

Sample Open Nominations Process for Ryan White Part A Planning Councils

Recruitment and Outreach

1. The Membership and Nominations Committee coordinates an annual Open Nominations process based on bylaws requirements that terms for Planning Council members are for three years and end December 31, with staggered terms so that approximately one-third of the membership terms end each year.
2. If the federally mandated and locally required membership categories are not currently filled or will become vacant or if the composition of the current membership does not reflect the demographics of the epidemic in the EMA, the Membership Committee identifies the areas of needed representation and prepares to recommend the individuals for appointment to correct this lack of representation. The Membership Committee determines recruitment needs each June and presents to the Executive Committee and Planning Council in August to get its input and support.
3. The Planning Council annual Open Nominations Process is active year-round, but is especially active August - October of each year to handle annual nominations and renominations and to ensure reflectiveness of the demographics of HIV/AIDS in the EMA as required by HRSA. The Planning Council does recruitment and nominations throughout the year to fill vacant membership categories, and continuously accepts and reviews applications from consumers who are interested in Planning Council membership in order to have a pool of qualified candidates. The nominees for the annual process is recruited and screened by October; referred to the Executive Committee and to the full Council in November. The Planning Council approves a slate of nominees in November, and then sends it to the Mayor's office for review and appointment by the Mayor as CEO.
4. The Council advertises throughout the year in local HIV publications, local newspapers, local radio and television, press releases and sends direct notices to colleges/universities, associations, provider agencies, churches and community groups. Advertisements requesting nominations for specific categories of membership or areas of representation, based on current or expected vacancies, will be placed in newspapers of record in the EMA, including papers serving the lesbian/gay/bi/transgender community, and other papers serving the particular communities from whom individuals are being recruited. Such advertisements shall include a description of Planning Council member's roles and responsibilities, criteria for membership including attendance requirements and conflict of interest policy, term of office, and HIV disclosure guidelines.
5. Application packets are mailed or hand-delivered to interested individuals. The packets include: an application with self-addressed stamped envelope, a brochure

describing the work of the Council, information on the Council and committee structure, Conflict of Interest Policy and Disclosure Questionnaire, meeting schedules, attendance requirements, and a copy of this Open Nominations Process. The Application is available and can be down loaded from the Planning Council's website; in the future, it will be possible to apply on-line.

6. Interested individuals send applications to the Planning Council support staff office.

Screening of Applications

1. The Planning Council Administrative Assistant logs the application by date and category and sends notification of the review process to the applicants.
2. The Membership Committee reviews the applications and schedules interviews for applicants who meet the categories being recruited.

Interview Process

1. All applicants who fit Planning Council requirements are interviewed. A three-member panel from the Membership Committee must be present to interview applicants and be sure they meet the criteria established and the specific needs for the current recruitment year. The applicant interview responses are score by each member of the panel and averaged for a total rating. Applicants must be recommended by a majority of the Committee members conducting the interview. The interview panel and applicant discuss the following items during the interview:
 - a. The Ryan White program
 - b. Representational needs of the Planning Council
 - c. The roles and responsibilities of Planning Council members
 - d. Applicant's clarity regarding his/her commitment to the Planning Council and how s/he can contribute to its work and success
 - e. Specific skills, interests, and experience the applicant will bring to the Council
 - f. Time commitments and meeting schedules and the applicant's ability to participate actively
 - g. Standards on Conflict of Interest
 - h. HIV disclosure requirements
 - i. Knowledge of HIV/AIDS services
 - j. Experience working with historically under-served populations and those with co-occurring conditions

Membership Committee panels are informed of the applicants' HIV status, but this information must be kept confidential and not disclosed to anyone outside the Membership Committee unless the individual has indicated a willingness to be publicly disclosed.

The Panel uses a set of consistent questions as part of its interviews, and rates applicants on a set of standardized criteria as highly qualified (3), qualified (2), and (1) not qualified. All applicants that have a mean score of 2.0 or more when scores on all criteria are averaged are recommended to the Membership Committee as nominees for Planning Council membership.

2. Applicants NOT recommended for interview and those NOT recommended for membership following the interview:
 - a. Receive a letter from the Planning Council Coordinator indicating the Council's decision and thanking them for their interest – with a reason given where appropriate
 - b. Are encouraged to join a committee or the PLWH Caucus

Recommendations to the Planning Council and CEO for Membership

1. The Committee reviews all applicants recommended by the Membership Committee panels against current openings and the identified vacancies that will be created at the end of the current year. It matches these applicants to member categories and considers reflectiveness needs. Individuals who fit current needs become a part of the slate of nominees to the Planning Council. If more than two people fit current needs for a particular vacancy, the two candidates with the most appropriate skills and characteristics for reflectiveness are included in the slate.
2. Individuals who do not fit the current needs slate but were screened and rated positively are held in a pool of qualified candidates. The candidates are told that their nominations will remain active for a period of one year, and are urged to join a committee of the Council or to participate in the PLWH Caucus to learn more while awaiting possible nomination to the Planning Council.
3. The Membership Committee sends forward recommended applicants to fill vacancies that already exist or will be created as of the end of the current term of office. Where there are two individuals eligible to fill a particular vacancy, the Committee specifies its preference for a particular candidate, based on Council skills needs and reflectiveness considerations. Along with names, the Committee provides a summary bio that emphasizes strengths and skills of the applicants. HIV status is indicated only where the applicant specifies his/her willingness to have his status publicly disclosed.
4. This information goes first to the Executive Committee for review. During the review, an applicant's HIV status is not discussed unless s/he has indicated a willingness for public disclosure. Instead, the Membership Committee simply indicates that approval of the recommended slate of nominees will enable the Council to meet the requirement for one-third unaffiliated consumers. If approved by the Executive Committee, the nominations go to the full Planning Council.

5. If approved by the Planning Council, the nominations are sent to the Mayor's office for final review and appointment by the Mayor as CEO. Either the Executive Committee or the full Planning Council may change the recommendations or ask the Membership Committee to identify additional nominees. The recommendation to the CEO includes a matrix documenting composition of the Council pending a new applicant's approval, and a summary of the strengths and skills each individual will bring to the Council.

The Mayor's Liaison to the Planning Council will take the following actions, to ensure that membership requirements are met:

- a. Appoint Part A Planning Council members in a timely manner (usually within 30 days) to minimize vacancies and ensure a representative and reflective Planning Council.
- b. Ensure Planning Council appointments reflect the implementation of an Open Nominations process with clearly stated and publicized criteria.
- c. Ensure that the nominees reflect compliance with the Planning Council's Bylaws and Ryan White legislative requirements and HRSA guidelines.

Orientation and Training

1. The Planning Council Administrative Assistant schedules the appointee for a new member's orientation and notifies the appointee of the orientation.
2. The Membership Committee holds orientation sessions in January for the annual new appointees and throughout the year as needed to ensure that every new member receives an orientation within 30 days of appointment to the Planning Council. The Committee and staff also provide the new appointee with relevant materials and are available to answer questions and provide guidance.
3. Each new member is assigned an experienced Planning Council member, if needed, to serve as mentor for the first six months of his/her term. This member will sit next to the member at meetings, answer questions, and be available between meetings to provide information and help the new member become actively involved in the Planning Council and the assigned committee.