

**Island County Children's Commission
BYLAWS**

Revised March, 2008

ARTICLE I: GENERAL

The establishment of the Children's Commission was provided for by the Island County Board of Health adoption of Ordinance HD-34-07, C-93-07. The Commission shall be governed by said ordinance and these bylaws.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE OF THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSION

The continuing purpose of the Island County Children's Commission is to assess and identify the needs of infants, young children and youth county-wide, and advocate and work collaboratively to address priority issues. The Children's Commission will regularly apprise local officials, and the community-at-large of the state of children and youth in Island County, such that appropriate decisions can be made on behalf of our young citizens. The Children's Commission is the official voice for children in Island County.

To accomplish this purpose, the Children's Commission is required and empowered to:

- 1) Develop procedures, rules, by-laws and standards to govern its own operation and decision making processes, sufficient to carry out its duties.
- 2) Review data and conduct public meetings to determine needs and priorities of children, ages 0-18, in Island County related to health, mental health, safety, opportunities to contribute to community, and social services.
- 3) Hold strategic, focused community discussions to better understand issues affecting children's well-being and service delivery needs.
- 4) Report yearly to the Board of Health the status of children's service needs and resources in Island County; making its findings a written document on which advice and recommendations for future action and planning shall be based.
- 5) Advise the Board of Health on matters relating to the priorities, objectives, and tasks to be performed affecting infants, young children and youth.
- 6) Act as a resource, providing technical assistance to community-based organizations dealing with children's issues, assist in the development of grants affecting infants, young children and youth, and provide input to local, state and federal agencies on these issues.
- 7) Act in an advocate role in the public and private sector for the interests of children of Island County.
- 8) Review and analyze state and national legislation which might affect infants, young children and youth, and communicate with the BOH and legislators the results of such analyses.
- 9) Enlist collaborative agency and community support to strengthen child and family services in communities.
- 10) Identify and promote innovative programs/initiatives that will strengthen services to children and their families in Island County.
- 11) Perform such other duties as may be assigned or deemed necessary.

The Children's Commission may also review current and proposed county programs and activities to determine their potential impact upon children and on children's issues.

Island County Public Health, Assessment and Community Development Section will provide staff services to support the work of the Children's Commission.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

The Children's Commission shall consist of not less than 15 voting members, advising the Island County Board of Health on matters and issues of health, mental health, safety, general well-being, opportunities to contribute to community, and service needs of the infants, young children and youth of Island County.

Appointments and representation on the Children's Commission shall be based upon geographic distribution, strategic agency representation, general citizenry with special/pertinent expertise and interest, community credibility and representing the diversity of Island County. At least one member shall, upon appointment, be 18 years of age or younger.

The Children's Commission shall forward suggested appointments to newly vacant Commission positions to the Board of Health for approval and appointment.

Children's Commission members are expected to attend all meetings and actively participate in one or more issue-specific sub-committees or project teams.

ARTICLE IV: TERMS OF MEMBERS

Section 1. Length:

The term of office for Commission members shall be for two (2) year terms, with the exception of youth members, whose term shall be for one (1) year. A member may serve a maximum of three (3) consecutive terms upon the recommendation of the Children's Commission Executive Committee, and reappointment by the Board of Health. Then, after a period of two (2) years absence from the Commission, a person may again be appointed for up to three (3) consecutive terms.

Section 2. Removal:

Commission members are expected to attend all meetings. That is the expectation, and it is understood that there are bases for excused absences. If a member cannot avoid missing a meeting, it is the obligation of that member to contact an Executive Committee member, or staff, and be brought up to speed on Commission work, such that he or she can adequately participate in the next scheduled meeting. After a member has missed three (3) consecutive meetings, or five (5) within a two year period, the Children's Commission Executive Committee may declare that Commission member's seat vacant.

A member may be removed from the Children's Commission for continued and willful actions that are deemed to be counter productive to the mission, vision and values of the Children's Commission.

Section 3: Selection Procedure:

The original slate of Island County Children’s Commission members has been recruited by a Steering Committee of the Island County Community Health Advisory Board. Applicants were interviewed by an interview team consisting of local agency and county government officials. The successful interviewees were moved forward for formal appointment by the Island County Board of Health. The original slate of Children’s Commissioners numbered 20, and began to hold meetings in November of 2007. Subsequent recruitment and selections for membership shall be the responsibility of the Children’s Commission Nominations and Development Committee, with formal appointments by the Board of Health.

Section 4. Vacancies:

When vacancies occur on the Children’s Commission, the Nominations and Development Committee shall begin recruitment immediately per the criteria established under ARTICLE III of this document. A slate of nominees shall be put forth to the Board of Health for consideration, approval and appointment. New or re-appointed members shall immediately, upon appointment, assume their seat on the Commission.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS AND AT-LARGE REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1. Selection:

The members of the Children’s Commission shall select a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson to provide leadership and coordinate the activities of the Commission. Two at-large representatives will also be elected to serve one-year terms on the Executive Committee. One Children’s Commission member shall be elected to serve as the Liaison to the Board of Health, a position that is also considered part of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Officers:

The Officers of the Children’s Commission shall be the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, two Representatives At-Large, and the Liaison to the Board of Health.

Section 3. Responsibilities:

Chairperson – The Chairperson has the responsibility to:

- Provide leadership and vision in carrying out the purpose of the Children’s Commission
- Preside over full Commission meetings as well as Executive Committee meetings
- Assist in preparation of agendas for Commission meetings

Vice-Chairperson – The Vice-Chairperson has the responsibility to:

- Assist the Chairperson in carrying out his/her duties

- Perform all duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence
- Chair the Nominations and Commission Development Committee

At-Large Representatives – The members At-Large of the Executive Committee shall:

- Attend and participate in Executive Committee meetings and functions, as well as other leadership tasks, as agreed upon by the Chairperson and themselves.

Liaison to the Board of Health – The Liaison to the Board of Health shall:

- Work with Executive Committee and staff to create an update report for presentation to the Board of Health on Children’s Commission activities, progress and recommendations for action
- Attend at least quarterly, one Board of Health meeting to present the update report.
- Represent the Children’s Commission to the Board of Health at these meetings

Section 4. Term of Service:

The term of elected officers shall be for one (1) year from the date of their selection, or until successors are elected by a majority of the Commission members. Officers may be re-elected for one (1) additional term.

Section 5. Selection Procedure:

One month prior to the end of terms for officers, nominations shall be elicited at the regular monthly Children’s Commission meeting. A slate of nominees will be subjected to a majority vote among members, and officers will be selected. The new officers will assume their duties at the next monthly meeting following the end of term for sitting officers.

ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES/SUB-COMMITTEES/TEAMS

Section 1. Standing Committees:

a. Executive Committee

- The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and two (2) Representatives At-Large and the Liaison to the Board of Health.
- It is the expectation that all Officers and At-Large Representatives participate in Executive Committee meetings.
- Executive Committee meetings will take place at least one week prior to full Children’s Commission meetings, and the time and place of such Executive Committee meetings will be known to full Children’s Commission members.
- Though not a requirement, all Children’s Commission members are invited to attend Executive Committee meetings if they so choose

- Once Committees, Sub-Committees and/or Project Teams are formed, Chairpersons of these groups are encouraged to attend Executive Committee meetings.
 - Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called, for specific reasons, by the Chair and/or any other two (2) members of the Executive Committee, and the Commission membership shall be notified of such meetings.
 - A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of a simple majority of the Executive Committee membership.
 - The Executive Committee shall be empowered to transact routine business and act in emergencies between regular meetings of the Commission, when necessary because of timing.

- b. Nominations and Development Committee
 - The Nominations and Commission Development Committee shall be responsible for Commission membership, including soliciting and screening potential new members, and forwarding nominations to the Board of Health for appointment.
 - This Committee shall submit nominees to the full Commission for approval at an appropriate monthly meeting, prior to forwarding such nominees to the Board of Health.
 - This Committee shall be responsible for making recommendations for filling vacant positions at the next regular meeting following when the vacancy occurs.
 - This Committee shall maintain, with help of staff, a current membership matrix by reviewing annually expiring memberships.
 - This Committee shall orient new members to the Commission.

- c. Public Relations Committee
 - The Public Relations Committee shall be responsible for increasing the visibility of the Children’s Commission and its values, and promoting Children’s Commission activities and initiatives.
 - This Committee shall coordinate information exchange between other committees of the Commission, in order to develop timely press releases.
 - This committee shall take the lead in development of the LOGO and fact sheets that will highlight the purpose and work of the Children’s Commission.

- d. Data Analysis Committee
 - The Data Analysis Committee shall be responsible for analysis of all available, relevant data regarding infants, young children and youth in Island County.
 - This Committee shall present findings of such analysis to the Children’s Commission membership, for consideration in decisions about Commission work.

- e. Legislative Committee

- The Legislative Committee shall be responsible for analysis of state and national legislation which may affect Island County infants, young children and youth.
- This Committee shall guide and assist the Children’s Commission in all aspects of legislative advocacy on behalf of Island County children and youth.

Section 2. Sub-Committees/Teams:

- The Children’s Commission shall appoint sub-committees and project teams that define and carry out projects that further the mandate of the Children’s Commission. Such groups shall also prepare recommendations and reports for action to the full Commission. Substantive actions of the groups must be approved by the full Commission or the Executive Committee.
- At least one member of sub-committees and/or project teams must be a Children’s Commission member. These issue specific sub-committees may recruit members to the task from the full Commission and from the broader community.
- Periodically, the sub-committees and/or teams may be re-evaluated by the Children’s Commission to assure that the need which prompted formation of the group still exists, and that the work is being done effectively and efficiently.
- Staff support to sub-committees and /or project teams will be available on a limited basis, dependent upon work load.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the full Children’s Commission shall be held on a schedule determined by the Commission and shall be open and available to the public. Meetings of sub-committees and project teams shall be scheduled according to the work to be done.

- Special meetings may be called by the Executive Committee if a majority of the members determine a need to do so.
- An annual meeting shall be held at a strategic time each year.
- All regular and special meetings of the Children’s Commission shall be open and the public shall be permitted to attend in accordance with state law (RCW 42.30.080).

ARTICLE VIII: AGENDA FOR REGULAR MEETINGS

Agendas for regular meetings shall be assembled by the Executive Committee, after suggestions and input are solicited from the full Commission membership. A copy of the agenda for every regular meeting of the Commission shall be provided to each member prior to the date of the meeting at which such agenda is to be considered.

ARTICLE IX: RECORD OF MEETING

A written summary of deliberations and actions taken at official Children’s Commission meetings shall be prepared by, and maintained by, staff of the Island County Health Department. Committees, sub-committees and project teams shall keep a summary of deliberations and actions, which will be distributed to all committee members, and made available to County staff, where they will be maintained.

ARTICLE X: QUORUM/VOTING

For purposes of conducting official Children’s Commission business, a quorum shall consist of not less than one half of appointed Children’s Commission members, and must always include at least one (1) Executive Committee member. When votes are taken, the Commission Chair shall not cast a vote, except when necessary to break a tie vote.

ARTICLE XI: STANDING RULES AND POLICIES

The Children’s Commission may adopt, by majority vote, such standing rules and policies as deemed necessary and appropriate to accomplish its work. Adopted rules and policies shall be written, distributed to Commission members and maintained by staff in the Health Department.

ARTICLE XII: PROCEDURES

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern the Commission in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws of the Commission and its standing rules.

ARTICLE XIII: AMENDMENTS

Bylaws can be amended when:

- Previous notice of proposed action has been given as defined in Robert’s Rules of Order; and
- A majority of the current voting membership votes for the amendment.