

# IPG Policies & Procedures

Updated September 2, 2021

## Purpose

The Oregon HIV/Viral Hepatitis/Sexually Transmitted Infection Integrated Planning Group (IPG) is a community stakeholder group whose mission is to advise the Oregon Health Authority HIV/STD/TB Section on issues related to HIV care and prevention and co-occurring sexually transmitted infections and hepatitis C. Specifically, the IPG developed the End HIV Oregon strategy, in partnership with OHA, and provides ongoing guidance on ways to achieve the End HIV Oregon goals of increasing testing, expanding prevention, ensuring high-quality, accessible treatment, and eliminating disparities.

## Membership

### Goals

The IPG aims to have a broad cross-section of Oregonians participate in and provide input on End HIV Oregon efforts. Members are the lifeblood of IPG. People living with HIV, viral hepatitis, and STIs are key contributors to this work. Membership goals will be determined based on epidemiological data indicative of populations living with and vulnerable to HIV and co-infections. Membership goals will be reassessed annually. Data will be collected via 1) the member application and 2) phone calls from the state IPG co-facilitator to applicants.

### Monitoring

Membership data will be tracked and shared as follows:

- CivCom will track member attendance at meetings and share data with OHA after each IPG meeting.
- CivCom will track and report to the Operations Committee by the end of each calendar year:
  - The demographic characteristics of members who attended at least one meeting in the past 12 months.
  - Members who have not attended any meetings in the past 12 months. These individuals will then be contacted and asked if they are interested in continuing to serve on the IPG and receive IPG communications. These individuals will also be categorized as IPG partners (rather than members with voting rights) until they attend an IPG meeting.



## Applications

The number of voting members on the IPG is limited to 35. IPG membership applications are solicited and accepted on a continuous basis throughout the year as long as there are openings. Applications are reviewed as received by the Operations Committee. Individuals interested in IPG membership must complete an application (available at <https://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/HIVSTDViralHepatitis/IPG/Pages/index.aspx>)

The IPG recognizes the need to amplify the voices of groups most impacted by HIV or underrepresented at this time. Therefore, the IPG is currently only accepting membership applications from people in Oregon who are:

1. Black, African American, or African immigrants;
2. Latino/a/x or Hispanic;
3. Transgender women; or
4. People of color who are living with HIV.

When a new membership application is received, the state co-chair will call the applicant to ask if they are willing to share whether they are living with HIV or have experience having a substance use disorder; this information is not collected in the application form due to its sensitive nature. Applicant responses will be recorded on an internal tracking form.

Applicants who are not members of a priority population may be offered the option to attend IPG meetings as a guest or partner. These decisions will be based on applicant skills and interests and the needs of the IPG. Applications from members of priority populations will be forwarded to the Operations Committee for review. The OHA co-facilitator will maintain data regarding applicants' HIV status and lived experience with substance use disorder. This information will only be shared in aggregate form (e.g., x% of IPG members report living with HIV).

## Co-chairs

IPG meetings will be facilitated by two co-chairs: a state co-chair and a community co-chair. The state co-chair will be an OHA employee appointed by OHA leadership. The community co-chair will be an IPG member not employed by OHA and will be elected by the Operations Committee for a 2-year term. Community co-chairs may be re-elected for subsequent terms. All IPG members will have an opportunity to self-nominate.

## Member Benefits & Responsibilities

IPG meetings are generally held three or four times per year, either 1) remotely with opportunities to participate via video chat or phone or 2) in-person with opportunities to participate via video chat or phone for people who have barriers to traveling.

Participants are eligible for stipends who:



- Are voting members;
- Participate in a full meeting;
- Complete a stipend request form; and
- Are not already receiving payment for their time attending the meeting.

Members who work for agencies receiving funding from OHA are expected to charge any meeting-related expenses to their grants and contracts. Stipends for attending meetings in-person are calculated based on mileage, while a flat fee (\$75) is available for participating remotely.

IPG terms of membership do not end, with a few exceptions. The IPG Operations Committee does reserve the right to terminate the membership and/or curtail participation of IPG members/partners/guests who:

- Commit verbal or physical harassment against IPG members, partners, or guests;
- Continuously are disruptive, combative, counterproductive, and/or actively promoting misinformation during meetings or via other communications with members; and/or
- Have continuous absences from IPG activities and/or are nonresponsive to communications.

The Co-Chairs have the right to mute or terminate the online or in-person participation of any participant who is disrupting the meeting (e.g., background noise, active interruptions).

## Code of Conduct

Our goal is to ensure all conversations constructively advance the work of the group, are welcoming of diverse perspectives, and are free from harassment. IPG members, partners, and guests are expected to:

- Conduct business in ways that are honest, respectful of diversity, compassionate, and non-judgmental;
- Take responsibility for their actions;
- Refrain from using language that is threatening, offensive, biased, insensitive, abusive or intended to be hurtful;
- Refrain from acts of threat or violence directed at other participants;
- Abide by the IPG ground rules:
  - Listen to understand. Remain open minded. Ask questions. If you disagree, please do so openly while maintaining respect for each other.
  - Share group time fairly. Allow one person to speak at a time.
  - Remain focused on the topic at hand. Avoid out-of-order comments and side conversations.
  - Speak from experience and from reliable data sources. Misinformation is unacceptable.

## Subcommittees

IPG sub-committee meetings are convened and held, as needed.



## Voting

While the primary role of members is to advise the Oregon Health Authority HIV/STD/TB Section, members may be asked to vote on occasion. In these instances, decisions will be made based on the votes of a majority of members who are present or responsive. IPG members are also required to vote on concurrence with the Integrated Plan once every five years.

## Operations Committee

Operations Committee meetings are facilitated by OHA staff so that all committee members can focus on providing input. The Operations Committee is composed of 10 members, including the 2 IPG co-chairs, 6 members-at-large, OHA's HIV/STD/TB Section Manager, and OHA's Viral Hepatitis Coordinator. To ensure representation of populations most impacted by HIV, at least 2 members-at-large must be consumers/PLWH who are not employed by a public health agency, and the remaining 4 spots will prioritize consumers/PLWH who are not employed by a public health agency, as well as people representing groups more vulnerable to HIV, including Black/African American, Hispanic or Latino/a/x, and other people of color, people who inject drugs, and transgender individuals. Committee meetings are also attended by up to two support staff or contractors. OHA, HIV/STD/TB Section staff who are voting members will be limited to the state co-chair and the HIV/STD/TB Section Manager. Operations Committee responsibilities include:

- Develop IPG meeting agendas. Troubleshoot issues that arise related to group direction, dynamics, or logistics.
- Review membership data to identify membership gaps and recruitment needs.
- Ensure that new members are oriented and connected with the co-chairs prior to their first meeting.
- Develop and implement a plan to recruit prospective members, particularly for slots that have typically been challenging to fill. Monitor current and upcoming vacancies and openings of member and officer positions, and develop plans to fill them.
- Conduct outreach to businesses, organizations and groups that represent underrepresented groups on IPG.
- Review new membership applications and make recommendations for nomination based on the applicant's potential to contribute to IPG goals, including considerations related to diversity and representation. When a new application is received:
  - Within 2 business days, CivCom will 1) thank the applicant for their interest in the IPG and 2) share the application with the Operations Committee for a vote.
  - Within 5 business days of receiving the application, Operations Committee members will submit their votes to either recommend that the application is accepted or denied.
  - Within 2 business days of receiving votes, CivCom will submit a tally of the votes to OHA staff on the Operations Committee.



- Within 2 business days of receiving the tally of votes, OHA staff will inform the Operations Committee of its decision to accept or deny the application.
- Within 2 business days of receiving a decision to accept a new applicant, the OHA co-facilitator will attempt to contact the applicant by phone. This call will serve to 1) inform the person that their application was accepted and 2) welcome the new member and answer any questions.
- Within 2 days of receiving a decision to deny an application, the OHA co-facilitator will send the applicant an email thanking them for their interest and notifying them of the decision.

Operations Committee members who do not work for agencies receiving funding from OHA are eligible to receive \$25 stipends for their participation (to be paid at the same time as IPG meeting stipends).

## Conflict Resolution

- Formal disputes, complaints or concerns about individuals, processes or IPG-specific issues should initially be lodged with the IPG co-chairs.
- If the conflict cannot be resolved at that level, the IPG co-chairs shall formally bring the dispute to the IPG Operations Committee for resolution.
- If the conflict is taken to the IPG Operations Committee, a decision from the committee will be provided directly to the individual who submitted the original complaint. The decision will be final.

## Exit Interviews

IPG Co-Chairs should conduct all exit interviews within four weeks of a member's departure. Summary documents from all of the exit interviews will be shared with the IPG Operations Committee. Reasons given for departures will be tracked over time.

