

Health Equity Committee By-Laws
(Updated and Approved December 2018)

ARTICLE I

Background and Purpose and its Members

The Health Equity Committee (HEC) was established by the Oregon Health Policy Board (OHPB) on May 2, 2017. The purpose of the committee is to coordinate and develop policy that proactively promotes the elimination of health disparities and the achievement of health equity for all people in Oregon.

The Health Equity Committee will be responsible for reviewing health policy and leading efforts to develop best-practice policies that improve health equity. Specific duties include:

- Provide analysis, guidance, and recommendations to OHPB on policy, including key legislation, using an equity lens.
- Provide assessment and actionable recommendations. Analyze data and information and assess OHA's progress toward achieving defined health equity goals, including steps to becoming a more culturally responsive organization.
- Collaboratively work with other OHPB committees and make recommendations to OHPB to:
 - Improve racial, cultural and ethnic diversity of Oregon's healthcare workforce to reflect communities served, showing a baseline and benchmarks by county;
 - Serve as a resource for the Health Plan Quality Metrics Committee and identify quality measures relevant to advancing health equity in Oregon;
 - Serve as a resource to the Workforce Committee to assist in the identification of strategies that support health equity and integrated health delivery;
 - Collaborate with the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) and Public Health (PH) Divisions regarding the scope of work to integrate health equity strategies into Public Health Modernization;

- Develop strategies to advance health equity related to the OHA workgroups focusing on Primary Care and Behavioral Health Reform efforts identified in OHA workgroups.
- Identify strategies to advance health equity across policy domains relevant to the social determinants of health.
- Serve as a leader and catalyst for meaningful change in the health system related to health equity.

Committee Composition

The committee is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of OHPB. The committee shall consist of 15 individuals:

- Experienced and skilled in the review, analysis, and development of health equity policy and results-proven implementation, including but not limited to the social determinants of health.
- Inclusive of health equity professionals or individuals who have life experience in health equity policy advocacy and policymaking processes, community members, health equity practitioners, and individuals with expertise transforming health equity in operational settings.
- Representative of communities experiencing health inequities, including, but not limited to: racially and ethnically diverse populations, linguistically diverse populations, immigrant and refugee populations, LGBTQ populations, the aging population, people with disabilities, rural communities, economically disadvantaged populations, transient populations, geographic diversity, and intersections among these communities.

Term Appointment

Terms will be two (2) years, with staggered membership terms to ensure continuity. A member may be reappointed for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

ARTICLE II

Member Commitments and Expectations:

- Prepare for and set aside time for HEC meetings and the whole process.
- Participate fully, honestly, and fairly, commenting constructively and specifically.
- Speak respectfully, briefly, and non-repetitively, not speaking again on a subject until all other members desiring to speak have had the opportunity to talk.
- Allow people to state their ideas or opinions without fear of reprisal from HEC members.
- Avoid side conversations during meetings and be fully present.
- Provide information in advance of the meeting in which such information is to be used and share all relevant information to the maximum extent possible.
- Generate and explore all options on the merits, keeping an open mind and listening to different points of view to understand the underlying interests of other HEC members.
- Agree to work toward fair, practical, and durable recommendations that reflect the diverse interests of the entire HEC and the public.
- When communicating with others, accurately summarize the HEC process, discussion, and meetings, presenting a full, fair, and balanced view of the issues and arguments, both out of respect for the process and other members.
- Not attempt to affect a different outcome outside of the HEC process once the HEC has reached a decision.
- Strive vigorously for consensus and closure on issues. This means HEC members will work together to identify underlying values, interests, and concerns to develop widely accepted solutions.
- Self-regulate and help other members abide by these commitments.
- Not disparage, undermine, or affirmatively work against the goals and mission of the HEC.
- Adhere to ground rules established for the HEC and all its committees and workgroups.

- When members are not acting in their official HEC capacity, they shall consider the impact on the HEC, the HEC members, or OHA when using social media. HEC members may express themselves as individuals about matters of public concern but must not imply that their personal opinions reflect the views of the HEC, the HEC members, or OHA. This shall apply regardless of whether members use personal equipment or the State’s information technology assets.
- When providing personal opinions on matters involving the agency, give a disclaimer similar to the following: “This is my personal opinion, and I am not representing the official position of the HEC.”
- **Conflict of interest policy:** To maintain objectively, transparency, and integrity of HEC, members must comply with this policy.

Members are required to:

- Sign **conflict of interest disclosure form** at the time of their appointment regarding any **relevant financial relationships** or **commercial interests** which would pose an actual or potential conflict of interest before participating in any committee activities
- Update disclosures annually or whenever there are any relevant changes (such as a new financial relationship).
- Verbally disclose any actual conflicts of interest before voting on any motion.
- If a member has a potential conflict related to a motion, the member should state the conflict. OEI staff and HEC will then determine whether the member shall participate in the vote or be recused.

Definitions

Relevant financial relationships are financial relationships, in any amount, during the past twelve months with any organization or individual that is currently, or potentially, an applicant for OHA approval of CE opportunities, programs, or activities. Financial relationships are those relationships in which the individual, or an immediate family member, benefits by receiving a salary, consulting fee, honoraria, royalty, intellectual property rights, ownership interest (e.g., stocks, stock options or other ownership interest, excluding diversified mutual funds), or other financial benefits.

Commercial interests exist when an individual, or immediate family member, have any ownership interest in any organization producing, offering, selling, marketing, re-selling, or distributing services or products that are used in continuing education for health professionals. Immediate family members are defined as spouses, domestic partners, children, siblings, and parents, including family members related by marriage, adoption, etc.

Committee Members and Duties

- Members are expected to attend in-person or by phone/electronically, at least 80% of committee meetings annually.
 - Absences of more than 20% of scheduled meetings that do not involve family medical leave may be reviewed.
- In the event there is a need for a Committee member to take a temporary leave of absence due to medical or family medical reasons:
 - Members may request a medical leave of absence in writing to OHA Equity and Inclusion Director to include:
 - Reason for request.
 - Length of time needed.
 - The OEI Director will consider requests on a case-by-case basis in consultation with committee Co-Chairs, if appropriate.
- If there are subcommittees established, members are required to serve on at least one subcommittee per membership term. This may include attending occasional meetings or developing and reviewing material outside of HEC meetings.

Regular Attendance, Representation by Proxy

Regular attendance is vital to the work of the committee. Members accept the duty and obligation to attend meetings and to provide notice at least two business days in advance of a meeting if they are unable to attend. In an emergency, the member shall contact the staff as soon as reasonably possible.

A member may send a non-voting representative (proxy) in his/her/their place. A member is only allowed to send a proxy on their behalf for a maximum of two consecutive meetings unless otherwise arranged in advance with staff.

Resignations and Replacement Appointment

If a member finds it necessary to resign from the committee, the member is encouraged to remain until a replacement can be selected and to provide as much notice as possible. Member is also encouraged to help the committee find a suitable replacement.

Members who wish to resign from HEC must submit a formal resignation letter to OHPB and OEI. Replacement members will be appointed to the remainder of the resigning member's term and are eligible for reappointment at the discretion of OHPB and OEI.

OHPB may appoint a replacement for any member who misses more than two consecutive unexcused absences or a total of 20% of the meetings per year. OHPB and OEI will also consider extenuating circumstances on a case by case basis.

Acting and Speaking Publicly on Behalf of HEC, OEI, OHPB, or OHA

Members are not allowed to use their role on HEC, nor act/speak on behalf of HEC, OEI, OHPB, nor OHA, when partnering with other organizations, unless authorized and voted on at a HEC meeting.

In speaking with media about health equity matters, members shall inform HEC leadership and OEI staff in advance, and make sure to clarify to media he/she/they are representing themselves, and not representing HEC, OEI, OHPB, nor OHA, unless authorized and voted on at a HEC meeting.

Travel Reimbursement

Members are not entitled to compensation for services but shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary travel expenses incurred by them by their attendance at committee meetings, in the manner and amount provided in ORS 292.492.

ARTICLE III

Leadership Structure: Committee Officers and Duties

HEC shall elect two of its voting members to serve as Co-Chairs for one-year (1) term, with the option to renew, and with staggered membership terms to ensure continuity. Elections shall take place no later than January and must follow the requirements for elections in Oregon's Public Meetings Law, ORS 192.610-192.690. Oregon's Public Meetings Law does not allow any election procedure other than a public vote made at a HEC meeting where a quorum is present.

If one of the Co-Chairs vacates their position before term completion, one of the Executive Committee members is eligible to complete the Co-Chairs' term.

A. Co-Chairs

The duties of the Co-Chairs are to:

- Work with OHBP and OEI staff to develop agendas and materials for HEC meetings
- Review draft meeting minutes before meeting at which they will be approved
- Facilitate HEC meetings and guide HEC in achieving deliverables
- Serve as HEC spokespersons at OHPB/OHA meetings
- Sign HEC-approved documents for OHPB/OHA, letters of support, and other correspondence on behalf of HEC, as its formal leadership authority
- Designate, in the absence of Co-Chairs, or when appropriate to conduct HEC business, other HEC members to perform duties including, but not limited to, attending OHPB, OHA, or other public meetings and approving/reviewing documents which require Co-Chair action.

B. Executive Committee (Three (3) members elected from HEC, plus the co-chairs)

The Executive Committee will serve a one-year (1) term, with the option to renew, and with staggered membership terms to ensure continuity. The role of the Executive Committee members is to:

- Help HEC accomplish its work in the most efficient way
- Develop an annual work plan and keep the HEC on track to implement it.
- Inform and support meeting agenda development
- Complete tasks between meetings, as needed
- Liaise with relevant groups, committees, and individuals as appropriate.

ARTICLE IV

Committee Meetings

HEC meetings are called by order of the Co-Chairs, who serves as the meeting facilitator.

HEC shall conduct its business in conformity with Oregon’s Public Meeting Law, ORS 192.610-192.690.

All meetings will be accessible by conference call and when possible, also by webinar (electronically).

Fifty percent (50%), plus one (1), members shall constitute a quorum for conducting business and making critical decisions. Members participating by phone or electronically are included in constituting a quorum.

Voting Process:

- i. All official actions of the committee must be taken by a public “roll-call” vote.
- ii. The results of all votes and the vote of each member shall be recorded by name.
- iii. When there is a quorum present at a meeting, a simple majority of the committee members in attendance is sufficient to pass motions or take action during a meeting except for when voting on the by-laws or on removing a committee member, in which case there must be a 2/3 majority.
- iv. Abstaining votes shall be recorded as abstentions.
- v. Proxy votes are not permitted.

All HEC actions shall be expressed by motion or resolution. HEC prefers a consensus-based decision-making process. When consensus cannot be reached within the meeting time, a vote may be used, with HEC leadership serving as the tiebreaker, when needed.

Votes may be made by voice or electronically during the meeting. Votes cannot be made by proxy, mail, nor email, between meetings. Those in the minority opinion may prepare a brief statement. All official HEC action is recorded in meeting minutes.

Meeting agendas and materials will be distributed in advance of meetings by staff through email and will be posted online at the OHA-OHPB webpage.

ARTICLE V

Amendments to the By-Laws

These by-laws may be amended through a formal vote of HEC members.

***Bylaws amended on December 3, 2018*