

Houston County Family Connection Collaborative

Operating Policies and Procedures

Vision

Through the cooperative effort of the entire community, all children and families will be physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy, productive, self-sustaining and contributing members of society.

Mission

We bring together community partners in an effort to limit duplication and overlapping of services, then coordinate more efficient and effective service delivery, and ultimately, better results for families in Houston County, Georgia.

What is the organization

An arrangement under which all of the agencies, churches, institutions, businesses and organizations in Houston County whose actions or inactions can affect the well-being of children and families agree and commit themselves to a vision of community health and well-being for all citizens.

Purpose

- Prioritize critical social problem areas for the community, which need to be addressed in a coordinated manner to achieve maximum improvement.
- Establish goals for each problem area.
- Establish incremental measurable objectives and service strategies to meet the objectives and be responsible, individually and collectively, for their success or failure.
- Recruit lead agencies for the individual or clustered service strategies that will be responsible for implementing and providing the direct service components.
- Coordinate and integrate planning and implementation of action plans and sharing of information (networking) with each other.
- Identify and evaluate duplication of programs and services.
- Partner and coordinate for funding opportunities to allow for joint planning and application submission.
- Be proactive in seeking out diversity among the collaborative membership.

Membership Benefits

- Market to community and collaborative your organizational activities and events through email blasts and Facebook posts.
- First invitation and access to attend FREE workshops and trainings.
- Inclusion in collaborative grants.
- Vote in collaborative strategic plan.
- Voice to shape subcommittee work.
- Networking opportunities.
- Access and support in locating data.
- Access to potential grants.
- Collaboration and support from members at events.
- Current and annually updated resource guide.

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Types of Membership

Organizational membership includes but is not limited to:

Agencies, organizations, churches, businesses, or institutions that serve (or seek to serve) Houston County children and families.

Consultants or businesses that work with organizations or agencies that provides direct services to Houston County children and families.

Individual membership

Individuals may join the organization if they do not meet the above criteria and are not being compensated by or have the authority to commit the resources of any organizational member or entity that meets the criteria of organizational membership.

Regional Partner

Agencies serving multiple counties and attending other Family Connection collaborative meetings will not be expected to maintain the 12 meeting attendance requirement. Regional Partners will receive all collaborative benefits, except Regional Partner Agencies will not have a collaborative vote.

Membership Criteria

Orientation

Orientation Sessions are offered once per quarter. These sessions are meant to provide new members with the opportunity to learn about collaborative policies and procedures, strategic plan and governing body and structure. These sessions are an effort to help new members to find a place to belong within the structure, strategic plan and understand their commitment to the work of the collaborative.

Application

Each Organization or individual will complete a membership information form annually (August meeting). An application is attached to the Policy & Procedures.

Attendance

A member in “**good standing**” consists of any agency or individual submitting a **Membership Form** who **attends and actively participates in 12 meetings** (to include regularly scheduled, strategy, or work group meetings) per fiscal year (July to June). The August meeting will represent the start of a new membership period. Members are responsible for reading the collaborative monthly meeting notes to stay aware of collaborative activities, announcements and activities.

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Voting

Each organizations or individual member will have one vote based on the application. Only members in “good standing” are eligible to vote. All others present at regularly scheduled monthly meetings will not have voting rights. The Executive Director will be responsible for maintaining a current “good standing” member list.

Strategy Teams

Strategy teams will establish around the benchmark objectives, identified in the Strategic and Annual Operating Plans. Teams will conduct business according to the following guidelines; however, meeting schedules will be determined by the teams upon formation and recorded in the meeting notes. The purpose of the strategy teams is two-fold: to promote the work for the collaborative around each benchmark and to ensure that the work in the plan is completed.

The Strategy Team Chairperson or other team member will report at the collaborative meetings the progress of the team. Teams will:

- Elect a chair or co-chairs and a secretary. Elect a chair or co-chairs and designate a recorder for each meeting.
- Set meeting schedules to be published in the collaborative meeting minutes.
- Identify and put in place, if necessary, work groups to support planning and evaluations.
- Recruit members of the work team as needed to support the benchmark objectives.
- Set annual objectives with measurable outcomes and target completion dates for inclusion in the Annual Operating Plan and multi-year strategic plan.
- Participate in evaluation activities by objectively reporting successes and failures and assisting with improvement of individual activities, processes, and strategy areas.
- Share fiscal information relevant to the benchmark objectives identified in the annual operating plan and ensure accurate financial assessment and planning. Share fiscal information relevant to the benchmark objectives identified in the annual operating plan and report Fiscal information in the Annual Report.
- The Chairperson of the Strategy Teams will serve on the Houston County Family Connection Board of Directors and report the work of the collaborative to seek support, and approval, and any required actions.

Accountability

Organizational members will agree to participate in relevant work teams. In order to be included in the Annual Operating or Strategic Plans, an organizational member must participate in the work of the collaborative through the work teams and must remain in good standing. In return Houston County Family Connection will commit to promoting organizational members and seeking resources in partnership with them that comply and or fall under the benchmark objectives of the strategic and annual plans.

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Dismissal or Removal

A member may be dismissed or removed from the collaborative membership if their organization or he/she fails to comply with the Criteria for Membership. Removal or dismissal will only be pursued if the member misses 3 consecutive meetings. First the Chairperson will email the member in an effort to reconnect with the member and identify barriers to attendance and participation, Second the chairperson will inform the Houston County Executive Director who will contact the member or other identified members on the Membership Form by phone. Third the Executive Director will send a letter to the agency with a copy of the Membership Form inquiring reasons and recommitment to the collaborative work. If the Member does not reengage in collaborative activities at the next scheduled monthly meeting, the Executive Director will present to the collaborative a dismissal or removal from the collaborative roster and privileges the collaborative body. Majority vote will dictate actions.

Governance

Officers and Duties

Chairman

- Be a member in good standing
- Serve as collaborative Chairman for Two years assuming office in July
- Work Closely with the Executive Director of Houston County Family Connection: Kids Journey to develop and approve monthly agenda items
- Communicate with work teams periodically to ensure tasks are on schedule.
- Serve as or appoint the collaborative representative to the Houston County Family Connection: Kids Journey Board of Directors. In the event that the Chairman already serves in a position on the Board of Directors, he or she will appoint another member from a different organization to serve as the collaborative representative to the board.
- Attend monthly meetings of the Board of Trustees.
- Take issues and concerns of the collaborative to the Board of Directors.
- Represent the overall best interests of the collaborative and vote accordingly.
- Reports monthly to the collaborative the results of the Board of Directors meetings.

Vice/ Co- Chairman

- Be a member in good standing.
- Serve as Chairman in his or her absence and/or replace the Chairman if deemed necessary by the collaborative with all related responsibilities and authority.
- Head at least one work team groups per year.
- Serve a term as vice co- chair and rotate into the position of chair for one two years.

Election of Officers

- The Vice Co- Chairman shall be elected annually and shall take office in July of the year elected and may not represent the same organizational membership as the Chairman.
- The Chair may appoint a nominating committee in March of each year consisting of two or more members in good standing.
- Nominations shall take place annually in April and elections shall be held in May.

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Quorum

A simple majority of members in good standing in attendance constitutes a quorum.

Amendments

These operating policies and procedures may be amended, changed, modified, or repealed by the action of a quorum of the members in good standing at any regularly scheduled monthly meeting. However, written notice of such requested change should be given to all members at least three weeks before the meeting.

System of Accountability

- Only members in good standing will receive letters of support for grant applications or assistance and support in planning and submitting grant applications.
- Collaborative partners will make timely requests for information or other support services from the Houston County Family Connection: Kids Journey Administrative Staff.
- Only collaborative partners in good standing will be included in Houston County Family Connection: Kids Journey grant applications, trainings, and support in advertising events and information to the community.
- To be included in Houston County Family Connection: Kids Journey grant applications, partners must participate in grant planning sessions and submit required grant information by established deadlines.

Grievance Procedure

- An organization/individual may be removed from the collaborative with cause by the vote of two-thirds of the members in good standing.
- Cause for removal by vote from the Collaborative includes but is not limited to non-conformance with membership criteria.
- Membership in the collaborative may be terminated by voluntary withdrawal in writing at any time by delivering said notice to the Houston County Family Connection: Kids Journey office.
- Exceptions to these policies and procedures may be made by written notification to the Chair of the Collaborative. Items should be submitted in a timely manner to allow publication to all members. The exception is decided by a majority vote for the members in attendance at the regularly scheduled meeting when the item is considered.
- The item may be pursued further by written plea to the Board of Directors. The member may present the plea, and the Elected Representative shall present the collaborative's response. The majority vote of the Board of Directors shall be considered final.
- Concerns regarding the Houston County Family Connection: Kids Journey Executive Director may be made by written notification to the Chairman of the Board of Directors. Concerns will be handled at the discretion of the Board of Directors

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Reinstatement after Removal/Withdrawal

- To be reinstated after being removed by vote of collaborative partnership or voluntary withdrawal will require the following:
- Complete and submit a new membership application.
- Attend the regularly scheduled collaborative meeting prior to reinstatement.
- Join and actively participate in a work team.
- Attend the next regularly scheduled collaborative meeting for formal reinstatement with all privileges.

New Agency/Organization Application

Any new organization wishing to join the collaborative partnership will be required to:

- Complete and submit a membership application.
- Attend an Orientation Meeting
- Attend the next regularly scheduled collaborative meeting.
- Join and attend a work team meeting.

Conflict Resolution

The purpose of conflict resolution is to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all members, eliminate dissatisfaction, and resolve problems so that constructive relationships can be maintained for the benefit of all members.

Partners will participate in mediation to resolve conflict between members. Mediations will be conducted by the Houston County Family Connection: Kids Journey Executive Director, Chairman and or other designees made by the Chairman for the Houston County Family Connection: Kids Journey Board of Directors.

