

# Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Health, Human Services and Opportunity Network (“The Network”)

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<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2023/act/pa/pdf/2023PA-00204-R00HB-06941-PA.pdf> (jump to page 237)

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# ARTICLE I – MISSION STATEMENT/GOALS & OBJECTIVES

## Section I – Mission Statement

The network shall work to build a safer and healthier environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer persons by conducting a needs analysis, within available appropriations, collecting additional data on the health and human services needs of such persons as necessary, informing state policy through reports submitted at least biennially, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public health, human services, appropriations and the budgets of state agencies, other legislative committees as necessary, the Governor and the Chief Court Administrator, and building organizational member capacity, leadership and advocacy across the geographic and social spectrum of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community.

## Section II – Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Health, [and] Human Services and Opportunity Network (The Network) are:

(1) the promotion of equitable access to opportunities for, (2) the delivery of health and human services to, and (3) educational awareness about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer persons in the state.

# ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

## Section I – Members

- The terms “member” or “members,” as used in these by-laws to refer to persons who have been appointed by the General Assembly
- Members of the network shall choose chairpersons.

## Section II – Composition and Membership

The network shall consist of the following members, or their designees, provided such members or designees are available and willing to serve: (1) The president of Connecticut Latinas/os Achieving Rights and Opportunities (CLARO); (2) The executive director of the Safe Harbor Project; (3) The executive director of the New Haven Pride Center; (4) The executive director of

True Colors, Inc.; (5) The executive director of the Triangle Community Center in Norwalk; (6) The executive director of AIDS Connecticut; (7) The executive director of the Connecticut chapter of the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN); (8) The executive director of the Rainbow Center at The University of Connecticut; (9) The executive director of the Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective; (10) The executive director of the Connecticut Transadvocacy Coalition; (11) The president of OutCT in New London; (12) The executive director of the Queer Unity Empowerment Support Team; (13) The executive director of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity; (14) A lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer physician, licensed pursuant to chapter 370 of the general statutes, appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives; (15) An LGBT Veteran Care coordinator assigned to a health care facility in the state administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate; (16) A member of the LGBT Aging Advocacy coalition, appointed by the Governor; and (17) The president of Connecticut Community Care. (d) Members shall serve at the will of the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate, who may each appoint additional members and set term limits for each member. Appointments to the network shall be made not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section. Members shall choose chairpersons. Any vacancy shall be filled by the speaker of the House of Representatives, acting in consultation with the president pro tempore of the Senate. (e) The administrative staff of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity shall provide administrative support to the network.

Non-voting members may serve on an advisory basis only and can serve on committees though still do not have a vote in decision-making.

The aforementioned members can vote to introduce new organizations as voting members and advisory members. The body may expand itself.

### Section III – Attendance

The proper functioning of the Network depends upon the participation of its members. Members should inform the Network Chair if they will be absent from a regularly scheduled meeting. A member with more than two unexcused absences or who has been deemed unfit to serve for willful or neglectful misconduct by a majority of the board may be recommended for removal to the members' appointing authority.

A Chair may be disqualified as Chair, or a member may be recommended for removal to the members' appointing authority, for cause by a two-thirds vote of a quorum at any regularly scheduled or special meeting of the Network. This must appear as an item on the agenda in accordance with the rules for meeting/agenda notification.

Absences may be excused by the Chairpersons, limited to 2 per member per year. Excused absences count towards attendance as a member in good standing, as long as they are accounted for accurately in the minutes. Examples of excused absences could include health, family, and/or professional responsibilities.

## Section IV – Member Preparedness

It is the responsibility of voting members to:

- Prepare for meetings by reviewing materials distributed *prior* to a meeting, prepare to raise questions and comments about issues being discussed; and
- Participate in meeting discussions; and
- Listen and speak respectfully to others; and
- Be respectful at all times of other Committee members, staff, and audience members. They will listen to each other to seek to understand the other's perspectives, even if they disagree; and
- Make every effort to bring all aspects of their concerns about these issues into this process to be addressed; and
- Refrain from personal attacks, intentionally undermining the process, or intentionally mis-stating the positions taken by any other participants during the process; and
- Maintain a respectful tone even if highlighting different perspectives in all written communications, including emails, blog and other social networking media, and will be mindful of these procedural ground rules; and
- Comply with Network Conflict of Interest policy (See Appendix I.).

## Section V – Resignation by Notice

Any member choosing to leave the Network shall submit a letter of resignation to the Chair and their appointing authority. Resignation by notice shall take effect on the date of receipt of such notice by the Chair and their appointing authority.

## Section VI – Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy on the Network, the Chairs shall petition the appointing authority with jurisdiction over the vacancy to appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy in accordance with the statute.

# **ARTICLE III – Executive Committee**

## Section I – Co-Chair Appointment

A. Two Co-Chairs are nominated by self or member of the Network and voted in by majority vote of an established quorum.

B. The Co-Chairs shall serve a term of two years, staggered, from the date of election.

C. After the expiration of each two year term, the members of the Network shall elect one new Co-Chair from among the Network's membership

E. A Co-Chair may serve multiple terms in that capacity.

## Section II – Duties of Co-Chairs

- The Co-Chairs shall preside at all meetings and shall perform all other duties necessary or incidental to the position.
- The Co-Chairs shall be voting members of any work group.

## Section III – Secretary

- The Secretary shall preside at all meetings and shall perform all other duties necessary or incidental to the position.
- The Secretary shall be a voting member of any work group.

## Section IV – Treasurer

- The Treasurer shall preside at all meetings and shall perform all other duties necessary or incidental to the position.
- The Treasurer is responsible for tracking all public and private funding allocated to the Network as well as via disbursements.
- The Treasurer will be responsible for quarterly financial reports as well as an annual budget.
- The Treasurer shall be a voting member of any work group.

# **ARTICLE IV – MEETINGS: Regular and Special**

## Section I – Frequency and Location of Meeting

Regular meetings of the Network shall be held at a frequency and such place and time as may be determined. CWCSEO will offer a virtual/call-in option for remote participation. The Network shall ensure that the location and time of meetings are reasonably accessible to members and the public.

All regular meetings of the Network and meetings of workgroups shall be subject to the Freedom of Information Act. The Network minutes as well as other documents produced by the Network shall be public documents, and in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

An annual schedule of regular meetings shall be made available to the public. At the annual meeting in July, the schedule of regular meetings is set for the following year.

## Section II – Notice

An announcement of special meetings of the Network shall be publicly noticed at least 7 business days in advance of the meeting.

The agenda for the meeting and all related meeting materials shall also be e-mailed to all members at least three business days in advance of the day of the date of the meeting.

## Section III – Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Network may be held or called by the Co-Chairs or set by the Co-Chairs after written request of any five (5) members of the Network is received by the Co-Chairs. The special meeting call shall be a written notice e-mailed to members, not less than seven (7) business days prior to the date set for such special meeting. Such call must set forth specifically the subject matter of the meeting, and other subjects may not be introduced or considered at such meetings.

## Section IV – Meeting Minutes

CWCSEO staff or an agent acting on behalf of CWCSEO, shall prepare a draft of the minutes of each of the Network meetings, stating the action taken at such meeting, and shall submit them to members as expeditiously as possible for their review. Any member wishing to propose a correction to the minutes shall propose a correction at the meeting at which the minutes are presented for review and approval. Any such approved corrections will be made to the permanent file copy. For substantive or major revisions, any member may request that a copy of the revised minutes be redistributed to all The Network members. Meeting minutes and any votes will be posted on the CWCSEO website.

## Section V – Quorum

At any Network meeting, the presence of at least “50% plus 1” of the members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the purpose of engaging in any formal decision-making. The presence of a quorum will be called by the Co-Chairs.

## Section VI – Voting

### CONSENSUS MODEL FOR COALITION DECISION-MAKING

1. A cooperative, collaborative consensus model will be used for the majority of decisions. The Co-Chairs will set a period of time for the members to reach consensus. All members may be part of this process.
2. If the members cannot reach a consensus in the designated time then the Co-Chairs can choose to:
  - a. Extend the time period to reach consensus
  - b. Table the item and set a designated time to return to the item
  - c. Call for a vote from voting members.
3. In the case of a vote, the following rules apply:
  - a. Only voting members may vote.
  - b. Quorum of the voting members needs to be present or reached for a vote to take place.
  - c. The vote must pass by a majority of the voting members present.
  - d. In the event that there are more than two options available at the time of voting and a majority cannot be reached for any one option, the option garnering the least votes will be dropped and a subsequent round(s) of voting may be introduced.
4. In the event that a vote is required, the membership will use Robert's Rules of Order as delineated in Appendix II.
5. Non-voting members of the Network are welcome to weigh in within the process of decision-making though they cannot participate in the final vote.

## Section VII – Conduct of Meetings

All meetings will be conducted in an orderly manner and governed by these Bylaws. Regular and Special Network meetings shall be conducted using Robert's Rules of Order Abbreviated.

## Section VIII – Public Comment at Meetings

The agenda for each meeting shall contain an item "Public Comment" at the beginning of regularly scheduled business. The Network Co-Chairs running a meeting shall manage any public comments and participation at the meeting.

# ARTICLE VI – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

## Section I – General Statement

All the Network members are required to disclose in advance if they, their employer or any member of their immediate family could possibly benefit financially from the outcome of a



Network decision process. A Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form is completed by each member of the Network and submitted to the CWCSEO.

Once disclosed, the individual can choose to abstain from a vote or be recused from a discussion.

In the event of a matter that raises a potential conflict of interest comes before the Network or a workgroup for consideration, recommendation or decision, the member shall disclose the conflict of interest as soon as they become aware of it.

This “conflict-of-interest” principle shall not be construed as preventing any member of the Network from full participation in discussion about the Network or work group needs. Rather, individual members are expected to draw upon their lay and professional experiences if they disclose verbally any potential conflicts of interest at the beginning of such discussion.

## **ARTICLE VII – DUTIES OF CWCSEO**

A. CWCSEO shall inform the Network about all changes that impact its mission, which includes Federal and State policy.

B. CWCSEO shall provide information, guidance and administrative support to the Network, as requested, within available resources.

C. CWCSEO will promote on-going communication between the Network and agency staff and leadership.

D. CWCSEO staff assigned to the Network will attend all meetings and inform the Network of timely developments.

## **ARTICLE VIII – OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION AND REPRESENTATION**

### **Section I – Official Communication**

Any communication request of the Network to the media or general public should be directed to the Co-Chairs of the Network.

### **Section II – Representation**

No member of the Network or any workgroup shall make any statement or communication under circumstances that might reasonably give rise to an inference that they are representing the

Network or CWCSEO (including, but not limited to, communications upon CWCSEO stationary, public acts, statements or communications in which they are identified as a member of the Network except only in actions or communications that are clearly within the policies of the Network Chair and Vice Chair, in consultation with the CWCSEO.) An example of an acceptable action is a Network member being asked to provide information about the Network and its activity at a forum being conducted.

## **ARTICLE IX – MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS**

Files containing Network and workgroup minutes, correspondence, and records shall be maintained by CWCSEO staff at the CWCSEO Office, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106. Electronic copies of all documents shall be retained in accordance with CWCSEO's record retention policies.

## **ARTICLE X – NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The officers, staff and committee members of the Network and any of its design groups shall be selected without discrimination with respect to age, gender, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin.

All Network business and activities shall be conducted fairly and equitably in a manner which does not discriminate with respect to age, gender, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or national origin.

These Bylaws may be amended, altered, or repealed by the affirmative vote of an established quorum of membership at any regular or special meeting of the Network.

## Appendix I – Conflict of Interest Policy and Statement

### General Principles

“The Network” seeks to avoid any conflict of interest in its operations and, where possible, to avoid even the appearance of a conflict. The members of the Network understand that, as an advisory body of CWCSEO, the Network members are expected to maintain a commitment to transparency and integrity of their work.

The integral nature of the input CWCSEO receives from the Network will inform the development of policy intended to benefit all within the State. While the Network members will benefit from their work, as a resident of the State, this policy is not intended to address those situations where Members may benefit from a decision simply because they are a member of the Network. Instead, this policy is designed to address situations where a board or committee member has a specific or individualized interest which may impact his/her ability to participate in the Network activities in a neutral, transparent and unbiased manner.

Taking into consideration the above principles, individuals covered by this policy agree that they will not participate in any Network decision that materially benefits them or a related party.

All individuals covered by this policy also agree to disclose any interest they have in a matter being considered by the Network of which they are a member where that interest could reasonably be viewed by others as affecting the objectivity or independence of the covered individual. An insubstantial interest will not normally be viewed as affecting the objectivity or independence of the covered individual. However, in the interest of full disclosure, an insubstantial interest should be disclosed to the Network co-chairs.

### Conflict of Interest Policy for Network Members

For purposes of this policy, Network members are considered to have a conflict if the conflict defined under the policy is one of self or a related party to self. For the purposes of this policy, a related party is any:

- Immediate family member (children, grandchildren, parents, siblings and spouses thereof and spouses);
- Household member (persons residing in a Member’s household); or
- Organization with which an immediate family member or household member has a formal relationship. A formal relationship is defined as serving as a member, director, officer, employer or partner of an organization regardless of whether the organization is a business or nonprofit.

### Determining the Existence of a Conflict of Interest “Conflicts of Interest”

Generally Defined “Conflicts of interest” includes not only individual financial gain in conflict with an individual’s duties to the Network (“material conflict”) but also conflicts arising from any

interest in or duty to another organization. In general, individuals shall not seek to profit personally from their affiliations with the Network or favor the interests of themselves, relatives, friends, supporters, or other organizations over the interests of the Network, or bring their interests into conflict or competition with the interests of the Network.

Recognizing that not all conflict of interest situations are clear-cut and easy to define, it is ultimately the responsibility of each individual to use sound judgment and avoid or determine the existence of and disclose any situation that creates or appears to create a conflict of interest. Specific questions about the possible presence of a conflict of interest shall be directed to the Executive Director of the CWCSEO. Alternatively, the Member may choose to treat the issue as a conflict of interest in accordance with this policy.

### Examples

This section includes illustrative examples of what does and does not constitute a conflict of interest that would need to be disclosed under this policy.

1. A Member works for a consulting firm which the Network is considering hiring. The Member has a material conflict of interest with respect to that issue that needs to be disclosed.
2. A Member's employer organization has applied for a grant from the Network which is awarded by the committee. The Member has a material conflict of interest with respect to the grant decisions that needs to be disclosed.
3. A Member's foundation has requested the Network work on a project funded by the foundation. The Member has a non-material conflict of interest with respect to the The Network's consideration of the project under the policy on external funding and grants that needs to be disclosed
4. A Member's foundation is being considered for a non-financial award selected by the committee. This Member has a non-material conflict of interest with respect to award decisions that needs to be disclosed.

### Other Conflicts of Interest

When a matter presents a non-material conflict of interest for individuals covered by this policy, the following procedure must be followed unless a more specific procedure is outlined above: a) The Member involved identifies the potential conflict to the Network; b) The Member fully discloses all facts relevant to the Network's discussion of the matter; c) The member refrains from voting on the matter and, if requested by the Network chair, absents him or herself from the meeting during any discussion of the matter; and d) The disclosure of the conflict and recusal from the vote is documented in meeting minutes and/or other records.

The Network Members are under a continuing obligation to report any actual or potential conflicts of interest and must report promptly any conflicts of interest that have not been

previously disclosed including material or non- material conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under this policy.

If an individual has reasonable cause to believe that others have failed to disclose a conflict of interest, they shall inform the Network co-chairs and the Executive Director of the CWCSEO. The Network co-chairs shall discuss the issue with the CWCSEO to assist in determining the appropriate steps to protect the Network.

#### Certificate

The undersigned hereby certifies that they have read and understood this Conflict of Interest Policy and agrees to abide by it.

Signature Date Print Name

## Appendix II – Robert’s Rules of Order, Abbreviated

What is Parliamentary Procedure? It is a set of rules for conduct at meetings that allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion. It’s a time-tested method of conducting business at meetings and public gatherings. It can be adapted to fit the needs of any organization.

### Sample Order of Business:

1. Call to order and roll call of members
2. Present the Agenda
3. Consider minutes of last meeting—vote to accept amended minutes.
4. Special orders--important business previously designated for consideration at this meeting
5. Business--motions
6. Announcements
7. Adjournment

### Presenting Motions:

1. Obtain the floor
2. Make a motion--avoid personalities and stay on subject.
3. Wait for someone to second the motion.
4. Another member will second the motion, or the Chairman will call for a second--if there is no second to motion it is lost.
5. The Chairman restates the motion.
6. Debate—concise and focused on content of motion.
7. Keep established time limits.
8. Put the question to the membership--if there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.

Note: Motion to Table – This motion is often used in the attempt to "kill" a motion. The option is always present, however, to "take from the table", for reconsideration by the membership.

### Voting on a Motion:

1. By General Consent -- When a motion is not likely to be opposed, the Chairman says, "if there is no objection ..." The membership shows agreement by their silence, however if one member says, "I object," the item must be put to a vote.
2. By Voice -- The Chairman asks those in favor to say, "aye", those opposed to say "no". Although "voice" is preferred, any member may move for an exact count.
3. By Ballot -- Members record their votes; this method is used when secrecy is desired.

In summary, parliamentary procedure is an effective means to get things done at your meetings. But, it will only work if you use it properly.

1. Allow motions that are in order.
2. Have members obtain the floor properly.
3. Obey the rules of debate—stay focused.

Most importantly, BE COURTEOUS.

Adapted from: <http://www.robertsrules.org/rulesintroprint.htm>