

Operating Guidelines for Vermont's Youth Services Advisory Council

I. NAME, PURPOSE

Section 1 The **name** of the group shall be the Youth Services Advisory Council (YSAC).

Section 2 The **purpose** of the Youth Services Advisory Council is to promote shared responsibility across state and community stakeholders for achieving positive outcomes for youth and young adults in Vermont. The work of the Council focuses primarily on interagency and cross-sector coordination and alignment.

In doing this work, the Council will:

- promote, advocate for, and monitor the continued evolution of culturally competent, holistic, strengths-based service systems for Vermont's young people;
- advocate for improved quality of and access to these services; and
- organize policy responses to remove barriers to achieving these goals.

Section 3 The Youth Services Advisory Council seeks to support better **outcomes** for youth, including:

- Increased job opportunities and levels of employment
- Increased positive relationships
- Increased mental health and decreased substance use
- Increased access to safe and stable housing
- Increased educational engagement, including post-secondary opportunities
- Increased resiliency
- Decreased involvement in the justice system
- Increased access to health care and/or medical homes
- Increased skill of staff working with young people

Section 4 The **functions** of the Youth Services Advisory Council include:

- Understanding and clarifying services and supports that make up the youth serving system
- Identifying gaps in services and making data-informed recommendations to bridge those gaps
- Leveraging funding opportunities
- Mapping and connecting to other groups providing youth services and/or youth advisory opportunities

II. STRUCTURE AND COMPONENTS

- Section 1 The Youth Services Advisory Council is made up of **Council Members** from state government, community-based organizations, organizations representing and/or supporting families, and other youth services providers. Council Members are eligible to vote on decisions made by the Council.
- Section 2 The **Implementation Team** is a subcommittee of the Council responsible for ensuring that the work of the Council moves forward. The Implementation Team focuses on specific work products and takes concrete steps between Council meetings to advance projects, discussions, or other initiatives.
- Section 3 **Council Chairs** are elected by the Council with the responsibility of planning Council meetings and coordinating the work of the Implementation Team. The Council should have at least two chairs with one coming from a state agency and one coming from a community-based agency. Council Chairs serve for 2-year terms.
- Section 4 **Committees** include both standing committees and others that may be formed as needed. Committees are composed of Council members, partners, and allies who volunteer to carry out the duties of the committee.
- Section 5 **Public Participation-** The Council benefits from expertise and perspective outside of voting membership. Input and participation from a broad stakeholder base is welcomed and encouraged at every Council meeting and throughout all aspects of the Council's work. All Council meetings are open to the public. Any individual or organization who wants to stay informed of or be involved in the work of the Council can attend meetings, give input, participate in discussions, join committees, and receive meeting notes and other related materials.
- Section 6 The **Vermont Agency of Human Services (AHS)** is responsible for providing staff time in support of the Council and in making connections for the Council to AHS leadership.

III. COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1 **Responsibilities** of members of the Youth Services Advisory Council include:
- Collecting relevant information and perspectives from constituents or associated organizations
 - Educating and disseminating information to constituents, colleagues, and contacts
 - Collaborating with other members of the Council to achieve the mission

Operating Guidelines for Vermont's Youth Services Advisory Council

- Identifying and sharing resources including training and technical assistance
- Actively participating in person, by telephone, or electronically in Council meetings (6 meetings per year). Any Council Member who represents an organization or agency can delegate a proxy to attend meetings when needed. If a proxy is being sent on a particular member's behalf, that member is responsible for fully briefing their designated proxy on any background or relevant material prior to that meeting.

- Section 2 **Council Size and Composition-** The Youth Services Advisory Council includes approximately 12-25 members representing a balanced cross section of state and local organizations and sectors. Efforts will be made to find representatives from different geographic regions of the state and representing a variety of organizations and related issue areas.
- Section 4 **Meetings-** Regular meetings will be held every other month, and more frequently as needed. Special meetings and emergency meetings may be called by the Council Chairs or on the written request of at least five members of the Council. Meetings may be held in-person or by conference call/ webinar. Participation of a member of the Council by telephone or computer constitutes attendance at the meeting. Dates for meetings will be set at least 4 weeks in advance. Every effort will be made to give members at least 2 weeks' notice for special meetings. Emergency meetings require at least a 24-hour notice. All meetings are open to the public.
- Section 5 **Terms of Office-** Members of the Council are expected to make at least a one-year commitment to actively serve. Membership can be renewed from one year to the next.
- Section 6 **Selection to Council-** As positions become available, potential candidates can be recommended by the Council Chairs, Implementation Team, or current members. At least one member of the Implementation Team and at least one recommending member will meet with the prospective member to explore a potential match and level of interest. New members will be welcomed to the Council upon a vote of current Council members and can join the Council at any point during the year depending on need.
- Section 7 **Moving off the Council-** Any member of the Council may resign at any point during the year by notifying the Council Chairs in writing. A member may be asked to step down if he/she misses more than three meetings in a year.

Operating Guidelines for Vermont's Youth Services Advisory Council

- Section 8 **Quorum and Modified Consensus Vote-** The presence of at least six Members of the Council is necessary to constitute a quorum to transact business at a meeting. The Council will use a modified consensus model to take votes. Voting members can indicate either a red, yellow, or green vote. A green vote signals agreement with the proposed decision. A yellow vote does not interfere with the proposed vote but signals some concern or hesitation. A red vote signals strong disagreement with the proposed vote and delays the vote from passing without further discussion.
- Section 9 **Notification of Meetings and Meeting Agendas-** The Council Chairs will establish meeting schedules and agendas. Meeting agendas will be e-mailed to all participants at least two days before each meeting, except emergency meetings which require at least a 24-hour notice.
- Section 10 **Compensation-** Members of the Council serve without compensation from the Council for their services.
- Section 11 **Conflict of Interest-** Whenever a member of the Council has a meaningful financial, personal, or organizational interest in any matter coming before the Council, the affected person shall fully disclose the nature of the interest to the rest of the Council.

IV. COMMITTEES

- Section 1 **Standing Committees** are established by the Council. The Council Chairs can request the Council to establish or disband a standing committee at regular meetings or at a special meeting called for this purpose. The Council can name the chair of a standing committee or direct the committee members to elect a chair from their membership. Committee members can be from the Council or others. In most cases, members of the Council should serve on no more than one Standing Committee at a time (with the exception of the Implementation Team).
- Section 2 **Committee Statement of Work-** Each standing committee will work with Implementation Team to develop a statement of work that ties to the Council's overall strategic plan and goals. Each committee's statement of work must be approved by the full Council. It is the Implementation Team's responsibility to either recommend a committee's statement of work to the Council or to send it back to the committee for additional work. Some sections of the statement of work may be predetermined by the Council or the Implementation Team.
- Section 3 **Committee Leadership-** Standing committees are chaired by one or two members of the Committee. Committee chairs are responsible for the following:

Operating Guidelines for Vermont's Youth Services Advisory Council

- Calling committee meetings, designing meeting agendas, and making appropriate arrangements for meeting space if in-person or other means if by phone or computer.
- Chairing committee meetings and ensuring that all committee members receive meetings notes or minutes following each meeting. Copies of meeting notes/minutes must also be sent to the Council Chairs.

Section 4 **Temporary Committees-** the Implementation Team can create and/or disband additional working committees as needed.

V. **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Section 1 The Youth Services Advisory Council does not discriminate in any of its activities, procedures, or policies based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or gender.

VI. **OTHER PROVISIONS**

Section 1 These Operating Guidelines for the Youth Services Advisory Council shall be effective July 10, 2018.

Section 2 These Operating Guidelines may be amended when necessary by the Council.