

**Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program (ADAP)
Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI)
PAIMI Advisory Council (PAC) Operating Procedures**

I. Name

The name of this organization is the PAIMI Advisory Council (PAC) of the Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program (ADAP), hereinafter referred to as the "Council."

II. Purpose of the Council

As required under the PAIMI Act and its implementing regulations, the purpose of the Council is to:

1. Provide independent advice and recommendations to ADAP regarding the needs of Alabamians with mental illness.
2. Work jointly with ADAP's Governing Authority and ADAP to develop the annual statement of objectives and priorities for ADAP's PAIMI program.
3. Complete a section of ADAP's annual PAIMI program performance report that describes the activities of the Council and its assessment of the operation and quality of services of ADAP's PAIMI Program.

III. Political Neutrality

The Council is non-political and does not support nor oppose any party or candidate for public office, and takes no position on matters of governmental policy or legislation, other than those that are relevant to its purposes.

IV. Composition of the Council and Membership Criteria

1. The Council is comprised of no fewer than twelve (12) Alabama residents.
2. Council members must include attorneys; mental health professionals; individuals from the public who are knowledgeable about mental illness, and the advocacy needs of persons with mental illness and have demonstrated a substantial commitment to improving mental health services; a provider of mental health services; individuals who have received or are receiving mental health services, and family members of such individuals.
3. At least sixty percent (60%) of the membership of the Council is comprised of individuals who have received or are receiving mental health services or who are family members of such individuals. At least one family member is a primary care giver for an individual who is currently a minor child or youth who is receiving or has received mental health services.
4. The Council pursues continuous efforts to create and maintain a Council that is inclusive of individuals from every region of the state as well as members of racial and ethnic minority groups. Particular effort will be made to recruit members from rural and historically underserved areas.
5. The Chair of the Council is an individual who has received or is receiving mental health services or who is a family member of such an individual.
6. Council members must have a commitment to promoting the legal and civil rights of persons with mental illness and advocating for their personal choices.

V. Nominations and Appointments to the Council

1. Nominations of individuals to serve on the Council are solicited from Council members and through broad outreach to, for example, peer support, family support, advocacy, and provider groups in Alabama. In developing such outreach, the Council considers how to engage with diverse populations, including persons of color, recipients, or former recipients of mental health services, people who have physical disabilities, and people from different geographic locations in the state.
2. The Council will maintain a standing member recruitment committee, comprised of at least the Council Chair, Council co-Chair, and one other Council member. The purpose of this committee is to encourage and organize recruitment efforts of Council members and to work with ADAP's PAIMI Program Coordinator in their recruitment efforts. The responsibilities of the committee include developing and implementing membership outreach plans; communication with applicants to answer any questions and to inform them about the role of a Council member; and making member recommendations to the Council for its consideration. ADAP's PAIMI Program Coordinator will support the committee by, among other things, assisting with membership outreach efforts and ensuring compliance with federal membership requirements. Membership recruitment is an ongoing process as every year the Council experiences a regular turnover in membership and member vacancies may arise unexpectedly.
3. The Council shall vote on prospective members, and, by a majority of the membership, choose official Council recommendations to be delivered to ADAP's Executive Director and Governing Authority, for their review and comment.
4. Council member terms run for four years. Members' terms are staggered so that in any given year, at least one-fourth (1/4) of the membership rotates off and is replaced by new members. A member who has been appointed for a term of four years may not be reappointed to the Council during the two-year period beginning on the date on which that four-year term expired. In the event that a member vacates his/her position before the end of that member's term, the person appointed to fill that vacancy will serve for the remainder of that term and will be eligible for reappointment to a full four-year term on his/her own.
5. New members shall receive training and orientation prior to the start of their term of office.
6. Vacancies on the Council will be filled as soon as practicable after such vacancy is identified.

VI. Resignation and Removal from the Council

1. A Council member may resign at any time by giving a written or verbal notice to the Council. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon receipt of the notice, and acceptance of the resignation is not necessary to make it effective.
2. Upon notice to the member and a majority vote of a quorum of the Council, a member may be involuntarily dismissed from the Council for the following reasons:
 - a. for failing to effectively support the Council in its mission
 - b. for failing to attend three consecutive meetings during any 12-month period without prior notification or for non-medical reasons
 - c. when a conflict of interest renders an individual unqualified to serve on the Council or
 - d. when the member is no longer a resident of the state.

VII. Election of Officers

The officers of the Council consist of the following: a Chair, a Co-Chair, and a Recording Secretary. Officers are elected by a majority of the members of the Council.

VIII. Responsibilities of Officers

1. The Chair (or, in his or her absence, the Co-Chair) shall lead Council meetings and is responsible for establishing the time and agenda for Council meetings. The Chair is responsible for communicating with ADAP's Executive Director and/or PAIMI Program Coordinator regarding any Council recommendations, input, and activities. The Chair is responsible for coordinating the Council's joint work with the agency's Governing Authority regarding the establishment of the agency's annual priorities and policies. The Chair is responsible for completing the Council's report to be submitted with the annual PAIMI program performance report.
2. The Co-Chair monitors Council attendance records and membership needs, assists the Chair with setting meeting agendas, and further assists the Chair in his or her duties as necessary.
3. The Recording Secretary is responsible the preparation and distribution of minutes of the meetings and maintaining the Council's operating procedures.

IX. Meetings

1. A minimum of four regular meetings are held each fiscal year. All meetings will be held in locations that are accessible to people with mental, physical, and sensory disabilities. All meeting notices, agenda items, and support data are distributed at least one week prior to each of these meetings and are provided in accessible formats upon request. Interpreter services are provided upon the request of any committee member or guest of the meeting, if a request is made at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.
2. Where practicable, opportunities for members to join meetings via a web-based voice- or video-conference platform will be made available.
3. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or upon the written request of four Council members.
4. A quorum is established when a simple majority of all Council members attend meetings in person or by voice- or video-conference. Vacant positions on the Council shall not be counted in establishing a quorum. Lack of a quorum shall not prevent the Council from conducting a meeting.
5. The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order will be relied on in guiding the meetings of the Council to the extent applicable.
6. The minutes of the Council's meetings are the official record of the Council. The minutes are distributed to all members of the Council within one week prior to the next meeting.
7. The minutes of the meetings serve as one mechanism by which the Council reports its interests, concerns, and feedback to ADAP and/or its Governing Authority. Separate written reports may, at any time, be furnished by the Council.
8. All meetings of the Council are open to the public.
9. Council actions may be voted on by email. Prior to allowing any Council action to be approved through an email vote, the Council officers will consider how soon a decision is required; whether the decision would be better made after further discussion; and whether a conference call meeting can be scheduled and held. If, after considering these factors, the officers determine it would be advisable to take action on a matter through an email vote, the officers will draft the proposed action and the Recording Secretary will email it to all Council members. Where Council members do not have an email address, the Recording Secretary will contact the member by telephone to obtain his or her vote. The Recording Secretary will record all such votes in the Council minutes.

X. Confidentiality

Council members are not entitled to client information. It is ADAP's obligation to maintain confidentiality of client information.

XI. Agency Responsibilities

1. ADAP pays all necessary costs to enable the fullest possible participation of members in Council activities, consistent with ADAP's operating policies. ADAP maintains policies and procedures for reimbursement of Council member expenses, taking into account the needs of individual members, available resources, and applicable restrictions on the use of grant funds. Reimbursement is made consistent with federal cost principles.
2. Depending on the amount of available resources, ADAP may reimburse Council members for costs related to transportation, parking, meals, hotel, per diem expenses, and distribution of copies of the minutes, agendas and all other materials to the members of the Council. ADAP may also provide Council members with stipends or subsistence allowances, and pay for daycare or childcare (or its equivalent for the child's travel and subsistence expenses) for their dependents with mental illness.
3. ADAP provides the Council with reports, material and fiscal data to enable review of existing program policies, priorities, and performance outcomes. Such submissions are made at least annually and report expenditures for the past two fiscal years, as well as the projected expenses for the next fiscal year, identified by budget categories (e.g., salaries and wages, contracts for services and administrative expenses) and proposed priorities, including the amount allotted for training for each member of the Council, Governing Authority, and staff.

XII. Amendments

These operating procedures may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Council at any regular or special meeting of the Council, providing that such amendment has been submitted in writing to all Council members not less than one week prior to the meeting.