

Operating Rules of the National Consumer Advisory Board

Approved June 14 2007

Article I Name

The name of the organization will be the “National Consumer Advisory Board,” also known as NCAB.

Article II Definitions

For the purposes of these Operating Rules, the following definitions apply:

- Health Care for the Homeless Agencies (HCH): Organizations that provide health care and/or respite care specifically for homeless individuals. These organizations are not required to receive any specific funding stream in order to be considered Health Care for the Homeless Agencies.
- Consumer: A homeless or formerly homeless person who is/has received care from an HCH.
- Local CAB: Consumer advisory boards organized groups of currently and formerly homeless consumers of HCH programs that are involved in the governance of an HCH.
- National Conference: the annual conference organized for grantees of the federal HCH program.
- National Health Care for the Homeless Council (National Council): a nonprofit membership organization that is the legal body through which NCAB operates. NCAB operates as a Standing Committee of the National Council, and members of NCAB are Individual Members of the National Council.
- Voting: as used in these Rules, voting refers to participation in the consensus decision-making process employed throughout the National Council. This process allows for decisions by majority vote when consensus cannot be reached.

Article III Purposes

The purpose of the National Consumer Advisory Board is to organize the consumers of Health Care for the Homeless so that they have a voice in national issues involving the health care of homeless persons; to assist the members in becoming more involved in

their local Consumer Advisory Board and to be a clearing house of information relating to homeless health care.

Article IV Membership

Section 1—Membership requirements:

Membership is open to anyone who is now using, or has used, the services of a local Health Care for the Homeless agency.

Members must:

1. Be homeless or formerly homeless; and
2. Have accessed services at a Health Care for the Homeless agency; and
3. Fill out an application for membership and send it to NCAB. This remains valid for 24 months at which time applications will need to be renewed for continued membership.

It is preferable that NCAB members are involved in a local CAB and/or organizational governance, but this is not required for participation as a member of NCAB.

NCAB members are Individual Members of the National Council and are eligible for election to National Council Board of Directors and officer positions.

There is no requirement that dues be paid by NCAB members.

Section 2—Voting:

1. Decisions within the National Council are made by consensus. At meetings where decisions are being made, only one NCAB member from each HCH is eligible to vote. Each HCH group is responsible for determining and informing NCAB who the voting member will be.
2. Proxy voting cannot be accommodated because the consensus decision-making mechanism requires live conversation and active participation by all parties.
3. There is no quorum requirement for a vote or consensus process to continue.
4. Staff is available for support, but do not participate in the voting process.
5. Decisions made by the Executive Committee will be made by consensus.
6. For Voting regarding selection of officers, see Article V, Section 4.

Section 3-Communication:

1. Communication with members will be initiated by the means directed on the membership application form. NCAB prefers e-mail contact if possible for the sake of efficiency. Members are responsible for informing NCAB of changes in contact information.
2. The Secretary will be responsible for assuring that advance notices of meetings are sent out to the membership.

Article V Meetings

Section 1—Full NCAB Meetings

1. An annual membership meeting will take place at the National Health Care for the Homeless Conference.
2. Notice for the National Convention will be distributed to the membership at least 30 days prior to the convention.
3. There is no quorum requirement for the NCAB meeting during the National Conference.

Section 2—Other NCAB Meetings

1. The Executive Committee will meet monthly by conference call, and may meet face-to-face one or more times per year, as the budget allows.
2. The Chairperson may establish working Committees to accomplish the organization's mission. NCAB Committees will typically meet by conference call.
3. Each NCAB member is encouraged to participate on other committees of the National Council
4. If an NCAB member joins a committee, he or she will be notified by e-mail of the scheduled meetings (these are usually done by telephone).
5. Other meetings may be arranged by as needed throughout the year.

Article VI Officers

Section 1-Officers:

The membership shall elect a Chairperson, two co-chairs, a Secretary, and three At Large members to serve as Officers of the National Consumer Advisory Board. These officers shall make up the Executive Committee, which will have authority to act for NCAB at all times except during NCAB Membership meetings. The membership may appoint such other officers and agents as it shall deem necessary, and who shall have such authority and exercise such powers and perform such duties as shall be determined from time to time by the NCAB.

Section 2-Removal:

The Executive Committee reserves the right to remove officers for non-participation and that officer can be replaced by consensus of the Executive Committee.

Section 3-Term of office:

Each officer will serve a term of two years and cannot serve in one position for more than two terms or four consecutive years.

Section 4-Election of Officers:

1. Any member of NCAB may run for office.
2. Elections will be held every two years at the Annual Meeting to be held at the National Convention.

3. The Chairperson will appoint a Nominating Committee to manage the officer election process. The membership will be notified of the positions coming up at least 6 weeks prior to the annual meeting. Members can nominate themselves or someone else, but the candidate is the only one who can send in a biography to be considered by NCAB for election purposes. These candidate lists with biographies will be sent out to the full NCAB membership no later than 3 weeks before the annual conference (usually in June), and members' responses will be used by the Nominating Committee to develop a recommended slate of officers. The slate will be confirmed or altered by the NCAB membership at the annual meeting, by consensus.
4. The first election under these Operating Rules will take place at the Annual Meeting in 2008. For that election, the Nominating Committee will develop a slate that includes nominees for the following terms of office:
 - Chairperson – two year term
 - Co-Chair – one year term
 - Co-chair – two year term
 - Secretary – one year term
 - Member at Large – one year term
 - Member at Large – one year term
 - Member at Large – two year term

In subsequent years, the Nominating Committee will prepare slates to replace or re-elect individuals whose term of office is expiring. The initial one-year terms will not count toward the term limits defined in Section 3 above.
5. Voting for officers will be open to any member of NCAB.

Section 5 –Duties:

The duties of the officers are as follows:

1. The Chairperson will preside at all meetings of the NCAB. The Chairperson shall designate such committees and sub-committees as may be necessary to carry out the purposes herein stated and the policies and directives of the NCAB, and shall designate the chairperson of each committee designated and the persons to serve thereon. The Chairperson shall serve as a member of the Board of Directors and as a Governing Member of the National Council.
2. The Co-chairs shall be authorized to act in place of the Chairperson when so directed by the Chairperson and/or when the Chairperson is absent or disabled. The Co-chairs shall have such other and further duties as the Chairperson and the NCAB shall require.
3. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the NCAB, and shall assure that all members are informed as to time and place of each membership meeting. The Secretary shall have such other duties as are customary for a secretary of a board and as the Chairperson and the NCAB shall require.

4. Members at Large shall be responsible for:
 - a. Collecting and reporting consumer involvement on committees to the Executive Committee;
 - b. Ensuring that agenda, minutes, and background materials arrive in advance of Committee meetings which they chair;
 - c. Keeping the Executive Committee informed of issues related to committee work;
 - d. Keeping the Executive Committee informed of feedback from consumer involvement on committees;
 - e. Keeping the consensus process on-track;
 - f. Identifying needs of NCAB and reporting those to the Executive Committee and/or staff as appropriate;
 - g. Facilitating meetings as needed; and
 - h. Contacting NCAB membership to update information, maintain membership, etc.

Section 6—Decision-Making Provisions:

NCAB and its Executive Committee will make decisions by consensus.

ARTICLE VII
Committees

Section 1 –Committee Appointments:

By consensus, the members may at any time establish one or more committees of members for any appropriate purposes and dissolve any such committees; this is in addition to the Chairperson’s authority to establish Committees. The Chairperson shall appoint the members of the committee and designate a chairperson who shall preside at all meetings of the committee and generally supervise the conduct of the committee's affairs. Standing committees shall consist of no less than three (3) members. Minutes will be kept on all committee meetings.

Section 2-Standing Committee, Composition and Description of Duties:

There shall be one standing committee, *The Executive Committee*. The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the Board, and is empowered to act for NCAB. A quorum for the transaction of business by the Executive Committee shall consist of fifty (50%) percent of the total membership of the Executive Committee, and decisions shall be made by a consensus of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present. The Secretary shall keep regular minutes of its proceedings and shall report the same to the NCAB at regular meetings of the NCAB or more often as appropriate. A report of any executive proceedings shall be available upon request by any member of the NCAB.

Article VIII
Special Provisions

Section 1-Non-profit Character:

Individuals shall receive no payment for their service as officers or members of NCAB.

Section 2-Bylaws:

1. These bylaws will not take effect unless ratified by a consensus of those present at the NCAB business meeting during the 2007 National HCH Conference..
2. Amendments to the bylaws
 - a. These Bylaws may be amended at any Membership meeting of NCAB by a consensus of the members of NCAB.
 - b. The proposed amendment must be submitted in writing to each member at least 7 days in advance of the meeting upon which such amendment is to be voted upon.

Article IX

Relationship with the National Health Care for the Homeless Council

1. NCAB is an autonomous committee of the National Council
2. The Chairperson or designee represents NCAB on the Board of Directors of the National Council
3. The Chairperson or designee represents NCAB on the Governing Membership of the National Council
4. NCAB is part of the consensus decision-making process of the Council
5. NCAB Members are eligible to participate on other committees of the National Council
6. The National Council provides staff support to NCAB as needed and as budget allows