

BYLAWS

MARYLAND ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

§ 9-2404

Adopted 09/14/2011

Preamble

The Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, hereinafter called the "Council" established in support of The Office of The Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The Council advises the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and promotes the general welfare of deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article, § 9-2404

Definitions:

“Council” means the Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

“Office” means the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

“Director” means the director of the Office.

“Deaf and hard of hearing individuals” means those individuals who have a partial or complete loss of hearing, including people who are deaf, hard of hearing, late deafened, and deaf-blind.

“Deaf-blind” means those residents of Maryland who have concomitant vision and hearing loss.

Article I. Name

The name of this Council is the Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. It is established in Accord with Article-State Government § 9-2301 through 9-2307, Subtitle 23. Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Annotated Code of Maryland.

Article II. Mission

The mission of the Council is to advise the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in carrying out its duties, and to advocate for public policies and practices that promote the full inclusion of all persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in all aspects of community life.

Article III. Purpose

The purpose of the Council is to fulfill its mission in accordance with State law. The Council advocates for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. The Council shall:

- A. Advise the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in carrying out its duties.
- B. Review statewide activities for deaf and hard of hearing individuals, including reviewing reports and publications of committees and commissions; and proposed state and federal legislation impacting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- C. Foster coordination and support for programs for people who are deaf or hard of hearing to stimulate state and local community interest through active cooperation of business and industry, labor, government, educators, public and private agencies serving individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- D. Study ways to maximize the use of facilities and services available to deaf or hard of hearing individuals.
- E. Promote a climate of public awareness and understanding of barriers to full-participation in life's activities faced by individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing through public education programs.
- F. Hold:
 - (1.) At least quarterly, regularly scheduled meetings and,
 - (2.) Open meetings to provide direct communication between deaf or hard of hearing individuals and private and public organizations and the general public about programs and services for, as well as the needs of people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- G. Assist any local governing body of a county to establish a local advisory council for people who are deaf or hard of hearing for purposes of implementing relevant provisions of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and other relevant State and federal laws.
- H. Serve on subcommittees with active participation in committee assignments. Committees meet during or in addition to Advisory Council meetings.**
- I. Advocate for agency policies and programs.**
- J. Recommend methods that improve the coordination of services among the public**

and private entities that provide services pertaining to interpreter services, computer aided real-time captioning services, and assisting listening devices (excluding hearing aids)

Article IV. **Membership**

- A. Appointment: The Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate appoints members.
- B. Composition: The Council consists of eighteen (18) members appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, of the 18 at least five of the members shall be deaf or hard of hearing individuals.

(1.) State Government Members:

- (a) one shall be the State Superintendent or a designee from the State Department of Education;
- (b) the Secretary or designee from the State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene;
- (c) the Secretary or designee from the State Department of Human Resources;
- (d) the Secretary or designee from the State Department of Transportation;
- (e) the Secretary or designee from the State Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation;
- (f) the Secretary or designee from the State Department of Housing and Community Development;
- (g) the Executive Director or designee from the Maryland Human Relations Commission;
- (h) the Superintendent or Designee from the Maryland School for the Deaf;
- (i) the Secretary or designee from the State Department of Aging; and

(2.) General Public Members:

Nine members shall be from the general public, chosen from different geographical areas of the state and shall consist of the following:

- (a) five shall be deaf or hard of hearing individuals;
- (b) one shall be a private citizen with special knowledge or expertise relating to services to people who are deaf or hard of hearing;
- (c) one shall be a parent of a deaf or hard of hearing child;
- (d) one shall be from a private agency providing services to deaf or hard of hearing individuals; and
- (e) one shall be a person with special knowledge or expertise relating to services to individuals who are deaf-blind

C. Tenure

- (1.) The term of a member of the Council is three (3) years. The terms of members are staggered. The initial term expirations are as follows: 5 in 2002, 5 in 2003, and 6 in 2004;
- (2.) A member may not serve consecutively more than two three-year terms;
- (3.) Two months prior to the end of term of a State government representative, the Director of the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing shall send a letter to the Secretary of the State Government member, requesting a nominee for appointment to the Council;
- (4.) Council members or organizations providing services to deaf or hard of hearing individuals may submit nominations of individuals to be appointed to the Council two months prior to the expiration of a non-State government council Member's term;
- (5.) The Director of the Office of the Deaf and Hard and Hearing shall forward all nominations to the Governor's Appointment office;
- (6.) A member who is appointed after a term has begun serves only for the remainder of the term until a successor is appointed and qualifies;
- (7.) At the end of a term, a member continues to serve until a successor is appointed and qualifies; and
- (8.) Any member who fails to attend at least 50 percent of the regularly scheduled meetings during any 12-month period shall be considered to have resigned and the chairman of such advisory council shall forward or cause his name to be forwarded to the Governor, not later than January 15th of the year following such non-attendance, with the statement of such non-attendance and the Governor shall

thereupon appoint his successor for the remainder of the term. If the member has been unable to attend meetings as required by this section for reasons satisfactory to the Governor, the Governor may waive such resignation if such reasons are made public.

- (9.) Minutes for each regularly scheduled meeting will be scribed and approved at the start of the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- (10.) Attendance will be recorded using a sign in sheet and recorded as part of the minutes for each regularly scheduled meeting.
- (11.) The office is required to annually submit the attendance records to the Governors Appointments office with a letter of explanation from those who have not met the minimum attendance requirements.

Article V. **Officers**

A The officers of the Council shall be Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. These individuals shall be elected annually from the Council by majority vote of the members of the Council.

- (1.) Chairperson: The Chairperson shall be a member of the Council from the general public, and in good standing. The Chairperson convenes and presides over all meetings of the Council; serves as spokesperson for the Council; represents the Council on the local, State and national level; serves as the Council's liaison to the Governor and other elected officials; appoints members to standing and ad-hoc committees; and serves as ex-officio member of all council sub-committees.
- (2.) Vice- Chairperson: The Vice- Chairperson shall be a member of the Council from State government, and in good standing. The Vice-Chairperson assumes all duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson, and carries out all other duties on behalf of the Council as requested by the Chairperson. In the event that the Chairperson is not able to complete a term in office the Vice-Chairperson shall act as Chairperson until a new Chairperson is elected by majority vote of the Council to fulfill the remaining term of the previous Chairperson. The Vice-chairperson shall be an ex-officio member of all subcommittees.

Article VI. **Elections**

- A. Date: Elections for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be held annually.
- B. Nominations: The Chairperson shall appoint a nominating committee. Members may

nominate themselves or other Council members. The nominations committee shall ensure that individuals have agreed to being nominated prior to voting. The nominations committee shall be responsible for presiding over the election and counting the votes. The method of voting shall be agreed upon by the membership prior to the election.

- C. Quorum: For the purpose of election of officers a majority of Council members present at the meeting in which the election is held shall constitute a quorum. Members shall be notified of an upcoming election at least one month in advance.

Article VII. **Committees**

The Council reserves the right to establish or abolish standing, ad-hoc and special committees as needed.

Article VIII. **Meetings**

- A. The Council shall meet quarterly. A simple majority of appointed members of the Membership shall be considered a quorum and shall have the authority to conduct business on behalf of the Council. Decision making and voting shall be based on simple majority vote of those present or by signed and written proxy vote.
- B. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or upon petition to the chairperson by at least five council members; however, notice of any special meetings shall be given to each member not less than ten days before such meeting. The notice shall give the date, time, and place of the meeting and shall include an agenda for the special meeting.

Article IX. **Procedure for Amendment**

- A. Bylaws will be reviewed annually during the first quarterly meeting of the calendar year.
- B. Any member may propose an amendment to the Bylaws. Favorable vote by two-thirds of the membership (10 of 16) is required for adoption of the proposed amendment. Copies of the proposed amendments and notice of its consideration must be mailed, faxed or emailed to each member at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting at which adoption of the amendment would be considered.
- C. All meetings will be held in areas compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG).
- D. Equally effective communications will be provided for all meetings.
- E. [eliminated Robert's Rules]

