

Multnomah County Family Violence Coordinating Council
Charter and Operating Procedures
Passed March 10, 2000
Amended October 8, 2004
Amended 1-13-06

I. Context

Family violence is emotional, physical, psychological abuse or neglect, or sexual abuse, or the threat thereof, perpetrated against a person by that person's family member, parent, child, spouse, former spouse, partner, former partner, or adult relative, or by the parent of their minor child. Abuse may include threats, harm, injury, harassment, exertion of power and control, terrorism, or damage to living beings or property. Family violence may be a single incident, ranging in intensity from harassment to homicide. Often it is a systematic pattern of abuse that usually escalates over time in frequency and severity. Family violence occurs between partners of the same and different sex. Overwhelmingly, victims of family violence are women abused by men. The Council's context is abuse that occurs in intimate partnerships between people of any age, and in other relationships between adults as described above. This context includes the effects of this violence on the community and on other family members, particularly children.

II. Vision

To assure the safety, well-being, and stability of all members of families, especially women and children, in Multnomah County, by eliminating family violence.

III. Mission

To promote public policies and facilitate and coordinate public and private efforts to prevent, respond to, and end family violence in Multnomah County

IV. Values

The work of the Council will be guided by Council members' shared commitment to:

- The right of all people to live free from family violence or the threat of violence;
- Recognition of the public responsibility of government to prevent family violence, to enact and enforce laws, and to promote and enact policies and practices that protect the victims of violence;
- Recognition that cooperation and coordination among public and private resources is essential to effectively address family violence;
- Recognition that efforts to address the issues of family violence must be culturally appropriate, based in respect for all individuals and desire to build a rich multicultural community;
- Promoting victim safety and holding batterers accountable for violence;
- The need to change social structures, including the status of women, which allow family violence to occur;
- Preventing family violence by changing social attitudes and cultural norms to

value relationships which ensure respect and dignity for all members of society;
and

- Recognition that all forms of oppression create an environment that promotes and encourages family violence.

V. Role of the Council

The Council will:

- Facilitate and coordinate public and private response to family violence;
- Advise policy makers within local government (cities and county), regional government (Metro), court systems, law enforcement and corrections, and other public entities about policy issues and resource needs relating to family violence;
- Map unmet needs and create coordinated responses to address them;
- Develop strategies to close the gap between needs and available resources;
- Prepare and disseminate reports regarding family violence policy issues;
- Bring key players in public and private efforts to end family violence together to build productive relationships and to provide opportunities to strengthen and improve the community response to domestic violence;
- Provide opportunities for exchange of information and training;
- Address problem areas in the coordinated effort to reduce family violence and advocate for system improvements; and
- Promote awareness of family violence and effective intervention and or prevention strategies.

VI. Membership of the Council

A. Qualification for membership

Public and private agencies, which meet the following criteria, may request membership on the Council. To qualify for membership, an agency must:

1. Intervene in or work to prevent family violence or have significant direct contact with victims and/or perpetrators or that play a significant role in funding or public policy related to family violence intervention, agree with the mission and values of the Council,
2. Agree to attend regularly; and
3. Sign a memorandum of understanding in which the agency agrees to:
 - a) Support the Vision, Mission and Values as described in the Charter and Operating Principles,
 - b) Support the Council in its roles as described in the Charter and Operating Principles:
 - c) Participate fully in Council work as described in the memorandum of understanding and as approved by the FVCC:
 1. Disseminate information from the Council, obtained at meetings or through written materials, to other employees, volunteers or clients of this agency.

2. Identify and make available to other member agency staff a contact person and an alternative to answer questions or assist in one-on-one problem-solving.
3. Participate in Council activities and projects by attending meetings, participating in committees, reviewing documents, and assisting in problem-solving at system level.
4. Assign the “right person” to meetings – has influence within the organization.
5. Demonstrate a willingness to discuss and solve problems brought to the Council or by other Council members about their agency.
6. Bring issues related to effective intervention and prevention of domestic violence to the Council for discussion and problem-solving.

This memorandum of understanding is effective upon signing for current members or is effective upon vote of membership for new members.

The Council shall seek members from public and private agencies working to eliminate or significantly reduce family violence in Multnomah County, and from organizations of individuals who are survivors of family violence, including but not limited to representation from the courts, law enforcement, corrections, the District Attorney, other agencies affiliated with the civil and criminal courts, batterer intervention providers, health care providers, social service agencies, elected officials, victims advocacy organizations, businesses, defense bar and Legal Aid Services.

B. Application for membership

Applicants for Council membership shall submit a brief application (using the Council’s approved format), accompanied by a letter of recommendation from a current Council member and a signed copy of the MOU.

C. Approval of application for membership

The Council shall act upon all applications for membership. Approval of application for membership shall require an affirmative vote by two-thirds of members present at the meeting at which the application is considered. In an emergency, the Executive Committee may act upon applications for membership after conducting a telephone or e-mail poll of all current members of the Council.

D. Revocation of membership

Membership may be revoked with or without cause by a two-thirds vote of Council members. Members who have not been represented for 12 months at Council meetings, do not have a signed MOU or have not participated as defined in the MOU will be reviewed by the Executive Committee which may propose revocation of membership.

E. Requirement for action by the Council

The Council will provide two weeks’ notice of the intent to take action on any

membership decision. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Council members present at any meeting for which such notice has been given, and at which a quorum is present, shall be required for adoption of the proposal.

VII. Quorum

Representatives of at least one half the organizations, which are currently members of the Council, must be present at any meeting at which the Council will take action, including adopting or rejecting a proposal or report, and electing officers or Executive Committee members.

VIII. Officers

The officers of the Council shall be the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. The Officers shall be elected by the Council at a meeting scheduled for the election. Officers shall be elected for one-year terms. There shall be no limit on the number of one-year terms, which an individual may serve. The Chair will facilitate meetings of both the Council and the Executive Committee, set the agenda for those meetings, and act as spokesperson for the Council when appropriate. The Vice Chair will act as Chair in the absence of the Chair or at other appropriate times, and will oversee the operations of the Council, including committees and work groups, as appropriate. Both the Chair and Vice-Chair will work closely with the professional staff to the Council in these roles.

IX. Executive Committee

A. Role of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall provide leadership for the Council. Its role may include:

- In-depth study of issues and formulation of proposals for action by the Council; and
- Approval of proposals consistent with the mission and values of the Council when there is insufficient time for the full Council to consider and act upon an issue.

B. Composition of Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council and at least 6 additional members-at-large. The composition of the Executive Committee shall be broadly representative of Council membership, avoiding over representation of a single type of agency. The Council will, from time to time, specify key organizations which should be represented on the Executive Committee. Individuals representing these organizations will be elected to the Executive Committee. In the event that the individual representing a specified organization is no longer associated with that organization, a vacancy on the Executive Committee will exist and will be filled by the Executive Committee until the next regularly scheduled election.

C. Terms of office for the Executive Committee

Executive Committee members shall serve two-year terms. Terms for Executive Committee members shall be staggered. There shall be no limit on the number of terms, which an individual may serve on the Executive Committee.

D. Quorum for meetings of the Executive Committee

One-half of the total number of members of the Executive Committee plus one must be present at any meeting at which the Executive Committee takes action.

X. Nomination and Election of the Officers and the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall propose and the Council shall appoint a Nominating Committee annually. The Nominating Committee shall select a slate of candidates for the officer positions and the at large positions on the Executive Committee.

The Nominating Committee shall present its nominations to the full Council. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. The Council shall designate its regularly scheduled December meeting to conduct the election of officers and Executive Committee members. A vote of Council members present shall be taken at the scheduled meeting. Candidates receiving the greatest number of votes shall fill officer and Executive Committee positions. Newly elected officers and Executive Committee members shall take office in the January following their election in December.

XI. Vacancies on the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall appoint individuals to fill Executive Committee vacancies until the next regular election.

XII. Voting

Each member organization is entitled to one vote on all matters put to a vote of the Council, including the election of officers and the Executive Committee, and action on any proposed measure. When more than one individual from a single member organization is in attendance at a meeting at which voting will occur, those individuals will caucus among themselves to agree upon the vote which will be cast on behalf of the organization.

XIII. Other Committees

The Executive Committee may establish other standing committees or ad hoc task forces as needed. The Executive Committee shall give each such committee or task force a clear charter and scope, and provide oversight for its actions.

XIV. Process for Approval of Proposals

Any committee that seeks Council action on proposals, recommendations, or policy statements shall present their request for Council action to the Executive Committee. Committee requests for consideration shall include a clear statement of the proposal to be acted upon by the Council, a record of the vote of the committee in support of the recommended proposal, and any minority reports which any committee member wishes to make known to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall

review the proposal for Council action for completeness and clarity, and may request that the committee revise it if needed. Once the Executive Committee is satisfied that a committee proposal for Council action is clear and complete, it will schedule the proposal for discussion by the full Council.

All Council members shall receive at least two weeks' written notice of the intention of the Council to consider action on the proposal, recommendation, or policy statement presented by a committee.

XV. Role of the Multnomah County Domestic Violence Coordinator

The Multnomah County Domestic Violence Coordinator shall provide professional staff support to the Council and Executive Committee, including development of meeting agendas, drafting proposals and reports, serving as spokesperson upon request of the Council, and overseeing the preparation of minutes, meeting notices, and other clerical support functions.

XVI. Revision of Council Charter and Operating Policies

Any member of the Council may request that the Executive Committee consider a proposed change to the charter and operating policies of the Council. The Executive Committee may draft and forward to the full Council recommendations for changes to the Council charter and operating policies. The Council shall consider changes recommended by the Executive Committee at a regularly scheduled Council meeting. Written notice of the intention to consider such changes shall be given to all Council members at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the consideration shall occur. In an emergency, the Executive Committee may schedule a special meeting for consideration of proposed changes in the charter and/or operating policies of the Council, so long as the Council members receive at least two weeks written notice of the special meeting and the proposed changes. Approval of changes shall require an affirmative vote by two-thirds of the Council members present at the meeting at which a quorum is present.