

Expectations for Planning Council Support Staff*

Primary Responsibility of PC Support (PCS) Staff

Assist the PC/B to carry out its legislative responsibilities and to operate effectively as an independent planning body that works in partnership with the recipient.

Planning Council Support Function

The *Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) Part A Manual* describes the PCS function:

“The planning council needs funding to carry out its responsibilities. HAB/DMHAP refers to these funds as ‘planning council support.’ Planning Council Support funds are part of the 10 percent administrative funds available to the grantee for managing the [RWHAP] Part A program. The planning council must negotiate the size of the planning council support budget with the grantee and is then responsible for developing and managing that budget within the grantee’s grants management structure.

“Planning council support funds may be used for such purposes as hiring staff, developing and carrying out needs assessments and estimating unmet need, sometimes with the help of consultants, conducting planning activities, holding meetings, and assuring PLWHA participation. [p 104]

“Planning council staff may be employed through the grantee’s payroll system, but measures must be taken to ensure that the planning council, not the grantee, directs the work of the planning council’s staff.”[p 105]

PCS Staff Responsibilities

The PCS staff can be hired through the municipal system or through a contractor but are responsible to the PC/B. PC/B leadership (usually the Chair/Co-Chairs and/or Executive Committee) sets priorities for staff, and should have a role in hiring and evaluating the performance of the PCS Manager. Other PCS staff (if any) report to the Manager.

Following is a summary of roles DMHAP expects PCS staff will play, though individual PC/Bs may establish additional or different responsibilities. In TGAs that have advisory planning bodies rather than planning councils, the recipient may play a larger role in determining planning body support staff roles and priorities.

1. *Staff committees and PC/B meetings:*

- Attend and provide assistance at every PC/B committee meeting unless the Committee decides it does not want staff support
- Work with Committee Chairs to ensure that committees have annual work plans with schedules, and that each meeting has an agenda, needed resource materials, and minutes documenting attendance, discussion, decisions, and recommendations to the full PC/B

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- Work with PC/B leadership to set agendas, arrange presentations, prepare meeting “packets,” and otherwise plan and coordinate PC/B meetings (including logistics such as meeting space, food, and transportation)
 - Ensure that all open meeting requirements (federal, state, and local) are met
 - Take notes and prepare minutes of PC/B meetings, and provide draft minutes to PC/B leadership for review and for eventual adoption at the next PC/B meeting
2. *Support the PC/B in implementing legislated tasks:*
- Facilitate and coordinate on-time completion of legislatively required and locally determined activities
 - Provide technical advice and support to specific committees in such tasks as needs assessment design, preparations for data presentations, and PSRA session planning
 - Assist in the development of PC/B policies and Standard Operating Procedures
 - Carry out direct planning activities when directed by the PC/B, such as design of needs assessment instruments, or aggregation of provider survey data for the assessment of the efficiency of the administrative mechanism (since PC/B members must not see individual provider responses)
 - Work with the PC/B to obtain external assistance where necessary to complete legislative tasks
 - Manage PC/B communications
 - Carry out other support as directed by the PC/B leadership (Chair/Co-Chairs and/or Executive Committee)
3. *Provide expert advice on Ryan White legislative requirements and HRSA/HAB regulations and expectations, and explain and interpret the PC/B’s Bylaws, policies, and procedures:*
- Have in-depth knowledge and understanding of RWHAP legislation, Policy Notices and Letters, Policy Clarification Notices (PCNs), the *RWHAP Part A Manual*, and other documents that provide guidance related to the work of PC/Bs, and be prepared to present and clarify relevant information as needed during a meeting – to ensure that the PC/B meets requirements, and to provide guidance when members are uncertain about HRSA/HAB requirements or expectations
 - Understand and ensure that the PC/B follows municipal requirements affecting boards and commissions or planning bodies
 - Keep updated on changes in policy that may affect the work of the PC/B
4. *Oversee a training program for members*
- Work with the assigned committee (often Membership) to ensure that new PC/B members receive a thorough orientation at the start of their service as members, including copies of key documents
 - Ensure that there is, at a minimum, annual training for members, and ideally, ongoing training to help the PC/B successfully carry out its responsibilities
 - Develop training specifically for PC/B leadership (Chairs of PC/B and committees)
 - Work with PC/B leaders in designing and delivering training directly, with members, or with external training assistance

- Obtain training materials from DMAHP and other RWHAP Part A programs that can help address PC/B training needs
 - Provide interactive training and facilitation that reflects sound practices and engages participants
5. *Encourage member involvement and retention, with special focus on consumers*
- Support the open nominations process, and assist the appropriate committee in disseminating information about opportunities for membership
 - Help the PC/B identify and resolve barriers to participation, especially by consumers and other PLWH
 - Assist with outreach and other efforts to engage consumers as committee or PC/B members
 - Be available to assist individual PC/B members with problems they encounter and to ensure they receiving needed mentoring and support, especially during their first year of membership
 - Support PLWH member expense reimbursement procedures, helping to ensure that they are understood and followed and that reimbursement is provided promptly
6. *Serve as liaison with the recipient, community, and sometimes the Chief Elected Official (CEO):*
- Help maintain a collaborative partnership between PC/B and recipient
 - Work with the recipient and PC/B to develop and/or implement an MOU between the PC/B and the recipient
 - Arrange recipient staff participation in committee meetings, to provide information and technical expertise
 - Communicate PC/B information/data and other requests for assistance to the recipient
 - Ensure that materials that should be shared with the recipient are provided promptly and the recipient is kept informed of PC/B activities and issues
 - Arrange/coordinate assistance to the recipient on behalf of the PC/B, such as preparation of PC/B sections of the annual RWHAP Part A application and provision of materials needed to meet Conditions of Grant Award related to the PC/B
 - Request recipient staff participation in training or other PC/B events as needed
 - Work with the recipient to request training and technical assistance from HRSA/HAB as needed
 - Serve as a liaison between the PC/B and the community, and support PC/B leadership outreach to the community
 - In some jurisdictions, maintain direct/official contact with the CEO and provide updates to the CEO's office on PC/B progress and concerns
7. *Help the PC manage its budget*
- Participate in annual negotiations between the PC/B and recipient concerning the amount of administrative funding that will be provided for PC support
 - Assist the PC/B in developing its budget, to ensure that support needs are met and all proposed expenditures meet both HRSA/HAB and municipal requirements
 - Provide the PC/B budget to the recipient in the agreed-upon format

- Manage and monitor expenditure of funds for the PC/B, following municipal requirements
- Receive a monthly report on PC/B expenditures from the recipient, and work with appropriate PC/B committee to review and where needed revise it
- Work with the recipient on any necessary contracting for PC support services such as consultants, ensuring a scope of work from the PC/B and PC/B involvement in selection of contractors, consistent with municipal requirements

PCS Qualifications

DMHAP has identified the following as desired qualifications for a PCS manager:

- Strong knowledge of planning and data
- Expertise in legislative mandates of a RWHAP Part A planning body
- Understanding of HRSA expectations for the planning process
- Ability and time to work with committees
- Ability to work with People Living with HIV/AIDS and diverse stakeholders
- Ability to facilitate a partnership between planning body and recipient

In addition, the following are very helpful:

- Strong oral and written communications skills, including use of clear, concise language
- Experience in facilitation and training, especially interactive training
- Group process skills such as team building, leadership development, and problem solving
- Experience in resolving conflicts
- Commitment to community planning and consumer engagement
- Knowledge of budgeting and expenditure monitoring