



Quick Reference Handout 8.3: Most-Needed PC/PB Policies and Procedures

Importance of Policies and Procedures to PC/PB Functioning

Policies and procedures supplement the Bylaws of a Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) Part A planning council or planning body (PC/PB), and provide greater detail about the processes to be used for implementing policies stated or summarized in the Bylaws.

Policies and procedures are important because they help the PC/PB meet legislative requirements and conduct business. They lay out processes that everyone associated with the PC/PB is expected to follow. When written in plain language and made available to all members, with appropriate orientation and training, they contribute to PC/PB operations that are fair and efficient. Followed consistently, they help prevent conflict and confusion – and help avoid complaints or grievances against the PC/PB.

Some policies and procedures are legislatively required; others are established as sound practice. The following are specified in the legislation:

- Conflict of Interest (COI) (See Quick Reference Handout 8.3)
- Grievance Procedures (See Quick Reference Handout 8.4)
- Open Nominations Process

Other policies and procedures are also important in guiding the PC/PB’s work and ensuring sound and consistent processes. Clear, well-written policies and procedures contribute to efficiency, prevent conflict and confusion, and minimize situations in which the PC/PB is not sure how to address a situation. Policies and procedures that guide tasks and decision-making about use of funds (PSRA, reallocation, and use of carryover funds) have special importance because failure to adopt and consistently follow such policies can lead to grievances against the PC/PB.

Policies and Procedures related to Legislatively Defined Planning Roles

Needs assessment policies and procedures specify and detail: the frequency and scope of various needs assessment tasks (often based on a multi-year cycle); the responsible committee; how input is obtained from the Consumer Committee or Caucus; timing for data gathering, analysis, and presentations; and use of staff, consultants, and volunteers.

Integrated/comprehensive HIV prevention and care planning policies and procedures specify and detail both development and updates of the plans, describing the role of the PC/PB in collecting information and helping to prepare the integrated plan, and providing a process for assessing progress and preparing updates. Since many integrated plans are statewide, a PC/PB’s policies and procedures may include procedures for “localizing” the integrated plan for implementation in the

Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA) or Transitional Grant Area (TGA).

Priority Setting and Resource Allocation (PSRA) policies and procedures specify and detail: the steps of data presentation, priority setting, resource allocation, and directives development; how input will be obtained from the community including people with HIV; what entity is responsible for each task; timing; and methods and levels of decision-making.

Reallocation policies and procedures specify and detail the processes, including rapid reallocation, to ensure that all program funds are spent to meet identified service needs and the program does not end the funding year with “unobligated balances” of Part A formula award funds.

Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism (AAM) policies and procedures guide the PC/PB’s annual process of assessing how quickly and well the recipient carried out the processes of contracting with and paying providers for delivering HIV-related services, so that the needs of people with HIV throughout the RWHAP Part A service area are met. These policies and procedures describe the information needed and the process to be used in obtaining and analyzing data from the recipient, and sometimes subrecipients, and preparing a report each year.

Use of carryover funds policies and procedures specify how the PC/PB works with the recipient to determine uses of carryover funds so that a waiver/carryover request can be submitted by the deadline date of December 31.

Policies and Procedures related to PC/PB Operations

The policies and procedures that structure and guide PC/PB operations provide institutional memory and help new members, leaders, and support staff work together to make the PC/PB efficient and productive. The following policies and procedures related to PC/PB operations are especially valuable:

- *PC/PB support budget*, addressing negotiation of the amount with the recipient, development of the budget, and monitoring of expenditures. (Unless PC/PB support is contracted out, the recipient provides fiscal management within the city or county system.)
- *Code of Conduct*, which specifies expectations for the behavior of both PC/PB members and other people who attend PC/PB and committee meetings or other events. In addition to the actual Code, many PC/PBs have policies and procedures that provide guidelines regarding how members are made aware of Code of Conduct provisions, who is responsible for enforcement, and how violations will be addressed.
- *Expense reimbursement* for PC/PB members with HIV, specifying what expenses are reimbursed, as well as procedures and forms for reporting expenses and for timely reimbursement.
- *Orientation and training for PC/PB members*, specifying when and how it is provided and who is expected to participate. For all PC/PBs it is expected that all new members will receive an orientation, and each PC/PB is expected to provide training for all members at least once during the year.

- *Attendance and participation* in PC/PB meetings and other activities, specifying expectations for attendance, what constitutes an excused absence, and how non-attendance is handled up to the point of recommending that the Chief Elected Official (CEO) remove a member for non-participation.
- *Committee operations*, specifying the scope of each committee's work, requirements for membership and participation, how assignments are made, and committee leadership selection and roles.
- *PC/PB support staff* specifying PCS roles and responsibilities, recruitment and hiring, supervision, and evaluation.
- *Communication with the community*, specifying who may speak on behalf of the PC/PB, website use and contents, and use of social media.

Development, Review and Updating of PC/PB Policies and Procedures

Development and approval of policies and procedures is usually a multi-stage process:

- Policies and procedures are usually developed and drafted by a committee – Governance, Policies and Procedures, or Executive Committee – or by an ad hoc committee.
- Drafts are usually reviewed by the Executive Committee, then sent to the full PC/PB for review and approval.
- Some policies and procedures, including Grievance Procedures, must also be reviewed by HRSA HAB and often by the CEO's office.

PC/PB support staff usually assist with preparation of policies and procedures, and they may be asked to locate examples from other Part A programs. It is extremely helpful to have a consistent format for policies and procedures, to record when they were approved and the date of each revision. Staff often number them chronologically by date of development. They should be readily available to all members electronically or in hard copy. Some PC/PBs post them on their websites.

Like Bylaws, policies and procedures should be reviewed regularly and revised to reflect changes in the legislation, HRSA HAB guidance, or PC/PB operations. For example, changes may be needed if a PC/PB becomes an integrated prevention and care body.