

Social Services, Financial Assistance Services,
and Health and Wellness Administration
Community Advisory Council Bylaws

Effective September 21, 2022

Social Services, Financial Assistance Services, and Health and Wellness Administration
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ARTICLE I
Name and Definition

Section 1. Name

The Ramsey County Financial Assistance Services and Social Services Department and the Ramsey County Health and Wellness Administrative Division Community Advisory Council is hereafter referred to as the Council.

Section 2. Ramsey County Board of Commissioners

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners is hereafter referred to as the Board.

Section 3. Ramsey County Financial Assistance Services and Social Services Department and the Ramsey County Health and Wellness Administrative Division

The Ramsey County Financial Assistance Services and Social Services Department and the Ramsey County Health and Wellness Administrative Division is hereafter referred to as the Departments/Division.

Section 4. Standing Committees

Standing committees of the Council are permanent committees and are identified as Adult Mental Health Advisory Council; Adult Services Committee; Children's Mental Health Advisory Council; Children's Services Review Panel; Disability Services and Support Committee; Low Income Committee; and Substance Use and Recovery Committee; hereafter referred to as Committee or Committees.

Section 5. Ad Hoc Subcommittees

An ad hoc subcommittee is any subcommittee of the Council or one of its Committees appointed for a limited time for a specific purpose.

ARTICLE II
Authority, Purpose, Responsibilities, and Mission

Section 1. Authority and Purpose

Pursuant to Resolution BXX-XXX, the Social Services, Financial Assistance Services, and Health and Wellness Administration Community Advisory Council reports to the Departments/Division, directly advises Departments/Division staff, and supports Board representation at all Council or Committee meetings. The Council's purpose is to align with the County's Racial and Health Equity and Residents First initiatives, sharing power and collaborating with the Departments/Division to promote positive change for residents most impacted by services and programs.

Section 2. Responsibilities of the Council

The Council is community and is advisory to the Departments/Division. All Council/Committee recommendations shall be made in writing to the appropriate Department/Division.

On behalf of the population represented, each Committee may:

- Make recommendations relating to the development or modification of the service delivery system, identifying needs, community priorities, and service gaps.
- Provide input for the Departments/Division's annual budget.
- Provide legislative recommendations and participate in legislative advocacy.
- Participate in public engagement about community needs for human services, County response, and related issues.
- Respond to assignments from the Board or Departments/Division.
- Present to the Departments/Division or the Board to provide insights, observations, ideas, and challenges from a community perspective.
- The Adult Mental Health Advisory Council, the Children's Mental Health Advisory Council, and the Children's Services Review Panel have additional responsibilities according to state mandate and federal law.

Section 3. Responsibilities of the Department

The Departments/Division will cooperate with requests from the Council and its Committees whenever possible, understanding its service to the community and especially those directly impacted by the services and programs offered by the County.

Based on the Council's and the Departments/Division's collaborative partnership to share power with community, the Departments/Division shall:

- A. Support Council leadership with administrative tasks relating to recruitment, appointments, onboarding, and other events related to the membership cycle,
- B. Actively participate and provide oversight by division leadership,
- C. Consistently attend and ensure transparent participation from County staff, and
- D. Share priorities, requesting feedback and participation from community regarding internal efforts, report to community.

Section 4. Relationship with Board

The Board is invited to attend Committee or Council meetings to engage with the community and residents they represent, to request support for initiatives, and to offer support to the community/County collaborative advisement process.

ARTICLE III

Composition and Membership

Section 1. Appointments

Appointments are made by the recommendation of the Council to the County Manager or designee. The process for all Committees except the Children's Services Review Panel includes a community member's submission of an application, consideration of the application by the Council and the appropriate Department/Division, and an offer of membership to the applicant if approved by the County Manager or designee.

The Children's Services Review Panel is under state and federal mandate and the application process also includes an interview of the applicant, a background check, and the approval of the Minnesota Department of Human Services Commissioner, the appointing authority.

Section 2. Council

- A. The Council consists of sixteen (16) members, including the Council Chair, Council Vice Chair, seven (7) Committee Chairs and seven (7) Committee Co-Chairs. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Council shall be appointed by the ~~Board~~ County Manager or designee to serve for a period of one year. The Chair will not be affiliated with any Committee. The Vice Chair will be a qualified Chair/Co-Chair of a Council Committee.
- B. The Council Chair and Co-chair shall meet with Department/Division Directors and Council Coordinator to plan the Council meeting agenda.
- C. When attendance is not possible, the Council Chair, Vice-Chair or Co-Chair, may designate an alternate to attend. In the event that any member of the Council (unless excused by the Council Chair or Council Coordinator) is absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings or is absent from one-half of announced Council meetings within a period of twelve (12) months, the Council Chair shall notify the Committee Chair (or Vice Chair if the absentee is a Committee Chair) of the intention to terminate such absentee's Council membership. Such termination shall not affect the absentee's Committee membership. The Council Chair shall then request the affected Committee, at its next meeting, to select a replacement representative to serve on the Council.

Section 3. Committees

- A. Each of the Council's seven (7) Committees may have up to fifteen (15) members. Members shall be recommended for appointment by the Council Coordinator in partnership with the Council chairs, subject to approval by the Departments/Division. Members serve two (2)-year terms beginning on the date of appointment and ending two years later. Members are limited to three (3) consecutive terms. A member may serve on only one Committee of the Council.
- B. The Council Coordinator, County staff, Council and Committees will actively seek and recruit persons willing to be appointed to the Committees from any groups or organizations currently serving the target population, ensuring representation reflects the demographics of the community,
- C. Council chairs, along with the Council Coordinator and County staff will create a recruitment plan and report to the Council. Members must reside in the County, and/or work or volunteer in a capacity serving the needs of County residents.
- D. A member whose term has ended may reapply for membership after one-year absence as a voting member.
- E. No employee of the Health & Wellness Service Team is eligible to serve as a member of the Council or Committees. No individual or employee of an agency contracting with the Health & Wellness Service Team who is directly involved with contract negotiations, may serve as Chair of the Council or Committees. No employee of the State of Minnesota Department of Human Services may serve as

Chair of the Council or of a Committee whose target constituency is related to their area of work.

- F. Member representation should reflect the racial, ethnic, and cultural makeup of the population served by specific Committees. To the extent possible, and when appropriate, the membership of the Committees will include:
 - Service recipient or person(s) with lived experience(s)
 - Caring community member
 - Family member of a target population
 - Representative of an impacted population-individual or advocacy group
 - Professional in the field
- G. Each Committee will elect from its membership a Committee Chair and Vice Chair (or Co-chairs) for staggered two (2)-year terms when possible. All Co-chairs shall serve on the Council. Each Committee may elect additional members to serve as alternate representatives to the Council. Alternates may participate in Council discussion and debate, but may only vote in the absence of the officers. Only two representatives from each committee are eligible to vote.
- H. In the event that any member of a Committee (unless excused by the Committee Chair or Council Coordinator) is absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings or is absent from one-half of announced Committee meetings within a period of twelve (12) months, the Committee Chair may authorize the Council Coordinator to terminate membership of the absent member.
- I. When a vacancy occurs, a new member will be appointed to fill the vacated position, as soon as possible.
- J. If a member of a Committee who is a representative to the Council resigns, the Committee will elect another member to fill the vacancy on the Council.
- K. Committee Co-chairs communicate on a monthly basis with the Council Coordinator and Departments/Division staff to plan and prepare Committee meeting agendas.

Section 4. Participation in Meetings

- A. All members of the Council and Committees and/or guests will participate with the best interests of the Council or Committee in mind. Members are expected to address the broader needs of Ramsey County residents, not just the needs of their constituent group, organization or the member's own individual agenda.
- B. Members of the Council and Committees are required to attend meetings. In person meetings are preferred when appropriate. Virtual meetings are encouraged when it fits members' needs. If absolutely necessary, telephone options are available. Meetings may be held in a hybrid format as needed.

Article IV Grievance and Conflict Resolution Procedure

- A. In the event that the actions and behaviors of any member and/or guest of a Committee disrupt or undermine the purpose or functioning of that Committee, the Committee Chair and Co-chair shall meet with the Council Coordinator and the individual(s) to offer possible solutions.

- B. If the conflict continues, the Council Chair and/or Vice Chair shall meet with the Committee Chair and the individual member to remedy the situation. If an issue needs to be elevated from the Committee, the Committee Chair and Co-chair shall present the issue to the Council, along with any evidence, for resolution. A 2/3 majority is needed for solution approval. Committee Chairs and Co-chairs must keep the matter confidential per the Council Agreement and their confidentiality agreement.
- C. An appeals process may be requested by the member and/or guest by writing to the Council Chair, Council Vice Chair, and Council Coordinator. An appeals panel will be determined by involved parties and can include, but is not limited to, Council members, Departments/Division staff, and community members.

ARTICLE V

Officers and Duties

Section 1. Officers

The principal officers of the Council will be the Chair and Vice Chair.

Section 2. Election of Officers

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Council shall be appointed by the County Manager or designee for a term beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of the year following. No person may serve more than four consecutive years as an officer. The Chair, with the approval of the members of the Council, may appoint any other officers deemed necessary for the transaction of business.

Section 3. Duties of Officers

- A. The Chair will preside at meetings of the Council. The Chair may appoint task forces and may supervise the work of any Committee; and is an ex officio member of any Committee or ad hoc subcommittee of the Council. The Chair and Vice chair will create the agenda for each meeting of the Council.
- B. The Chair and Vice Chair may sign any instruments the Council has authorized to be executed.
- C. The Chair will perform other duties incidental to the office of Chair and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Council.
- D. The Vice Chair will serve in the absence or disability of the Chair and perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chair at such time and will perform other duties as the Chair may designate.
- E. The Chairs and Co-chairs will supervise the work of the Committees. The Council Chair or Vice Chair will serve in the absence of the Committee.

ARTICLE VI

Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees

The Council will consist of seven (7) standing Committees as referenced in Article 1, Section 4.

Section 2. Responsibilities

The Committees will be deemed to have, for their area of assignment, the same responsibilities as the Council. The Committees will also assume any responsibilities directly assigned to them by the Council.

- A. Committees have a responsibility to work with the County on concerns of the Departments/Division.
- B. Committees will provide honest and transparent feedback to county on community facing services.

Section 3. Reporting

Recommendations to the Departments/Division from the Council and its Committees must be in writing. The Council will review recommendations from Committees. It will be the prerogative of the Council, on a majority vote of a quorum, to submit a dissenting position on recommendations expressed by a Committee. The Departments/Division shall respond to recommendations in partnership with County residents.

In the event that the Departments/Division ignore recommendations or derail from the partnership, the Council will elevate the issue appropriately.

It is the responsibility of the Committee representative to report on Committee activity at Council meetings, and to identify issues originating with the Committee which require Council action.

Committees will report annually to the Council on their activities. The Council shall combine Committee reports and provide an annual report in writing to the County Manager.

ARTICLE VII

Staff Responsibilities/Duties

Section 1. Role of Ramsey Staff as Attendees

- A. All Ramsey County staff are expected to ground their work in collaborative partnership, co-design, and resident-centeredness whenever working with Committees and residents.
- B. Ramsey County shall support and partner with Committees as needed ensuring follow up and transparent communication.

Section 2. Role of Departments/Division Directors

The Departments/Divisions Directors shall:

- A. Attend the monthly Community Advisory Council meeting.
- B. Support the Chair and Vice Chair in the creation of meeting agendas.
- C. Provide leadership training to newly elected Chairs, Vice Chair or Co-Chairs.
- D. Provide updates and information useful to Committees, their Chairs, and members in a transparent manner.
- E. Keep Departments/Division Directors accountable for their responsibilities.
- F. Empower assigned staff to act in the best interested of the county-community relationship.
- G. Create a vision for the Council and its future with the Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Chairs.
- H. Appoint dedicated staff to their division/unit-aligned Committee who shall continuously attend.
- I. Ensure representing staff are onboarded, understand bylaws, staff responsibilities, and community expectations .
- J. Maintain ongoing communication with representing staff to ensure community needs, questions, and concerns are being addressed and answered.
- K. Ensure staff are engaged and meet committee expectations and needs.
- L. Provide division/unit goals and visions to the Council Committees.

Section 3. Role of Assigned Staff

Assigned Staff shall:

- A. Attend every meeting. If unable to attend, staff shall find a replacement and provide update and context needed to meet community expectations.
- B. Provide connections to other Ramsey County staff who may have insightful information to committee's topic of interest and discussion.
- C. Respond to community requests and questions in an appropriate time manner. When answer is not known, follow up with needed staff to answer concerns.
- D. Share relevant information and updates to the Council Committee members.
- E. Prepare and onboard replacement when a staff member can no longer attend.

Section 4. Role of Council Coordinator

The Council Coordinator:

- A. Will report to the Departments/Division Director.
- B. Responsible for administrative support, committee recruitment onboarding, cultivating and maintaining meaningful relationships between Departments/Division, County residents and internal and external community partners.
- C. Must abide by the job descriptions created by Ramsey County staff and Council members.
- D. Will take meeting notes and prepare minutes based on the notes, and/or delegate this task to Committee member in consultation with Council Chair and Vice-Chair. The Council Coordinator will provide notice, minutes and any related materials to members prior to an upcoming meeting.

ARTICLE VIII

Meetings

Section 1. Meeting Schedule

- A. Regular meetings of the Council and Committees will be held at least nine (9) times per year at such time and place as may be determined by the members of the Council and Committees.
- B. Chair and Vice Chair of the CAC in partnership with Council Coordinator will cocreate annual schedule at the beginning of the calendar year.

Section 2. Notice of Meetings

- A. All Council and Committee meetings will be open to the public but are not subject to Open Meeting Laws.
- B. Notices of meetings will be posted and distributed. The Council Coordinator, in conjunction with Council, will create an annual schedule for all meetings in a calendar year. If a meeting needs to be rescheduled, notice for the new meeting date shall come at least seven (7) days in advance.
- C. Reminder of all regular meetings of the Council or its Committees will be sent at least seven (7) days in advance by email or other method as requested, to each member at the (or their) address as it appears in the records. Notification shall include place and tentative agenda, together with appropriate material pertaining to agenda items.

- D. The attendance at a Committee meeting (regular and/or special) can be waived if a meeting notice is not sent within seven (7) days at members' request.
- E. The attendance of a Council or Committee member at a meeting will constitute a waiver of notice of a meeting except where a member attends a meeting and objects to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened.

Section 3. Ad Hoc Subcommittee Meetings

Ad hoc subcommittee meetings may be held at any time for a limited period. Ad Hoc subcommittees must be motioned and passed by a simple majority by members belonging to the committee for that specific committee business. Ad hoc may be formed for the purpose of Council business or specific committee work.

When possible, notice of meeting, agenda, and other needed material shall go out seven (7) days in advance.

In the event of an emergency, notice may be waived by a quorum of the committee. Business at special meetings shall be limited to subjects stated in the call.

Section 4. Annual Meeting

At a minimum, there will be one (1) meeting of the general membership of the Council and its Committees each year that is open to the County community. Its purpose, format, and content will be determined by the Council in collaboration with the Departments/Division.

Section 5. Quorum

A majority of the current Committee membership (50% of members plus one) will constitute a quorum for the conduct of business at Committee meetings. A quorum will not be necessary at a meeting when discussing agenda matters on an informal basis. If a quorum exists at any time during the meeting, a quorum is then determined to exist for the remainder of the meeting.

At the Council, a quorum will be established by a roll call by committee. Votes will be recorded in the same manner.

Section 6. Order of Business

The order of business shall include:

- A. Approval of an agenda and any amendments.
- B. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting.
- C. Report of officers, committees and staff.
- D. Agenda items.
- E. Other matters which may properly come before the Committee.
- F. Adjournment.

Section 7. Conduct of Business

- A. Committee's conduct of business shall be according to Robert's Rules of Order.
- B. All minutes and reports of the Council shall not contain private welfare data and will be retained on file in the Departments/Division and will be available for inspection by any citizen.

ARTICLE IX Amendment of the Bylaws

These Bylaws may be recommended for amendment by a majority vote of a quorum of the Council at any regular meeting -provided that written notice setting forth the contents of the proposed amendment(s) has been given to the Council members at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. All amendments shall be created by Council members in collaboration with the Departments/Division.