

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY
YOUTH SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL**

BY-LAWS

In December 1995, Governor Whitman signed a series of bills reforming the juvenile justice system in New Jersey, P.L.1995,c.280 through c.284. The reform initiative resulted from recommendations made in December, 1994 by the Governor's Advisory Council on Juvenile Justice. In its recommendations, the Governor's Advisory Council recognized the need to consolidate all aspects of the juvenile justice service system. Various parts of the system then existed under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Law and Public Safety. The centralizing authority over juveniles was created to form the Juvenile Justice Commission. The Commission was created by N.J.S.A.52: 17B-169 et seq., in but not of, the Department of Law and Public Safety, as the single agency of State government for the planning, implementation and operation of a comprehensive program of sanctions and services for juveniles to protect the public, ensure accountability and promote rehabilitation for juvenile offenders, with broadly defined powers to accomplish these goals.

ARTICLE I - NAME

This organization shall be known as the Cumberland County Youth Services Advisory Council.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The Youth Services Advisory Council (YSAC) shall serve as an advisory body to the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners. It will emphasize the planning of community services which address the needs of children under the jurisdiction of the Family Court. It will recommend the provision of services which strengthen families, consistent with the physical safety and mental well-being of the juvenile and family. It will also recommend ways to avoid or reduce institutional placements through community-based alternatives and through prevention and early intervention programs.

The Council shall:

1. Prepare and submit to the County Board of Commissioners, for its approval, a comprehensive plan for the provision of services and programs by identified resources within the County for specified target populations under a needs assessment and resource inventory for submission to the Juvenile Justice Commission, as required by law.
2. Annually review the comprehensive plan and, as needed, recommend revisions to the Board of Commissioners.
3. Make recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for the programmatic expenditures of available funds.

4. Identify gaps in service delivery systems for juveniles and their families
5. Recommend new strategies which emphasize the goals of family and community-based treatment in order to fill the identified service gaps.
6. Recommend public information programs as to the nature and extent of problems relating to juvenile justice and the availability of services.
7. Monitor the outlined minority concerns issues relating to youth within the county and explore the need for services for this population.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

1. The Council shall consist of no fewer than twenty voting members.
2. Members shall be representative of a wide range of public and private child and family organizations, including schools, mental health, family counseling and other organizations with interest or experience in issues concerning children and families. The Council shall to the maximum extent feasible, represent the various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups of the county.
 - a) Membership on the Council will reflect the required membership set forth by the Juvenile Justice Commission.
3. Members who fail to attend three consecutive meetings without being excused or failure to attend at least one-half of all meetings in a calendar year may be cause for removal of the member from the Council. Upon request from the Chair, the member must produce a letter of intent to remain a member of the council. The decision will be made by the Chairperson to keep or remove the member. Removal may be recommended to the Board of Commissioners.
4. All resignations from appointed members shall be in writing to the Chairperson and to the Board of Commissioners.
5. A designee may serve on the Council in place of a voting member. There will only be one allowable vote per member/designee.
6. The YSAC Administrator shall be an ex-officio member of the council and of the Executive Committee. The Administrator shall not have a vote.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS AND DUTIES

1. The Officers and Executive Committee of the Council shall be:
 - a) The Chairperson.
 - b) Vice Chairperson

c) The committee Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the following standing committees:

- i. Planning and Budgeting
- ii. Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT)
- iii. Monitoring

2. The duties of the officers shall be:

a) The Chairperson, selected by YSAC shall preside over all Council and Executive Committee meetings, call special meetings (as necessary), serve as spokesperson for the YSAC, and nominate the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for all committees, both standing and ad-hoc (with the approval of the council).

b) The Vice Chairperson, selected by the YSAC shall serve on the Executive Committee, substitute for the Chairperson during the Chairperson's absence, and perform other duties assigned by the Chairperson.

3. Re-organization:

a) Elections for Chair and Vice Chair will be conducted at the May YSAC meeting. The Nominations Committee will be formed at the April meeting and collect nominations prior to the election.

b) The Chair and Vice Chair shall serve a term of one-year and be eligible for re-election each year.

c) Re-organization shall occur yearly at the June YSAC meeting. Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs will be appointed at the yearly re-organization meeting.

ARTICLE V – COMMITTEES

1. YSAC shall have the following standing committees:

a) Planning and Budgeting, which shall:

i. Prepare and present the County Youth Services Plan to the Council and the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners for review and approval, as required by law;

ii. Annually review status of the Youth Services Plan recommendations and findings and report to the Council.

iii. Review and make recommendations on all funding proposals to the Council.

iv. Explore the need for affiliation agreements with service providers for Family Court.

b) Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT), which shall:

i. Make recommendations to the Judge to limit use of detention (within the confines of public safety) to youth who must be detained in accordance with the law, and to move these cases to disposition as soon as possible.

ii. Advise the Judge on needs and service options for disposition.

iii. Assist the Juvenile Justice Commission in developing aftercare/parole case plans.

c) Monitoring, which shall:

i. Monitor and evaluate agencies who hold a contract with the county through the YSAC on an annual basis.

ii. Use monitoring tools as directed and supplied from the Juvenile Justice Commission.

iii. Complete check-ins of contracted agencies to monitor program effectiveness on an as-needed basis throughout the year.

2. All standing committees will seek to consider issues relating to education, training, community awareness and racial disparity in the juvenile justice system

3. All committees shall report to the full Council unless otherwise directed by the Chairperson with consent of the full Council.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

1. The Council shall meet at least six times per calendar year, provided that no more than nine weeks shall elapse between meetings.

2. Special meetings can be called by the Chairperson or by request to the Chairperson by five or more members.

3. A quorum is defined as fifty percent plus one (50% + 1) voting members, or at least 10 voting members. No official business can be conducted at any special or regularly scheduled Council meeting without a quorum.
4. Recommendations of the Council are established by a majority vote of those present.
5. The Chairperson of the YSAC will not have a vote unless the vote is needed to break a tie.
6. Electronic transmission, under emergency circumstances from at least fifty percent plus one (50% + 1) voting members, or at least 10 voting members of the total Council will be acceptable, with permission from the Chair after consultation with the Executive Committee.
7. The Council shall comply with the Open Public Meetings Act.

ARTICLE VII – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

1. Members of the YSAC shall abstain from voting on matters when that individual or agency they represent may be the grant recipient.
2. Any member can challenge a member’s voting privilege in a matter which is identified as a conflict of interest. The Council shall have final authority to rule on these matters to the extent that the local finance board does not have jurisdiction pursuant to N.J.S.A 40A:9-22.4.
3. The rules contained in the most recent edition of “Robert’s Rules of Order” shall be used to guide the Council in all cases in which they are applicable, unless they are in conflict with these By-Laws.

ARTICLE VIII – ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT

1. Proposed amendments to these By-Laws must be given to all members in writing at least one week before the regular meeting at which action may be taken. Fifty percent plus one (50% + 1) voting members, or at least 10 voting members of the council is required to amend these By-Laws. The By-Laws will be reviewed as needed.
2. These By-Laws shall take effect immediately upon approval of the Board of Commissioners

ARTICLE IX – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1. Council members must refrain from discussion, voting and/or decision making relative to the funding or monitoring of programs with respect to which they are employed, serve as a board member, serve as a volunteer, or in which they financial interest.
2. Council members shall review and consider the potential conflict of interest on an annual basis

or as requested, and shall promptly provide any and all information concerning a potential or actual conflict of interest relating to themselves, their spouses, other immediate family members, and any other member of the immediate household.

3. Any member of the Planning Committee, or any committee or subcommittee which engaged in proposal review, shall yield his/her seat to an alternate member of the committee in the review of a proposal involving a conflict of interest.

4. If an appeal related to a spending plan is presented, any member whose agency has been recommended for funding shall abstain from participating in the appeals process.

5. All Council members shall adhere to the Code of Ethics found in the Local Government Ethic Law at N.J.S.A 40A:9-22.5.