a member of the Council requests that the vote of each member on a particular matter be recorded, a voice vote or vote by a show of hands is not permissible unless the vote is unanimous, and the minutes reflect who is present for the vote.

SECTION 4.06. Location And Conduct of Meetings. All Council meetings shall be publicly held in places reasonably accessible to members of the public and shall be open to all citizens at all times, except as provided in section 4.03 above.

SECTION 4.07. Contract Partner Agencies. Lead contract partner agencies for case management and safety, as well as other contract agencies as requested by the Council will be required to attend relevant committee meetings and all Council meetings. Relevant Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services management will also be required to be present at committee meetings and all quarterly Council meetings.

SECTION 4.08. Committees. Council committee structure will assure that all issues are documented, follow up is assured, and response is communicated. The committees will play an important role in system quality assurance. Committees may also hear reports from Bureau Directors, Section Chiefs, or Program and Policy Analysts in committees' specific area of focus. Committees will play a role in efforts to further improve system services and reports.

Council committees will consist of Standing Committees and, from time to time, Special Committees. The organization, authority, and procedures to be used by these committees are as described in Article V below.

SECTION 4.09. Bylaws. The Council shall operate according to its bylaws, and the bylaws may be amended at any time by a simple majority vote of the Council.

SECTION 4.10. Council Consideration of Committee Issues. When a standing or special committee has an issue for consideration by the full Council, it shall notify the Council chairperson before the next Council meeting that it wishes to have its matter placed on the agenda for the meeting.

ARTICLE V.

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

SECTION 5.01. Standing and Special Committees. The following are Council standing committees: Community Prevention and Support and Critical Incident;

- (a) Community Prevention and Support.** This committee works to identify needs of families who are involved with CPS and identify upstream opportunities to prevent entry for their children into out-of-home care. The committee shall address issues relating to service gaps, available opportunities, and access to those services for families in Milwaukee County.
- (b) Critical Incident Committee.** The Critical Incident Committee shall review child fatalities and near fatalities in accordance with 42 U.S.C.A. § 5106a(c)(4)(A)(iii)(II). It shall also review aggregate findings of the DCF Systems Change Review Process, following any death or egregious incident review. The Committee shall follow DMCP’s progress in addressing these recommendations.
- (c) Special Committees.** Special committees may be formed as deemed necessary by the Council, for the purpose of developing policy or examination of specific issues which are not within the province of any existing standing committee. These special committees shall have a specific purpose and shall cease to exist once they have accomplished that purpose.

SECTION 5.02. Membership. Standing committee membership, including the position of chairpersons for those committees, may consist of community representatives serving in addition to Council members. Standing committee total membership shall be determined by the Council as needed, but should consist of an odd number of members in the event that issues must be decided by a vote.

- (a) Designated Representatives.** A standing or special committee member may send a representative in that member’s stead to attend any committee meeting. Such a representative does not have the authority to vote in committee proceedings but may participate in discussions on a committee member’s behalf.

SECTION 5.03. Nomination and Appointment of Members. The Chairperson shall appoint standing and special committee members, subject to approval of the Council. Appointed members may serve in a temporary capacity until such time as the Council votes on the appointment.

SECTION 5.04. Chairperson. For each standing and special committee, the Chairperson shall appoint committee chairpersons, subject to approval of the Council. Appointed chairpersons may serve in a temporary capacity until such time as the Council votes on the appointment. While preference for the position of standing or special committee chairperson should be given to members of the Council, the standing or special committee chairperson need not be a member of the Council. The Council Chairperson shall have authority to designate a Secondary Committee Chair for each committee who may serve as Committee Chair when the designated Committee Chair is unavailable.

SECTION 5.05. Authority. The standing committees, and any special committees when active, shall report to the Council at the meetings on the issues, concerns, and recommendations before them.

SECTION 5.06. Meetings. Standing committees, and special committees when active, shall meet quarterly or at intervals otherwise determined by committee goals and membership. The Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services will staff all standing and special committee meetings. All standing and special committee meetings shall be publicly held in places reasonably accessible to members of the public. Pursuant to s.19.83(1), Wis. Stats., every meeting of standing and special committees shall be held in open session, except that the committee may meet in closed session as permitted by s.19.85(1), Wis. Stats.

(a) **Video or Telephone Conference Calls.** A member of the committee may fully participate in council meetings via videoconference or conference call as long as the member is able to identify themselves as a committee member to the other meeting attendees and members of the public during the meeting.

SECTION 5.07. Notice. All meetings of the Council standing and special committees shall be preceded by notice to the public similar to that which is required for Council meetings. The chairperson of the each standing and special committee shall be responsible for giving notice of the committee meetings.

SECTION 5.08. Quorum. A majority of the membership of the standing or special committee constitutes a quorum to do business, and a majority of a quorum may act in any matter within the jurisdiction of the standing or special committee.

SECTION 5.09. Voting and Manner of Acting. The act of a majority of the members of the standing or special committee present at a committee meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the standing or special committee. Committee members may cast votes in person or by telephone or video.

The standing or special committee shall keep a record of the motions and roll call votes at each meeting. If a member of the committee requests that the vote of each member on a particular matter be recorded, a voice vote or vote by a show of hands is not permissible unless the vote is unanimous, and the minutes reflect who is present for the vote.

SECTION 5.10. Procedure. The standing or special committee chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the committee. Each standing or special committee may fix its own rules and procedures, which shall not be inconsistent with these bylaws.

ARTICLE VI.

ANNUAL REPORT

SECTION 6.01. Annual Report. The council will annually, submit a report of its recommendations under pars. (am) to (d) to the department, which within 60 days after receiving the report shall prepare a response to those recommendations and transmit the report, together with its response, to the governor and to the appropriate standing committees of the legislature under s. 13.172 (3). The report will be submitted to the Department and sent to the Council membership.

ARTICLE VII.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

SECTION 7.01. Conflict of Interest. Council members are required to abstain from any conflict of interest in exercising their duties as Council members. Council members are required to abide by the State of Wisconsin Code of Ethics set forth at Ch. ER-MRS 24, which is hereby incorporated by reference into the by-laws of the Council.

ARTICLE VIII

CONFIDENTIALITY

SECTION 8.01. Confidentiality. Consistent with Wis. Stat. §§ 48.78 and 48.981(7), council members, associate members and invited guests shall keep in confidence all confidential information received and reviewed pursuant to the Council's duties as a Citizen Review Panel.

SECTION 8.02. Agreement. Council Members who participate in case review-currently conducted by the Critical Incident Committee- are required to sign and abide by a confidentiality agreement. The agreement will be signed annually. Violation of the confidentiality agreement may subject the member to penalties set forth in Wis. Stat. § 48.981(7)(f). The Council chairperson shall recommend removal to the appointing authority of any member who violates the confidentiality agreement.