

**Operating Procedures for Standing and Ad Hoc Committees  
of the Consumer Family Coalition (CFC)**

In order to conduct effective meetings, it is necessary to have a set of procedures (rules) to establish parameters that guide participants. It is important to follow the established procedures so that Coalition committee business is conducted in a consistent manner. These procedures have been developed with the assumption that a chair has been selected. Should a committee chair not be established prior to the first meeting of a committee, the coalition chair shall serve as acting chair until such time as a chair can be established.

**Before The Meeting****Setting the meeting: (Chair)**

- Obtain a list of each committee member to include
  - Name, email, phone number
  - Distribute to each committee member

Determine when meetings will be held.

- Example: 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month from 4-6pm
- Example : chair will call meetings when necessary
  - If this option is used it is very important that the chair makes sure that they take the time to find times that all committee members can meet. If you leave people out of meetings they will begin to stop participating. This is a time consuming task!!
- Email each committee member to remind them of the meeting date, time and place five (5) days prior to each meeting. If a committee member indicates they do not have a computer, the chair may suggest computer resources i.e. public library, or offer to call the member with a reminder.

**Develop the Agenda (Chair)**

- The chair is responsible for developing an agenda for each meeting.
- The chair may ask committee members to submit items to be included on the agenda. These items may be submitted via email or phone (whichever method the members agree upon).
- Each meeting should have a written agenda (even if there is only one item!). This is for record keeping purposes.
- Each agenda should contain the following items:
  - Name of Committee
  - Date of Meeting
  - Location of Meeting
  - Agenda items (optional: allotted time for each item)

**Sending Out the Agenda (Chair)**

- The agenda should go out via email five (5) days prior to the meeting.
- If there is additional material to be read, the chair should send the material with the agenda and ask committee members to read and review the material prior to the meeting.

## **Prior to the Meeting (chair)**

- Review agenda
- Gather any materials needed for the meeting
- Bring extra copies of material for those who may forget their copies

## **At the Meeting**

1. **Start the meeting on time.** Waiting for the one or two people who are “always” late does not show respect for the people who are “always” on time. Plus, punctuality is good business practice.
2. Determine who will be **taking notes** for the meeting.
  - a. If at all possible the chair should not take notes and run the meeting.
3. Make any **general announcements** at the beginning of the meeting.
  - a. Example: lunch will be delivered at noon, so we will break at 11:45.
4. **Proceed through each agenda item utilizing the following check list for each item**
  - a. Introduce agenda item and give an explanation if necessary.
  - b. Present the issue that needs to be addressed and discuss it.
  - c. Assign tasks, determine due dates
  - d. Review and bring closure to the agenda item
5. **Keep the meeting moving**
  - a. It is the responsibility of the chair to keep the committee members on track. This can be difficult. It is easy to begin discussions about other topics or get side tracked. The chair should gently remind people that it is necessary to continue addressing the agenda item.
  - b. The committee members will be very grateful to the chair for doing this. Everyone likes a productive meeting!!!! More will get accomplished if the committee stays on task.
6. **Review and Bring Closure**
  - a. Make sure there is time at the end of the meeting to ask the group if there are any questions related to assignments, due dates or other issues. If needed, repeat and clarify important items.
  - b. Indicate to the committee members when and how the minutes to the meeting will be distributed.
7. **Report – Responsibility of the Assigned Note Taker at each meeting**

The following items shall be included in the report for each committee meeting. A copy shall be sent to the Coalition Chair five (5) days before the regular Coalition meeting to be included in the meeting packet and for archival purposes.

  - Name of the Committee
  - Date, Time, Location
  - Names of those present and absent
  - Summary of:
    - Key point
    - Assignments
    - Decisions
    - Due dates of assignments
    - Recommendations for the Coalition to consider

## **After the Meeting**

The minutes shall be sent electronically to all Committee members within one (1) week of the Committee meeting.

A copy shall be sent to the Coalition Chair five (5) days before the regular Coalition meeting to be included in the information packet and for archival purposes.

A copy shall be sent to the web editor for inclusion on the Coalition website.

### **Guidelines for Discussion During Committee Meetings**

There are several models that may be followed for discussing agenda items during committee meetings. The goal is to allow for rich discussion. All members of the committee should be encouraged to participate. The method used should not be limiting yet should be organized and structured.

**Roundtable:** One person speaks at a time, going around the room until every person has had an opportunity to speak. A committee member may pass when it is their turn to speak.

**Random:** The chair may ask for open discussion on an item and individuals can be identified by raising their hand. This option also provides balance between the more outspoken and quieter individuals.

If the committee is larger than 12, use **Roberts Rules of Order** which is a highly formal method. Training is necessary. This method can often be intimidating to first time chairs.

### **Guidelines for Making Decisions During Committee Meetings**

There are many options for decision making that can be utilized by committees. A few ideas are presented.

**Democratic vote:** A majority vote rules. A written ballot or show-of-hands vote may be taken for each decision. This is a very common option

**Consensus:** Consensus is reached when all parties agree to support the outcome. Individual members may not completely agree with the outcome or decision, but they will walk out of the meeting and support it. This is a good option but committee members need consistent reminders of what consensus means. It can be damaging if a member agrees to something in committee, but talks negatively about that decision outside of committee.