

STATEWIDE SUICIDE PREVENTION COUNCIL

By-LAWS

(Amended and Adopted May 1, 2007)
(Amended and Adopted November 10, 2009)
(Amended and Adopted January 13, 2010)
(Amended and Adopted August 26, 2014)

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this organization is the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council. Common usage and abbreviation may be "Council," or "SSPC."

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

Section 1. The Council is the state planning and coordinating agency for issues surrounding suicide and suicide prevention as established by Alaska Statute 44.29.300-390.

Section 2. As established by Alaska Statute 44.29.350, the powers, duties, and responsibilities of the Council are to serve in an advisory capacity to the legislature and the governor with respect to what actions can and should be taken to:

- a. improve health and wellness throughout the state by reducing suicide and its effect on individuals, families, and communities;
- b. broaden the public's awareness of suicide and the risk factors related to suicide;
- c. enhance suicide prevention services and programs throughout the state;
- d. develop healthy communities through comprehensive, collaborative, community-based and faith-based approaches;
- e. develop and implement a statewide suicide prevention plan; and
- f. strengthen existing and build new partnerships between public and private entities that will advance suicide prevention efforts in the state.

ARTICLE III
MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE

Section 1. COUNCIL COMPOSITION:

The Council shall consist of 17 members. The membership and committees of the Council shall fulfill the requirements of A.S. 44.29.300.

Four (4) members appointed by the Legislature, as follows:

- a. two members of the senate, appointed by the president of the senate, one of whom shall be a member of the majority and one of whom shall be a member of the minority;
- b. two members of the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, one of whom shall be a member of the majority and one of whom shall be a member of the minority.

Thirteen (13) members appointed by the Governor, as follows:

- a. two persons who are employed in the executive branch of state government, one of whom shall represent the Department of Health and Social Services and one of whom shall represent the Department of Education and Early Development;
- b. one member of the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse;
- c. one member of the Alaska Mental Health Board;
- d. one person recommended by the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc.;
- e. one person who is an employee of a secondary school;
- f. one person who is active in a youth organization;
- g. one person who has experienced the death by suicide of a member of the person's family;
- h. one person who resides in a rural community in the state that is not connected by road or the Alaska marine highway to the main road system of the state;
- i. one person who is a member of the clergy;
- j. one person who, when appointed, is at least 16 years of age but not more than 24 years of age;
- k. one person who is discharged from, retired from, or engaged in active duty military service in the armed forces of the United States, including the United States Coast Guard, the Army National Guard, the Air National Guard, or a reserve unit of the armed forces of the United States, or who is a mental health provider, social worker, or other person actively providing a health care service to discharged, retired, or active military personnel; and
- l. one public member.

Members of the council appointed under 1a-b of this section are nonvoting members.

Section 2. TERMS OF OFFICE:

- a. Council members serve staggered terms of four years.
- b. A vacancy occurring in the membership of the Council will be filled by appointment of the Governor or legislative leadership, for the unexpired portion of the vacated term.

- c. Members of the council serve at the pleasure of the Governor or legislative leadership and may be removed only for cause, including, but not limited to, poor attendance or lack of contribution to the council's work, demonstrating ineffectiveness as a member. "Poor attendance" means the failure to attend three or more consecutive meetings.
- d. A member who has three unexcused absences from meetings of the full Council, during any twelve month period, shall be referred to the full Council for removal pursuant to subsection 2c of this article.
- e. Any disputes arising under subsections 2c and 2d of this section may, but are not required to be, resolved by informal conference between the member proposed to be recommended for removal and the Executive Committee.
- f. The Council may, by resolution through simple majority vote, recommend to the Governor or legislative leadership the removal of a member for cause, provided that notice shall be given to the member proposed to be recommended for removal at least 10 days prior to the meeting at which the resolution is to be considered.

Section 3. CHANGE OF STATUS:

In the event that a Council member's status changes from one of the categories enumerated in Section 1 above to another, that member shall inform the chair within 30 days of the change of status. The Council shall immediately inform the Governor if such status changes affect compliance with statutory membership requirements. Nothing in this section prevents a member from being reappointed to the Council in another capacity. Nothing in this section shall diminish or limit the power of the Governor with respect to appointments.

Section 4. COMPENSATION:

Members of the Council who are not state employees receive no salary but are entitled to per diem and reimbursement for travel and other expenses as authorized for boards and commissions under AS 39.20.180, including meal allowances for Council members who attend authorized meetings in their city of residence.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS AND STAFF

Section 1. The Council, by a majority of its voting membership, shall annually elect a Chair and other officers it considers necessary from its membership.

Section 2. Officers must include a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Recorder/Treasurer and an at-large Officer.

Section 3. The officers must be elected by a majority vote at a meeting, no later than June 30 each year, and their terms of office shall start on July 1 and shall end on June 30.

Section 4. Terms of office are for one year, officers may be re-elected.

Section 5. In the event of the resignation, death, or removal from the Council, of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will succeed to the office of the Chair until the next election

Section 6. If an office of the Council becomes vacant, an election shall be held to fill the vacancy at the next regular meeting of the Council following the vacancy. In the interim, the Chair may appoint a member to serve until the election is held.

Section 7. The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

a. Chair

1. Call all meetings. Preside at all meetings.
2. Appoint Special Committees and Chair of Special Committees.
3. Serve as ex-officio member of all Committees.
4. Serve as the Council's official representative during his/her term.
5. Operate and conduct the business and affairs of the Council according to the orders and resolutions of the Council.
6. Perform other duties described in these By-Laws or assigned by resolution of the Council.
7. Appoint Standing Committees, Ad Hoc Committees, and Task Forces and the Chairs of said committees.
8. Supervise the Coordinator's activities in carrying out policies, procedures, and directions of the Council in conjunction with the Executive Committee.
9. May call and schedule meetings of the Council; and
10. Refer matters to committees for reports to the Council.

b. Vice-Chair

1. Assist the Chair in the discharge of his/her duties and performs the duties of the Chair when the Chair is unavailable.
2. Ensure that a list of actions taken by motion at each meeting is kept and that items requiring follow-up are placed on the agenda for the next meeting.
3. Act as the parliamentarian for the Council.

4. Perform other duties in accordance with the orders and resolutions of the Council.
- c. Recorder/Treasurer
1. Review and approve Council meeting minutes for distribution. Upon request, attest to the authenticity of Council resolutions and orders.
 2. Review and present Council budget reports to the Council and to the Executive Committee.
 3. Serve as acting Vice-Chair after the death, resignation, or removal from office of the Vice-Chair or when the Vice-Chair serves as acting Chair in the absence of the Chair or pending election of a successor.
 4. Perform other duties assigned by the Council or the Executive Committee.
- d. At-large Officer
1. Perform duties assigned by the Council or the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V COORDINATOR

Section 1. The Council shall appoint a Coordinator from among candidates provided by the Department of Health and Social Services as provided by law. The Coordinator shall be in the partially exempt service of the state in accordance with AS 44.29.330; all other staff of the Council shall be in the classified service of the state and shall be hired by the Coordinator. The Coordinator shall keep all records, prepare agendas for each meeting in consultation with the Chair, provide staff to record and transcribe minutes of all meetings, and with Council approval sign official documents and effect payment of all obligations to the extent provided by law.

Section 2. Subject to applicable law, the Coordinator is responsible for staffing, planning, organizing, coordinating, and directing all activities necessary to assure fulfillment of the powers, duties, and purpose of the Council. Specific duties include, but are not limited to the following:

Meetings:

- a. Send or arrange for the sending of notices of meetings of the Council, or committees of the Council and the agenda of such meetings to all members of the Council.
- b. Provide public notice of all meetings of the Council and all meetings of the Executive Committee of the Council.
- c. Maintain a list of persons that have asked for notice of meetings of the Council or of meetings of any committee of the Council.
- d. Record or arrange for the recording of the minutes of all meetings of the Council and of committees of the Council.
- e. Prepare and distribute Council meeting minutes.
- f. Upon request, attest to the authenticity of Council resolutions and orders.

Reports:

- a. Maintain a roster of members of the Council, including the names and mailing

addresses of all members and the areas of representation as described in law that each member represents.

b. Review and present Council financial reports to the Council and to the Executive Committee.

c. Maintain current statistics on suicide in Alaska.

Legislative Activities:

a. Request and review legislation to determine the effect of the proposed legislation on issues relating to suicide. Monitor the progress of legislation and regulations, and notify the Council chair of hearings and deadlines for comment on regulations and proposed legislation that relates to suicide.

b. Work with the Executive Committee to furnish a legislative priorities agenda for the Council.

c. As directed by the Executive Committee or Council, prepare proposals to change present laws or regulations.

d. Assist the Executive Committee in the preparations and submittal of reports to the Legislature.

Other:

a. Perform other duties assigned by the Council or the Executive Committee.

Section 3. The Coordinator shall be directly responsible to the Council in the performance of his or her duty and subsequently responsible for the actions of the SPCC staff.

Section 4. The Executive Committee shall review the performance of the Coordinator after the first six months of employment and present the review to the Council at its next meeting. Thereafter, the Coordinator's performance shall be evaluated annually by the Executive Committee which will present the report to the Council for final approval.

Section 5. Termination of employment of the Coordinator is by two-thirds vote of the Council.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS

Section 1. The Council may meet and vote, by teleconference or otherwise, as often as considered necessary by the Chair. Committees will meet as necessary to accomplish their responsibilities.

Section 2. Meetings of the Council and its Committees are subject to the Open Meetings Act, AS 44.62.310 and 44.62.312. Therefore, all meetings of the Council are public and there shall be public notice prior to Council meetings. Reasonable public notice of Council and Committee meetings shall be provided in accordance with AS 44.62.310. However, an executive session may be called by majority vote of the Council members present. All records of executive sessions shall be maintained consistent with Robert's Rules of Order, revised (see Article XI).

Section 3. The date, time, and place for the succeeding Council meeting will be established at each Council meeting. The Council will reconvene at that time and place unless proper notice is given to all members that the meeting will be rescheduled. The Executive Committee may poll the Council and reschedule any meeting if a majority of the members of the Council indicate that they cannot attend a meeting. If the Executive Committee reschedules a meeting, they shall file a certificate in the minutes of the Council listing the names of those members that stated that they could not attend at the scheduled time.

Section 4. Seven voting members of the council participating in the meeting in person or by teleconference constitute a quorum for the transaction of business and the exercise of the powers and duties of the council. AS 44.29.300

Section 5. No member of the Council may designate a proxy. All decisions will be made upon vote by a simple majority of those present at the meeting in person or by teleconference unless otherwise specified by these bylaws.

Section 6. The Council will schedule at least one period for public comment during each regular scheduled Council meeting. Prior to beginning the public comment period, the presiding officer will specify any limitation on content or topics to be addressed. The presiding officer should read or may paraphrase the following procedural constraints:

- a. The purpose for having public comment is to allow persons the opportunity to provide information to the Council and to advise the Council about problems and issues.
- b. The public comment period will not be considered a hearing and cannot be used for that purpose. Organizations are required to request hearings in advance in writing, and when granted by the Council, must be given public notice in accordance with law.

c. Public comments will normally be held to a maximum of five minutes per speaker. Organizations may be represented by not more than three speakers. A waiver to the time limit may be granted by order of the Chair or motion adopted by the Council.

d. The public comment period is not to be used in order to criticize or attack specific individuals. While the public is encouraged to speak freely, groups or individuals giving testimony are also encouraged to be thoughtful and constructive when offering criticism, especially if the criticism could be perceived as being directed at an individual. People providing testimony should refrain from commenting on individuals by name.

e. The Council may not take action during the comment period, but may take matters under advisement.

f. The Council may consider matters identified during the public comment period under new business, but may defer such matters to a subsequent meeting in order to complete the original agenda or to provide notice to the public that the item will be on the Council's agenda.

g. In order to afford the maximum amount of time to the public, responses or comments by Council members or Council staff during public comment periods will be held to a minimum.

Section 7. Meetings of the Council may be conducted by teleconference in accordance with AS 44.29.340 provided that, with respect to a matter which requires the consideration of documents, a member participating by teleconference may vote only on those matters to which he or she has access to said documents.

Section 8. Minutes of all meetings shall be kept, transcribed and distributed to the membership by the Council's staff within thirty (30) days following the meeting.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Section 1. Ex-officio Council members may serve on any committee of the Council. Ex-officio members may not be voting members of such committees. One-half of the voting Council membership of a committee constitutes a quorum at a committee meeting.

Section 2. The Council Chair may designate Special Committees or task forces to accomplish special purposes. Persons other than Council members may serve on the Council's Special Committees and task forces; however, such persons may not be voting members of such committees.

Section 3. The Council shall appoint an Advisory Panel to provide further advice on suicide prevention. Members serve solely in an advisory capacity to the Council.

Section 4. Nominations for ex-officio members may be submitted by Council members, Council staff, State of Alaska employees, and the general public. Approval of members shall be by simple majority of the Council or by unanimous vote of the Executive Committee.

Section 5. Ex-officio members serve at the pleasure of the Council. Members will be given tasks specific to the issue they are asked to address. Members will have the option of participating by teleconference, e-mail, or in person.

Section 6. Pursuant to AS 44.29.330, members of the Advisory Panel or ex-officio members are not entitled to compensation, per diem, or reimbursement of travel expenses.

ARTICLE VIII
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Executive Committee of the Council is composed of four officers, the Chair, the Chair-Elect, the Recorder/Treasurer, and an at-large officer. The Coordinator shall staff Executive Committee meetings.

Section 2. The Executive Committee:

- a. has full power to act on behalf of the Council between meetings when necessary or advisable due to:
 - 1. the importance of the action and
 - 2. the infeasibility of calling a full Council meeting prior to the deadline for acting, where the proposed action conforms to currently established Council priorities, policies, and procedures. The Council shall be given reasonable notice of all Executive Committee meetings, including the agenda for each meeting. Executive Committee actions must be reported in writing at the next Council meeting;
- b. acts as the Council development work group for the Council, addressing bylaws review, member recruitment, orientation, and training, and Council operations;
- c. has the authority to call special meetings of the Council;
- d. appoints ad hoc Committees and Chairs.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall meet at the request of any Officer unless otherwise agreed by a majority of the Executive Committee members.

ARTICLE IX
PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Unless otherwise provided by law or these By-Laws, the most current authorized edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Council's procedures. The Vice-Chair shall act as parliamentarian.

ARTICLE X ETHICS

Section 1. Council members are required to comply with AS 39.52.010 - 39.52.960, the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act. As provided by AS 39.52.960(8)(E), the Chair or Vice-Chair shall act as the designated supervisor for the Council members and the Coordinator; the Coordinator shall act as designated supervisor for the Council's staff.

Section 2. Any Council member with a potential conflict of interest concerning an issue to be considered by the Council shall announce that conflict at the beginning of the Council meeting at which the issue will be considered or at such time as the potential conflict becomes apparent.

Section 3. Council members shall refrain from influencing or attempting to influence their fellow Council members, or the Council Staff to take any official action or make any recommendation for official action with respect to the state's funding, direct or indirect, of an organization with which they are associated.

Section 4. Members of the Council shall not be eligible to apply for any Council staff position until a year after concluding Council service.

ARTICLE XI EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Sessions may be called during a regular meeting in accordance with provisions of AS 44.62.310.

- a. The meeting must first be convened as a public meeting and the question of holding an Executive Session to discuss matters set forth in Section (B) shall be determined by a majority vote. No subjects may be considered at the Executive Session, except those mentioned in the motion calling for the Executive Session, unless auxiliary to the main question. No action may be taken during the Executive Session.
- b. Only the following subjects may be discussed in an Executive Session:
 1. matters, the immediate knowledge of which would dearly have an adverse effect upon the finances of the government unit;
 2. subjects that tend to prejudice the reputation and character of any person, provided however the person has the right to a public discussion upon that person's request; and

