

Administrative Policy No. 02.05

Subject: Advisory Groups

Information Contact: Office of Policy and External Relations
MS 45115 (360) 902-7813

Authorizing Source: Chapters [42.30](#) and [42.32 RCW](#)
[RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060](#)
[RCW 43.03.220 through 43.03.250](#)
[RCW 43.06.130 and 43.06.150](#)
[RCW 43.20A.350 through 43.20A.390](#)
[RCW 43.41.220 through 43.41.250](#)
[RCW 43.88.500 through 43.88.515](#)

References: RCW [43.03.050](#) and RCW [43.03.060](#)
For specifics regarding lodging, and mileage reimbursement for advisory group members
[Governor's Office Boards and Commissions Handbook For Boards and Commissions Profiles](#)

Effective Date: November 1, 1987

Revised: February 21, 2013

Approved By: Original signed by Pat Lashway
Senior Director, Policy & External Relations

Purpose

This policy defines criteria for advisory groups and advises Department employees about the Office of Financial Management's (OFM) reporting requirements when starting, reporting on, or ending an advisory group. For additional guidance on this subject, see the References section above.

Scope

This policy applies to the Department's employees who work with an advisory group as defined by this policy. This policy does not apply to an advisory group whose membership is exclusively DSHS employees.

Definition

Advisory Group: For the purposes of this policy, an advisory group is a group whose members:

1. Are organized and sponsored by the Department;
2. Report to the Department;
3. Are involved in the operation of the Department; and
4. Are eligible for travel expenses.

The group may be permanent or temporary, set up by statute, or referred to as a board, commission, council, committee, or any other title functioning in the same capacity.

Policy Requirements

A. Membership for Advisory Groups

1. When the law requires your administration/division to have an advisory group, you must follow the statutory requirements for the number and types of members.
2. If there is not a statutory mandate for the number and types of advisory group members, membership should:
 - a. Include a balanced representation of the state's population, diversity, and backgrounds;
 - b. Have a particular interest or expertise in the relevant program area;
 - c. Be interested in social service programs;
 - d. Be willing and able to commit to participate fully in all meetings and group activities during their term of appointment;
 - e. Be willing to work towards the success of the group; and
 - f. Be willing to abide by the terms of their appointment and the by-laws of the group.

B. Department Staff Responsibilities

1. Staff must assist with establishing the advisory group guidelines/bylaws which are consistent with the Department's goals and objectives and must include (see attached [examples](#)):
 - a. Mission;
 - b. Structure/membership;
 - c. Roles and responsibilities;
 - d. Lobbying restrictions on behalf of the agency (see Administrative Policies [01.01](#), and [01.04](#)); and
 - e. Confidentiality restrictions.
2. Staff must ensure advisory group members are given the by-laws/guidelines and expectations for acting as a member.

3. Staff must assist the advisory group with providing recommendations to the Department upon request on policies, programs, budgets, etc.
4. Staff must ensure the group operates pursuant to federal and state laws and regulations, and the Department and OFM reporting requirements.

C. Federal and State Law Impact

All advisory groups must operate according to federal and state laws, which include OFM reporting requirements (see RCW [43.41.220](#), RCW [43.41.250](#) and RCW [43.88.505](#)).

D. Staffing

Department advisory group staff must be qualified to process appointment letters, manage meetings, communicate with the members, reimburse members' expenses, and develop by-laws or guidelines, as appropriate.

E. Office of Policy and External Relations Review

Administrations/divisions must obtain the Office of Policy and External Relations review before forming or ending an advisory group as follows:

1. Before an administration/division forms an advisory group, the Office of Policy and External Relations must review the advisory group proposal to determine:
 - a. There is no duplication with existing advisory groups;
 - b. The sponsoring administration has legal authority to form the advisory group;
 - c. The program can financially support the advisory group; and
 - d. OFM has approved the advisory group when the group is not mandated by statute (see RCW [43.41.240](#)); *the Office of Policy and External Relations will process the request for approval from OFM.*
2. Before an administration/division ends an advisory group, the Office of Policy and External Relations must review to determine that:
 - a. The advisory group may be ended under federal/state law; and
 - b. There are no other reasons to maintain the advisory group.

F. Office of Policy and External Relations Report to OFM on the Department's Advisory Groups

The Office of Policy and External Relations must report to OFM the following:

1. In odd numbered years, specific information regarding the status of the Department's advisory groups, such as permanent, temporary, statutory, non-statutory, boards,

- commissions, councils, and committees (see RCW [43.88.505](#) for report requirements).
2. In even numbered years, recommendations for ending or consolidating advisory boards (see RCW [43.41.220](#) for criteria).

Procedures

A. Starting an Advisory Group

Before starting an advisory group:

1. Department staff sends a completed DSHS 03-409 Starting An Advisory Group found at <http://forms.dshs.wa.lcl/> to the Office of Policy and External Relations for review and approval.
2. The Office of Policy and External Relations responds within 14 days of receipt of the request.

B. Ending an Advisory Group

Before ending an advisory group:

1. Program staff sends the completed form DSHS 03-410 Ending An Advisory Group found at <http://forms.dshs.wa.lcl/> to the Office of Policy and External Relations for review and approval.
2. The Office of Policy and External Relations responds within 14 days of receipt of the request.

Note: The Secretary's office, department administrators, or the Office of Policy and External Relations may contact staff about ending an advisory group due to legal changes or for other reasons.

C. Administration Reporting

1. In odd numbered years, Administrations must submit status updates on any Boards, Commissions, Councils, Committees, or Advisory Groups to OFM using the template provided by the Governor's Office. The Office of Policy and External Relations must submit the completed forms to the Governor's Office. NOTE: The Office of Policy and External Relations will send instructions for completing the template once they are distributed by the Governor's Office.
2. In even numbered years, administrations must send recommendations for ending or consolidating any advisory group(s) to the Office of Policy and External Relations by June 15th using the form DSHS 03-410 Ending An Advisory Group found at <http://forms.dshs.wa.lcl/>.