



COUNCIL ON OLDER PERSONS (COOP)

Operational Procedures

A. MISSION

To promote a better understanding of aging and address the issues and concerns of older persons in Greater Cleveland through citizen-led needs assessment, policy development, community education, and advocacy.

B. PURPOSE

The Council on Older Persons (hereinafter “the Council”) will serve as an advisory committee for The Center for Community Solutions (CCS) and as a resource to support communities, organizations, and institutions to promote the well-being of older adults through education, awareness, and advocacy.

C. MEMBERSHIP

1. Number

Membership shall consist of a maximum of 50 persons. Honorary members do not count toward the maximum membership.

2. Composition

Membership on the Council is an individual membership. Membership may be conditioned upon employment or organizational affiliation and reviewed by Nominating Committee if appropriate.

Members shall:

- (a)** Be selected from a wide range of groups and organizations concerned with and about older persons,
- (b)** Represent a balance of such agencies and groups as the city offices on aging, community-wide planning organizations, major governmental institutions serving the elderly, consumers, senior citizen’s advocacy groups, local universities, service providers, and religious groups;

(c) Have expertise in such fields as housing, law, business and industry, retirement, nursing homes, and medicine;

(d) Always include representatives from Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging, City of Cleveland Department of Aging, and Cuyahoga County Department of Senior and Adult Services (hereinafter "Mandatory Members"); and

(e) Represent some diversity of age, through active recruiting as members some persons who are at least 60 years of age.

3. Selection and Replacement of Vacancies

All members shall be nominated for membership on the Council by the Nominating Committee in November of each year. Voting on each such member shall be made by the Council the following January. If there are vacancies in membership, the Council may elect to hold mid-year nominations, in which case the Nominating Committee shall make such number of nominations as may be determined by the Council and voted upon by the Council at its first meeting in the month immediately following the month of such nomination.

4. Term

With the exception of the members who represent a Mandatory Member, as defined in Article C.(2)(d), above, members shall serve two-year terms and shall be eligible to serve for up to five consecutive terms or ten years.

5. Honorary Members

(a) The membership may also include two groups of honorary members, Alumni Members and Emeritus Members, each of whom have met the criteria of having served as a member of the Council for a minimum of ten years.

(b) Any member who has served a minimum of ten years on the Council may request the Council to become an Alumni Member, and upon the Nominating Committee's nomination, the Council can name a member as an Alumni Member. Alumni Members are allowed to attend Council or its Committee meetings but have no voting privileges on the Council; and

(c) The Nominating Committee may also nominate members who have distinguished themselves through service to the Council

and/or to seniors in the community to be Emeritus Members of the Council. Upon the Council's approval, an Emeritus Member may both attend meetings of the Council and its Committees and have voting privileges.

D. LEADERSHIP

1. Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

There shall be two positions of leadership for the Council, a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson.

(a) The Chairperson shall preside at all Council meetings, serve on all Council Committees in the ex-officio capacity, and keep the members of the Council informed about all pertinent activities. The Chairperson's term of office will be for two years, with eligibility to serve consecutive terms (maximum of four years).

(b) The Vice-Chairperson shall carry out the responsibilities of the Chairperson in his/her absence and serve on all Council Committees in an ex-officio capacity. The Vice-Chairperson has the option if invited, to become Chairperson at the end of the current Chairperson's term. The term will be for two years with eligibility to serve consecutive terms (maximum of four years).

2. Selection of Chairs

The Chairs of the Council shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee and approved by Council. The nominations shall be made every other November, and the affirmative vote of the Council shall be taken.

3. Term

The Chair and Vice-Chair shall serve a two-year term.

4. Vacancies

If the Chairperson leaves before his/her term expires, the Vice-Chairperson shall serve out the Chairperson's term and be eligible to serve two additional terms as Chairperson. If the Vice-Chairperson leaves, the Nominating Committee will nominate a replacement, which replacement nomination shall be approved by the Council.

E. MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

1. Number of Meetings

The Council shall meet at least six times a year. Meetings may be in person or conducted pursuant to any Authorized Communications Equipment. "Authorized Communications Equipment" means any communications equipment that provides a transmission, including, but not limited to, by telephone, telecopy, or any electronic means, from which it can be determined that the transmission was authorized by, and accurately reflects the intention of, the member or officer involved and, with respect to meetings, allows all persons participating in the meeting to contemporaneously communicate with each other.

2. Notice of Meetings

Notice of the meeting date shall be given to each member at least ten days before the meeting. Such notice may be given by any Authorized Communications Equipment.

3. Voting

Voting decisions will be made by Council on: **(1)** all membership nominations, **(2)** the annual work plan and public policy principles for advocacy purposes, and **(3)** changes in the operational procedures. Each member, except the Chairperson and Alumni members, shall be entitled to vote on all matters coming before the Council. The Chairperson shall vote in case of a tie. Decisions shall be made by a majority vote of those present. A quorum is not required. If an organization is represented by more than one member, a vote by only one member from that organization is permitted.

4. Attendance

Any member unable to attend a meeting may appoint another person to attend and act in his/her place with the exception of voting privileges.

Every member or his/her appointed alternate must attend half of the meetings during a calendar year. If any member or his/her appointed alternate does not meet the attendance requirement, they shall be notified by the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee of his/her membership termination. Termination exception shall be granted when extended illness or other legitimate circumstances (as approved by the Nominating Committee) prevents meeting attendance. If a representative from one of

the three Mandatory Members is terminated, that agency may recommend a replacement to the Nominating Committee.

F. COMMITTEES

1. Standing Committees

There shall be four Standing Committees of the Council: the Steering Committee, the Nominating Committee, the Legislative Committee, and the Program Committee.

2. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee shall be made up of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, chairs from the Nominating, Legislative, and Program committees, key representatives from Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging, City of Cleveland Department of Aging, and Cuyahoga County Department of Senior and Adult Services, and three at-large Council members appointed by the Chairperson (a total of eleven individuals). The Steering Committee will serve as the managing committee for Council activities and will be responsible for implementing and monitoring community education, policy development, and advocacy for the Council. The Steering Committee is required to obtain approval from the Council on its annual plan and any public policy principles for advocacy purposes. A quorum of six members is required for all action by the Steering Committee.

3. Nominating Committee

The Council Chairperson shall designate the Nominating Committee Chairperson. There shall be at least two other members on the Committee: one shall be selected by the Nominating Committee Chairperson and the other(s) shall be elected by Council. The Nominating Committee duties include: review operational procedures every five years, nominate new members and chairs, recommend emeritus membership, and recommend termination of membership due to lack of attendance. All membership will be approved by the Council.

4. Legislative Committee

The Council Chairperson shall designate the Legislative Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. Each office term will be for two years and is eligible to serve consecutive terms (maximum of four years). The Vice-Chairperson has the option if invited, to become Chairperson at the end of the current Chairperson's term. At-large Council members

volunteer for a two-year appointment to the Legislative Committee and shall be eligible to serve consecutive terms. The Chair is responsible for setting meeting agendas, convening and staffing the meetings, and ensuring that the work of the Committee is completed on time and according to the highest expectations. The Vice-Chair works with the Chair and assumes responsibilities of the Chair in the absence of the Chair.

The Committee is responsible for development, review, and revision of Council principles that address legislative and social policies and services that impact or influence the well-being of older adults (principles shall be presented to the Council membership for revisions and adoption before); monitoring pending local, state, and federal legislation and developing supportive or dissenting recommendations and reporting these recommendations to Council for development of advocacy steps; and developing and fostering linkages with other advocacy organizations. The Legislative Committee works with the Program Committee to create and sponsor educational opportunities that combine policy with practice issues, which impact older adults and those who care for them as well as systems providing services to these populations.

5. Program Committee

The Council Chairperson shall designate the Program Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. Each office term will be for two years and is eligible to serve consecutive terms (maximum of four years). The Vice-Chairperson has the option if invited, to become Chairperson at the end of the current Chairperson's term. Committee membership shall comprise appointees of the Council Chairperson and volunteers from among at-large Council members. Committee members shall serve a term of two years and may serve consecutive terms. The Chair is responsible for setting meeting agendas, convening and staffing meetings, and ensuring that the work of the Committee is completed on time and according to highest expectations. The Vice-Chair works with the Chair and assumes the responsibilities of the Chair in the absence of the Chair.

The Committee is responsible for designing and producing the aging track for the annual Human Services Institute or other educational events of The Center for Community Solutions. This responsibility includes identifying current topics related to Council's mission, recruiting moderators and speakers, informing and engaging Council membership during the planning period prior to the Institute, coordinating closely with

Institute planners, and ensuring that sessions take place on the day of the Institute as planned. In addition, the Committee may take on other special programs on relevant issues such as a speakers' bureau, forums, and community assessment.

6. Committee Leadership

The Council Chairperson shall appoint the Committee Chairpersons to serve for a two-year term.

7. Committee Membership

The Committee Chairperson shall select Council members to serve on the Committee taking into account the special talents and interests of Council members. Committee members may also be drawn from individuals who are not members of the Council, with the exception of the Steering Committee.

Any member or his/her appointed alternate who fails to attend one-third of the meetings during a calendar year shall be notified by the Committee Chairperson of his/her membership termination. Termination exception shall be granted when extended illness or other legitimate circumstances (as approved by the Committee Chairperson with agreement from the Council Chairperson) prevents meeting attendance.

8. Ad Hoc Committees

Ad Hoc Committees or Task Forces shall be appointed as necessary by the Steering Committee with the approval of the Council.

G. ADOPTION AND/OR AMENDMENTS

Adoption of, and/or amendment to, these operational procedures may be made by majority vote of the Council at any meeting, providing that proper notice of consideration of adoption and/or amendment shall have been given to all Council members prior to the meeting.