



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF AGING

## PROCLAMATION

SUBJECT: Cultural Diversity Advisory Council

DISTRIBUTION:

To All Staff and Area Agencies on Aging

By Direction Of: **John Michael Hall**  
**Secretary of Aging**

It is with great pride that I announce the reconstitution of the Cultural Diversity Advisory Council (CDAC) and affirm the continuing importance of diversity awareness in both the strategic planning and the day to day operation of our agency.

The mission of the CDAC is to advise the Department of Aging in its efforts to develop and sustain a network that is culturally sensitive, responsive to the needs and inclusive of all older people in the Commonwealth. With members who reflect the diversity of the people we serve, the Council meets periodically and functions as a statewide forum, clearinghouse, and advocate for the rights and interests of diverse older persons.

This affirmation of the Council could not come at a more opportune time. Just as baby boomers swell the Commonwealth's aging community, the diversity of that group is increasingly obvious. Compared to a relatively stable non-Hispanic White population, projections show a growth rate of more than 40 percent for both the Hispanic and Asian populations in Pennsylvania in the next ten years. This vivid tapestry of differences presents both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is to identify and meet appropriately the service needs of those from various cultural backgrounds, including those with a limited English proficiency; the opportunity is to demonstrate that the Commonwealth continues to excel in adapting to meet its citizen's needs.

The antecedent of the CDAC was convened more than sixteen years ago as a Task Force with a charge very similar to today's Council. Over the years, the purpose of the group remained constant as its form evolved into a Committee in 2000 and then into the Council, a permanent entity, in 2007. Today's Proclamation honors that history and underscores the high priority this agency invests in diversity, especially in the nature of and accessibility of the services we provide.

# CULTURAL DIVERSITY ADVISORY COUNCIL BYLAWS

*This document is an official update of the Cultural Diversity Advisory Council  
bylaws originally approved in 2007.*

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## **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this Council shall be the Cultural Diversity Advisory Council of the Pennsylvania Department of Aging (hereinafter referred to as "the Council").

## **ARTICLE II - ORIGINS**

In the Spring of 1994, the PA Department of Aging convened a Minority Services Task Force. The purpose of the Task Force was to assist the Department in its efforts to make services accessible and appropriate to older minority persons throughout the Commonwealth. This initiative came about as a result of recommendations by the PA Council on Aging and other organizations during the State Plan hearings on the Department's proposed block grant allocation formula to Area Agencies on Aging (AAA). The proposed formula targeted older low-income minority people in response to the 1992 amendments to the federal Older Americans Act that required the Department and Area Agencies on Aging to give emphasis to and set objectives for serving low-income minority people. During the 1980s and early 1990s, the PA Department of Aging initiated various outreach projects and encouraged Area Agencies on Aging to reach out to minority populations but without a coordinated effort or focus to bring this about.

The Task Force mainly included AAA representatives of the major minority racial and ethnic groups identified by the Bureau of the Census, and in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In the Spring of 1995, the Task Force issued a report based on four meetings during the 12-month period. The report contained socio-economic and demographic information about each minority group and comparative statistics relating to aging services. The report included eight (8) recommendations relating to cultural competency, outreach, minority staffing, programming, marketing, targeting funds, monitoring and continuation of the Task Force.

In 2000, the Task Force was renamed the "Cultural Diversity Advisory Committee" (CDAC). A mission statement was also adopted: "To advise the Department of Aging in its efforts to develop a network that is culturally sensitive, responsive to the needs and inclusive of all older people in the Commonwealth."

In 2001, after study of the Policy Guidance Document entitled "Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 National Origin Discrimination Against Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP Guidance)" and Executive Order 12250, the Committee recommended that the PA Department of Aging issue an Aging Information Memorandum on Language Assistance to Persons with Limited English Proficiency based on guidance issued by the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights.

In 2003, the Committee was introduced to the National Standards on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health Care (CLAS standards). The Committee was instrumental in implementing these standards within the Department of Aging and following up with the development and implementation of a CLAS Plan for the Department and Area Agencies on Aging as a priority objective in the 2008-2012 State Plan on Aging.

In 2007, bylaws for the Committee were officially approved by the Secretary of the Department of Aging, creating the "Cultural Diversity Advisory Council," to reflect a permanent structure rather than the transient nature of a Committee or a task force. Until 2008, the Council was working with the Department and monitoring the implementation and rollout of CLAS standards to the Area Agencies on Aging. The Department also received a federal grant from the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA) that included this objective as part of the grant's purpose. The grant was used to conduct training sessions on the CLAS standards and to provide technical assistance to the Council on standards implementation.

The ongoing purpose of the Council continues to be to ensure that inclusion and diversity issues are considered in all aspects of the Department of Aging's policies and programs.

### **ARTICLE III - MISSION, FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. MISSION - To advise the Department of Aging in its efforts to develop a network that is culturally sensitive, responsive to the needs and inclusive of all older people in the Commonwealth.
- B. FUNCTIONS - The Council shall serve as a statewide forum, clearinghouse, and advocate for the rights and interests of diverse older persons in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- C. RESPONSIBILITIES:
  - 1. To advise the Department in its efforts to promote, monitor, evaluate and ensure access to the development and implementation of programs and services that are inclusive and address the needs of diverse populations so that aging services are accessible to all population groups throughout the Commonwealth.
  - 2. To make recommendations regarding educational and training activities, policies and procedures relating to program design, administration, and staffing that support the mission and purpose of the Council.
  - 3. To prepare and submit to the Secretary of the Department of Aging annually, or as requested by the Secretary, a report summarizing the activities and recommendations made based on the Council's activities throughout the calendar year.

### **ARTICLE IV - APPOINTMENT, MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS**

- A. APPOINTMENT - After review of recommendations from PDA staff and the Council, the final authority for appointment of all members shall be the Secretary of Aging. The Council shall recommend candidates for membership based on composition criteria (see below) and general qualifications. The Chair may appoint an ad hoc membership committee if there is a need for recruitment of candidates.

B. COMPOSITION OF MEMBERSHIP - Appointment of members shall be made by the Secretary of Aging based on recommendations from the Council. The Council shall be composed of members who reflect the people served through the Department of Aging: members of various ethnic groups, people with physical disabilities, LGBT and people who are affiliated with different faith-based communities in the Commonwealth.

1. Membership shall include at least one AAA representative from each of the five (5) regions of the Commonwealth including Central, Northeast, Northwest, Southeast and Southwest. The geographic representation requirements set forth in this clause shall be attained through membership attrition.
2. Guests and resource persons representing the interests and issues of diverse groups within the aging population will be invited to address the Council and/or to serve on committees as non-members, as needed.

C. TERMS -Terms of membership shall be as follows:

1. Members will serve three (3) years with the option of renewal.

#### **ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

A. MEETINGS - The Council shall meet at least THREE (3) times annually. Meeting dates shall be announced as far in advance as possible. Members may be excused from the attendance requirement for a meeting if they do not receive advance notice. Members may participate (attend) by electronic methods, such as a conference call, webinar, or other means available at the time. All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public and guests.

B. ATTENDANCE - If a member is absent without excuse for more than two (2) consecutive meetings, the Council may declare the office of such absent Council member to be vacant. Absence may be excused if the member requests and receives approval from the chair. A member's failure to provide notification of his/her inability to attend a meeting shall be considered an unexcused absence. Members may designate a proxy to represent him/her at Council meetings, with prior approval from the Chair.

#### **ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS**

A. OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL - Officers of the Council shall be the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. Officers of the Council shall not be staff persons of the Pennsylvania Department of Aging

B. DUTIES - Following are the duties of officers:

1. Chair - To set the agenda in cooperation with the Staff Liaison; preside over meetings and carry out other duties as assigned by the Council.

2. Vice-Chair - Preside over meetings in the absence of the Chair and carry out duties as assigned by the Chair.

3. Secretary - Review the draft minutes prior to distribution to the Council; assure that a list of voting members and their term dates are maintained and that attendance records are maintained.

C. TERM OF OFFICERS - Officers shall serve for a period of three (3) years and may be re-elected for an indefinite number of additional terms.

D. SELECTION OF OFFICERS - When an Officer's term of Office ends, an ad hoc committee shall be formed to nominate replacements. The ad hoc committee will submit their recommended slate to the designated PDA Staff Liaison (see Article VIII, below), who will coordinate an election using the most effective and expeditious technology available. At the time of this writing that method is e-mail. Nominees receiving the majority of votes shall become the new Officers.

## **ARTICLE VII - COMMITTEES**

A. COMMITTEES - Standing committees shall be established by the Council to best serve the on-going purposes of the Council. Special committees, that is, ad hoc committees and task forces may be appointed by the Council Chair as needed to address current goals and objectives of the Council.

B. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP - The Chair of each committee shall be a Council member and appointed by the Council Chair. Other committee members shall be appointed by the Council Chair and the committee Chair. Committees and task forces may include some non-council members.

C. QUORUM - To transact official business, over one-half of the members of the Cultural Diversity Advisory Council must be participating in person or by telephone.

## **ARTICLE VIII - PDA STAFF SUPPORT**

The PDA Staff Liaison shall provide background information and/or agenda items and bring matters before the Council for review.

The Staff Liaison shall provide an orientation to all new Council members prior to or soon after attendance at the first meeting including a review of the bylaws.

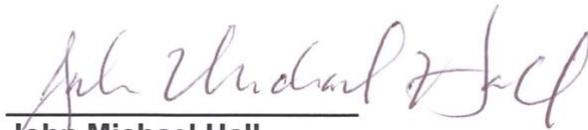
The Staff Liaison shall provide an annual report to the Council to include progress and challenges that remain.

Staff support persons assigned to the Council shall provide the following administrative support: prepare and disseminate meeting notices, materials, agenda and relevant information to Council members; **assist** in taking, preparing and distributing meeting minutes.

## **ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the current membership. Written notice of proposed amendments shall have been given to the membership of the Council at least ten days prior to the date of the meeting at which the proposed changes are to be considered.

**BYLAWS ARE HEREBY APPROVED AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2010, AS DIRECTED BY**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Michael Hall", written in dark ink over a horizontal line.

**John Michael Hall**  
**Secretary**  
**Pennsylvania Department of Aging**