



**Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council (Council)  
Of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)**

**Bylaws**

Approved by the Council on: January 17, 2014

**Part 1. General Provisions**

**Section A. Mission/Vision/Values of the Council**

The Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council (Council) mission is “working together to advance health and human services equity.

The Vision is “the council develops community-supported policy recommendations that work to achieve health and human services equity for cultural and ethnic communities and all those who call Minnesota home.”

**Core Agreements are:**

1. **Everyone is heard: practice active listening, build connections to others before and after meetings, and include opportunities for stakeholder input**
2. **All voices are honored: practice compassionate accountability and withhold judgment**
3. **Have integrity: practice honesty, put aside personal gain, prioritize attending meetings**
4. **Be transparent: practice sharing information, describe your own experiences to give context, explain expectations for participation, share our work with others**
5. **Empower people: practice speaking up courageously; reach out to other communities and each other for input**
6. **Embrace tension: practice addressing issues where there isn't clear agreement, spend time and opportunity ensuring everyone feels safe to discuss their point of view**

**Values:**

- (1) **BE consistent, proactive, and represent diverse communities**
- (2) **KNOW that within communities there is a lot of diversity; that there is a big task ahead because we are talking about ambitious**

**changes; all the facts that inform our work; and that there are good practices we can draw on**

- (3) DO reach out to a broader community to make sure they are represented and dig deep into the root issues and possible solutions**

**Section B. Creation of the Council.** *Laws of Minnesota 2013, Chapter 107, Article 2, Section 1*, established the Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council for the Department of Human Services (DHS).

The purpose of the Council is to advise the commissioner of human services on advancing health equity and reducing disparities that affect racial and ethnic groups.

**Section C. Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council.** The council must consist of:

- (1) the chairs and ranking minority members of the committees in the House of Representatives and the Senate with jurisdiction over human Services; and
- (2) no fewer than 15 and no more than 25 members appointed by the commissioner of human services, in consultation with county, tribal, cultural, and ethnic communities; diverse program participants; and parent representatives from these communities. In making appointments under this subdivision, the commissioner shall give priority in consideration to public members of the legislative councils of color established under chapter 3.

The commissioner shall direct the development of guidelines defining the membership of the council; setting out definitions; and developing duties of the commissioner, the council, and council members regarding racial and ethnic inequities reduction. The guidelines must be developed in consultation with:

- (1) The chairs of the House of Representatives and Senate committees with jurisdiction over Human Services; and
- (2) County, tribal, and cultural communities and program participants from these communities.

**Section D. Duties of the Council.** The Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council shall:

- (1) recommend to the commissioner for review identified policies in the Department of Human Services that maintain and create, magnify, etc. racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and tribal inequities and advance and promote health equity;
- (2) identify issues regarding disparities by engaging diverse populations in human services programs;
- (3) engage in mutual learning essential for achieving human services parity and optimal wellness for service recipients;
- (4) raise awareness about human services disparities and health equity needs to the legislature and media;

- (5) provide technical assistance and consultation support to counties, private nonprofit agencies, and other service providers to build their capacity to provide equitable human services for persons from racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and tribal communities who experience disparities in access and outcomes;
- (6) provide technical assistance to promote statewide development of culturally and linguistically appropriate, accessible, and cost-effective human services and related policies;
- (7) provide training and outreach to facilitate access to culturally and linguistically appropriate, accessible, and cost-effective human services to prevent disparities;
- (8) facilitate culturally appropriate and culturally sensitive admissions, continued services, discharges, and utilization review for human services agencies and institutions;
- (9) form work groups to help carry out the duties of the council that include, but are not limited to, persons who provide and receive services and representatives of advocacy groups, and provide the work groups with clear guidelines, standardized parameters, and tasks for the work groups to accomplish;
- (10) promote information-sharing in the human services community and statewide; and
- (11) by February 15, 2014, and annually thereafter, prepare and submit a report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the committees in the house of representatives and senate with jurisdiction over human services that summarizes the activities of the council, identifies the major problems and issues confronting racial and ethnic groups in accessing human services, makes recommendations to address issues, and list the specific objectives that the council seeks to attain during the next biennium. The report must also include a list of programs, groups, and grants used to reduce disparities, and also statistically valid reports of outcomes on the reduction of the disparities.

### **Section E. Governance and Decision-Making Guidelines**

The council will strive to make decisions on a consensus basis.

- (1) A motion-second-pass/fail process will be utilized to memorialize all decisions.
- (2) Decisions that are required to approve group deliverables will be noted in advance on the meeting agenda.
- (3) Decisions and votes will be reflected in the meeting minutes.
- (4) Decisions will be voted on, with a minimum presence of at least 51% of members present.

**Section F. Meeting Schedule.** The council will meet monthly:

- (1) Minimum of monthly meetings through expiration date
- (2) At the call of the chair; meeting schedule will attempt to allow time for task completion.
- (3) A quorum is established when a majority (>50%) of the appointed members are present.
- (4) The agenda and meeting materials, including meeting minutes, will be sent to council members at least one week prior to scheduled meetings

### **Section G. Distribution of Meeting Materials**

- (1) Quarterly updates of group progress and the year-long work schedule will be reported on the DHS website
- (2) Agendas, approved meetings and adopted group documents will be published in the DHS website

**Section H. Expiration.** The council expires on June 30, 2020.

## **Part 2. Council Members.**

### **Section A. Council Membership**

Members must be appointed to allow for representation of the following groups:

- (1) Racial and ethnic minority groups;
- (2) Tribal service providers;
- (3) Culturally and linguistically specific advocacy groups and service providers;
- (4) Human services program participants;
- (5) Public and private institutions;
- (6) Parents of human services program participants;
- (7) Members of the faith community;
- (8) Department of Human Services employees; and
- (9) Any other group the commissioner deems appropriate to facilitate the goals and duties of the council.

**Section B. First appointments and first meeting.** The commissioner shall appoint at least 15 members by September 15, 2013, and shall convene the first meeting of the council by November 15, 2013.

**Section C. Terms for first appointees.** Seven of the first members shall serve until January 15, 2015. The remainder of the first members shall serve until January 15, 2016.

**Section D. Terms.** A term shall be for two years and appointees can be appointed to serve two terms. The commissioner shall make appointments to replace vacating members by January 15 every year.

**Section E. Compensation.** Public members of the council shall receive no compensation from the council for their services.

**Section F. Duties of council members.** The members of the council shall:

- (1) Attend and participate in at least 8 scheduled meetings and be prepared by reviewing meeting notes;
- (2) Maintain open communication channels with respective constituencies;
- (3) Identify and communicate issues and risks that could impact the timely completion of tasks;
- (4) Collaborate on disparity reduction efforts;

- (5) Communicate updates of the council's work progress and status on the Department of Human Services Web site; and
- (6) Participate in any activities the council or chair deem appropriate and necessary to facilitate the goals and duties of the council.

**Section G. The Chair of the Council.** The commissioner shall appoint a chair. Overall responsibilities of the chair are to:

- (1) Preside at meetings of the council.
- (2) Serve as the principal contact for the Council.
- (3) With approval of council members, appoint committees and committee chairs to carry out the duties of the council.
- (4) Call special meetings of the council as necessary.
- (5) Inform the commissioner of human services of a council member missing three consecutive meetings.
- (6) Attend regularly (quarterly at a minimum) scheduled meetings with DHS commissioner or designees for stronger collaboration and relationship-building.

### **Part 3. Duties of the Commissioner**

**Section A.** The commissioner of human services or the commissioner's designee shall:

- (1) maintain the council established in this section;
- (2) supervise and coordinate policies for persons from racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and tribal communities who experience disparities in access and outcomes;
- (3) identify human services rules or statutes affecting persons from racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and tribal communities that may need to be revised;
- (4) investigate and implement cost-effective models of service delivery such as careful adaptation of clinically proven services that constitute one strategy for increasing the number of culturally relevant services available to currently underserved populations; and
- (5) based on recommendations of the council, review identified department policies that maintain racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and tribal disparities, and make adjustments to ensure those disparities are not perpetuated. (b) The commissioner of human services or the commissioner's designee shall consult with the council and receive recommendations from the council when meeting the requirements in this subdivision.

### **Part 4. Code of Conduct.**

- (1) Council members will adhere to the DHS standards of Ethics and Conflict of Interest and will comply with all pertinent state laws and regulations.
- (2) If a Council member has a conflict of interest in a matter before the Council, the member shall declare the conflict, refrain from discussion and will not vote on the matter.
- (3) If a council member misses three meetings or more consecutively, the council staff will so note and inform the council chair. The council chair will contact the member and discuss the potential dismissal of the member.

(4) The council chair will inform the commissioner, as the appointing authority, the member's separation from the council membership.

(5) Staff will notify the Office of the Secretary of State for posting vacancy.

#### **Part 5. Data Practices and Open Meeting Law**

(1) The Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes, and Chapter 13 govern the collection, creation, receipt, maintenance and dissemination of data maintained by the Council and DHS.

(2) All meetings of the Council and its committees are subject to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13D, and shall be open to the public, unless closed is required or authorized by law. Observers at all meetings will be given an opportunity to provide input for Council consideration.