# State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (SRCB)

### Official Bylaws

Date originally adopted: April 27, 1996

##### Date last amended: October 26, 2016

##### Date adopted: December 2, 2016

#### Article I: Purpose

The purpose of the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (SRCB) is to:

* Review, analyze, and advise Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) of its responsibilities under the Rehabilitation Act;
* Partner with DSB in the development and review of the VR State Plan goals and priorities, the DSB Strategic Plan, reports, needs assessments, and program evaluation;
* Conduct a review and analysis of consumer satisfaction as it relates to the functions performed by DSB, the services delivered, and outcomes achieved;
* Prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and the RSA Commissioner, and make the report available to the public;
* Coordinate with other councils, as specified by the Rehabilitation Act, including, the State Independent Living Council and Independent Living Centers;
* Advocate for people who are blind by making recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature on issues related to the Department, other state agencies, or state laws which have a significant effect on the opportunities, services, or rights of blind persons;
* Advise and make recommendations to the Governor on the criteria and qualifications pertinent to the selection of the Director;
* Perform other functions consistent with the Rehabilitation Act, comparable to other functions performed by the SRCB, determined by the SRCB.

#### ARTICLE II: Membership Composition and Terms

#### Membership Composition

* Congress mandates a formal mechanism for people with disabilities to have influence in shaping the Vocational Rehabilitation services they receive. The DSB State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind is that means of influence.
* Members of the Council are appointed by the Governor. To achieve a balanced membership, appointments are made considering geographic representation, gender, ethnicity and other unique characteristics. The SRCB is made up of 17 members. Individuals who are blind will constitute a majority of the Council.

The SRC for the Blind is made up of the following represented groups in order to best represent the unique, collective and diverse voices of individuals who are blind:

* A representative of a consumer organization of the blind;
* Current or former Recipients of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (2);
* Representatives of business, labor and industry (4);
* A representative of the State Workforce Investment Board;
* A representative of the Client Assistance Program;
* A representative of the Parent Information and Training Center;
* Current or former Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor -- non-voting member if currently employed by the Department;
* A representative of a Community Rehabilitation Program;
* A Director of a Tribal Vocational rehabilitation Program;
* A representative of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
* A representative of individuals who are blind who have difficulty representing themselves or are unable due to their disabilities to represent themselves;
* A representative of the Washington State Independent Living Council
* DSB Executive Director – non-voting member.

#### Membership Terms

* One term is three years.
* Members may seek reappointment for a second term.
* No member may serve more than two consecutive full terms, except for the CAP and Tribal Representative positions.
* If a vacancy occurs due to resignation or withdrawal prior to the end date of the term, a new member may be appointed to the position. The new member will serve out the remainder of the position’s term to its scheduled end date.
* A member’s term may be ended at any time by the Governor.

#### ARTICLE III: Committees and Committee Responsibilities

#### Standing Committees

The following committees are standing committees of the Council. Additional standing committees or ad hoc work groups may be established as needed by the Executive Committee.

1. Executive Committee
2. Membership and Collaboration
3. Program Evaluation and Reporting
4. Policy and Planning

#### Executive Committee

The Executive Committee provides the overall leadership, vision, and guidance for the entire Council.

Composition:

* Chairperson which shall be elected annually by the full Council.
* Vice-Chairperson elected annually.
* Chairs of all Standing Committees.

Responsibilities:

1. Oversee and evaluate the performance of SRCB staff.
2. Develop and negotiate a resource plan between the SRCB and DSB.
3. Make decisions about the use of Council resources, including funds, staff time and general Council capacity.
4. Develop and approve quarterly meeting agendas.
5. Develop the SRCB’s mid-range and long-term goals by supporting strategic planning and work plan development.
6. Ensure the SRCB meets federal and state mandates on time and within budget.
7. Ensure that committee Chairs have access to information and support needed to advance the work of their committees.
8. Submit an annual report to the Governor and RSA Commissioner by December 31 of each year.

#### Membership and Collaboration Committee

The Membership and Collaboration Committee recruits Council members and works to maintain a strong, active and high-functioning Council.

Responsibilities:

1. Develop and update recruitment materials.
2. Ensure that all required positions of the Council are filled.
3. Design and implement a recruitment plan for Council positions.
4. Track Council member attendance.
5. Assure Council practices advance an accessible Council culture.
6. Assist members to identify support needed to fully participate in Council activities.
7. Respond to sensitive member concerns and emerging issues.
8. Coordinate new member orientation.
9. Identify how members can develop and refine leadership skills and prepare for Council member opportunities.
10. Establish a process and facilitate annual election of officers.

#### Program and Evaluation Committee

The Program and Evaluation committee evaluates customer satisfaction and other factors related to the Department’s performance, and make suggestions for program improvement based on findings.

Responsibilities:

1. Analyze Department performance data as compared to Rehabilitation Services Administration measures and other indicators of program effectiveness and efficiency.
2. Request and review Fair Hearing information for trends or areas of concern.
3. Sponsor opportunities for customer input, compile feedback and analyze over time to identify areas that indicate potential problems.
4. Request additional data from DSB to assess whether issues that emerge are a one-time issue or a broader concern that may need to be addressed.
5. Collaborate with DSB to document the results of customer needs assessment.
6. Survey DSB customers to assess service satisfaction.
7. Draft the annual report to the Governor and RSA Commissioner.

#### Policy and Planning Committee

Policy and Planning Committee members participate in activities related to DSB policies and practices, including process improvement efforts and work groups assembled to address state and federal program updates.

Responsibilities:

1. Provide input to DSB’s internal policies and practices.
2. Seek feedback from the Client Assistance Program related to proposed changes to internal policies and practices.
3. Identify opportunities to engage in DSB internal workgroups.
4. Provide input to DSB on policy changes affecting DSB customers, including proposed changes to the Rehabilitation Act, Revised Code of Washington and Washington Administrative Code.
5. Support DSB’s State Plan forums and contribute to DSB priorities.
6. Write the SRCB portion (section 4.2c) of DSB’s State Plan.
7. Participate in RSA monitoring activities.

#### ARTICLE IV: Elections, Terms of Office, and Duties

Elections of SRCB officers will be held at the final meeting of each year. The Membership Committee will develop a process for establishing a slate of candidates and will facilitate elections for officers and committee chairs.

Officer terms last one calendar year. The offices of Chairperson and Vice Chair are limited to two one-year terms.

Council Chair Duties:

* Preside at quarterly meetings of the Council.
* Preside at meetings of the Executive Committee.
* Oversee the appointment of members to committees.
* Assist Committee Chairs to understand the purpose of the committee and the responsibilities of the chair.
* Appoint a Council member to be liaison to other Councils, as needed.
* Attend committee meetings as needed as an ex-officio member.
* Act on issues requiring immediate attention which arise between meetings of the full Council and report actions taken at next full Council meeting.
* In partnership with the Executive Director and as authorized by the full SRCB, be a spokesperson for the Council.

Council Vice-chair Duties:

* Preside at Council meetings in the absence of the Chair.
* Assist the Chair to carry out the other duties of the Chair as needed or requested.

Committee Chair Duties:

* Facilitate the development of committee objectives and priorities.
* Facilitate completion of committee activities and responsibilities needed to meet objectives.
* Conduct committee meetings with support from Council staff.
* Provide reports to the Executive Committee regarding all meetings, activities and progress of the committee at each full Council meeting in achieving their SRCB responsibilities.
* Make presentations and/or motions to the full Council related to Committee work.

Council Member Duties:

* Members will operate within state and federal laws and Council Bylaws.
* Council members may not make unilateral decisions or take action as a representative of the Council without the consent of the Council, Executive Committee, or Council Chair.
* Council members understand the mission of the Council and support the Council mission ahead of any personal opinions or beliefs.
* Council members will not accept or solicit anything of economic value as a gift, gratuity or favor if it could be reasonably expected that the gift, gratuity, or favor would influence the vote, action, or judgment of the Council member.
* Council members will direct questions or inquiries regarding DSB business or activities to the Executive Director or Council Chair.
* Details of Council actions taken in closed Executive Committee meetings will not be disclosed to others unless it is part of the public record.
* Council members will attend scheduled quarterly meetings.
* Council members will participate in at least one Standing Committee.

Council Staff Duties:

* Council Staff act as a conduit of information to and from the Council and represents the Council to the public. The Executive Committee oversees and evaluates the position.

Termination of Member Appointment:

Any officer’s or Council member’s appointment may be terminated at any time by the Governor.

#### ARTICLE V: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No member of the Council may cast a vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to the member or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest.

#### ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

Meetings, Quorum, and Voting:

1. The Council shall convene at least four meetings a year.
2. A quorum for conducting Council meetings shall consist of a simple majority of the current voting membership.
3. Council staff will record and maintain Minutes of all meetings. Minutes will be distributed to all Council members.
4. The Chair will request formal approval of the Quarterly Meeting Minutes at the next Council meeting.
5. Each voting member of the SRCB shall have one vote and must be present to cast his/her vote. Being present may be any alternative interactive participation such as conference call or other telecommunication device which has been arranged upon the member’s request.

Public Comment at Meetings:

According to the Open Public Meetings Act (RCW 42.30.030), meetings of the Department of Services for the Blind State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind are open to the public. The time and place of Council meetings will be announced in advance and posted in the Register of Public Meetings. An opportunity for members of the public to make comments will be offered and made readily available during the Council meeting.

Travel Expenses:

Council members may be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses of attending Council meetings and performing Council duties following state laws and guidelines.

Meeting Guidelines:

* Meetings are held in settings that adhere to accessibility standards outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act.
* The Council is responsive to requests for reasonable accommodation from staff, Council members or the public.
* The Council staff works with Council members to identify and provide disability-related supports necessary to facilitate a member’s full participation.

#### ARTICLE VII: Amendments to the Bylaws

Amendments to the SRCB Bylaws may be recommended by any Council member or Standing Committee. Proposed changes must be presented to the Executive Committee at least two weeks prior to a quarterly meeting and will be included on the next quarterly Council meeting agenda. Adoptions of these amendments require approval by two-thirds of the voting members present at the Council meeting.

#### ARTICLE VIII: Conflict Resolution

In the event of conflict on the Council the Chair may extend debate so that everyone may be heard. If it appears that consensus cannot be reached in a timely manner, the Chair will end debate and call for a vote.