

**Washington County**  
**Family & Children First Council**

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

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**WASHINGTON COUNTY FAMILY & CHILDREN FIRST COUNCIL  
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

**ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of the organization is the Washington County Family and Children First Council.

**ARTICLE II - MISSION AND GOALS**

The Washington County Family and Children First Council promotes coordination and collaboration among county and local governments, non-profit organizations, businesses, schools and families in a manner which fosters wellness and self sufficiency for families.

Recognizing that in order to achieve the basic goal, that every Washington County child will start school ready to learn and will continue to reap maximum benefit from that school experience, the goals of the Family and Children First Council are:

1. Every child will be born into a welcome environment where mother, father, and community work together to play active roles in providing for children and instill in them personal responsibility. Families will be provided access to services, which will help our children grow up to be productive members of the community.
2. The homes of Washington County youth will be free of domestic violence, drug/alcohol abuse, emotional and physical abuse, and parents will be supported to provide structure in the home. Access to school and community activities will be increased for unruly and delinquent youth.
3. Washington County families will have access to quality healthcare to address physical, emotional, and/or mental illness, alcohol or drug abuse, and to promote wellness as a lifestyle.
4. Children will live in families which are self-sufficient and can take care of most of their basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter.
5. Washington County families will have access to safe, appropriate, affordable, and stable housing.
6. Washington County children will start school ready to learn.
7. Children will be maintained in nurturing environments free from physical, emotional, and mental abuse.

**ARTICLE III - ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Section 1 - General Membership

General membership of the organization is open to any individual or organization interested in the mission and goals of the Council. Council may establish membership dues.

## Section 2 - Governing Board

- A. The governing board of mandated members will consist of the following: the Director of the Washington County Mental Health & Addiction Recovery Board; the Health Commissioner (or designee) of all City and County Health Departments in Washington County; the Director of Washington County Department of Job & Family Services; the Superintendent of the Washington County Board of Developmental Disabilities; the Superintendent of Marietta City Schools; a school superintendent representing all other school districts with territory in the county, as designated at a biennial meeting of the superintendents of those districts; a representative of the City of Marietta; the president of the board of county commissioners, or an individual designated by the board; a representative of the Regional Office of the Department of Youth Services; a representative of Head Start of Washington County; the Executive Director of Washington County Children Services; a designated representative of Early Childhood Coordinating Committee; the Executive Director of the Washington-Morgan County Community Action Program; and the addition of any other mandated members as required by statute.
- B. In addition, the board will reserve **a minimum of three (3) seats** for mandated parents representing interests of families in the county and **a minimum of three (3) seats** for designated community representatives. These seats will be recommended for three-year terms by the membership committee and appointed by the governing board of the council. Terms will begin January 1 of each year as appropriate.
- In the event of a resignation, council will appoint someone to complete the term.
  - These members have voting privileges as members of the governing board, but may not have a representative vote by proxy in their place.
- C. Additionally, the board shall reserve one seat for a representative from Juvenile Court who is appointed by the Juvenile Court Judge. The appointment shall remain in effect indefinitely or until re-appointment by the Judge. The seat shall be considered a member of the governing board with full voting privileges. The county juvenile court judge shall serve as the judicial advisor to the county FCFC.
- D. Only members of the governing board will be eligible to vote on matters that come before the council. The responsibilities of membership to the governing board of the council also include regular attendance at meetings and maintaining the confidentiality of matters as appropriate. Non-mandated members of governing board may be removed by a majority vote when said member misses three (3) unexcused consecutive meetings. The Administrative Agent shall send notice (according to ORC 121.37) of a mandated member's absence if a member has been absent from either 3 consecutive meetings of the council or subcommittee or from one-quarter of such meetings in a calendar year, whichever is less.

### Section 3 - Executive Committee/Officers

The executive committee of the council will consist of the officers listed below. Officers will be elected for two-year terms by the governing board. A majority of the executive committee has the authority to act on behalf of the governing board on an emergency basis. Such action will be subject to approval by the governing board at the first general meeting following such action. In the event that an officer is unable to fulfill the two-year term, a nomination committee will be appointed to secure a replacement for the office in question. Elections shall take place at the annual meeting in January of odd years.

**President** - will preside over general and executive meetings and work closely with the council administrator on council business; will appoint committees as necessary and/or as directed by council.

**Vice president** - will assist the president, assume the responsibilities of the president in his/her absence, and chair the personnel committee.

**Treasurer** - will chair the finance and audit committees and present committee reports to the governing board.

**Secretary** - will insure the accuracy of minutes maintained by council staff and chair the membership committee.

### Section 4 - Staff Positions

The council administrator will be hired by the Washington County Commissioners. It will be the responsibility of the governing board to determine whether other staff positions are required. The governing board shall make such recommendations to the Commissioners.

### Section 5 - Meetings

- A. There will be a minimum of nine (9) general council meetings scheduled annually by the governing board. Special meetings may be called by the president as deemed necessary.
- B. Council meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order (revised).
- C. A quorum shall be declared when eight (8) or more members of the governing council, of which six (6) of the eight (8) must be ORC 121.37 mandated members, are present for any regular or special meetings of the council.
- E. All meetings of the council and the executive committee of the council shall be open to the public, except that either may elect to go into executive session, as provided by Ohio Revised Code, Section 121.22 (G: 1-6)

## ARTICLE IV - STANDING COMMITTEES

### Pooled Funds Group

Comprised of the executive directors of the Mental Health & Addiction Recovery Board; the Children Services Board; the Superintendent of the Board of Developmental Disabilities and the Juvenile Court Judge or the court administrator. Each of these agencies may contribute dollars to be used jointly to provide funds for special services to children and for administrative costs of Council. The Pooled Funds Group is responsible for establishing a ceiling on total benefits to be provided by the inter-system fund. The committee also explores options for additional funding and the development of additional service providers to meet the needs of Washington County families and children.

### Family and Community Enrichment Team (FACET)

FACET shall act as the cross systems decision-maker for review, funding and planning for youth in out-of-home placement that are supported with Council Pooled Funds and shall represent the member agencies of the Pooled Funds Group. FACET shall also continue implementation, oversight and maintenance of Family Plans of multi-systemic children in the County Service Coordination Mechanism, while the child is in out-of-home placement. Upon request of a Family Team, FACET shall provide a forum for discussion of children with some of the most intensive needs by offering additional resources to teams they may not be aware of or have access to; provide clinical feedback on planning; and make recommendations for teams to consider in planning. Committee meets at least quarterly.

### Community Options Team (COT)

Membership on the Community Options Team includes Supervisory Representatives from Children Services; Juvenile Court; Board of Developments Disabilities; Department of Job & Family Services; Education; a local mental health provider; an FCF Parent Representative; the FCF Service Coordinator and the FCF Council Administrator who shall serve as the Chair of the Team. Other members may be added. The Community Options Team shall meet bi-weekly to approve funding requests for wraparound/direct services identified on Family Plans; review initial Family Plans; monitor the planning process; offer additional resources and recommendations; complete and review data and outcome collection; address individual systems issues; serve as the 'gatekeeper' of information within each system including monitoring referrals from respective agencies; develop re-entry plans into the service coordination mechanism; and review the County's Service Coordination Mechanism on an annual basis.

### Early Childhood Coordinating Committee

The Early Childhood Coordinating Committee is comprised of the Ohio Department of Health /Help Me Grow required members per ODH policy. These members shall be designated by the required agencies. The Help Me Grow Project Director along with an elected member of the committee shall serve as co-chairs of this committee. Additional members may be added at the discretion of Council. The primary focus of the Early Childhood Coordinating Committee is to assist the Council in the design, coordination and implementation of the Help Me Grow Project. The Early Childhood Coordinating

Committee may expand its efforts beyond the Help Me Grow population to include all children ages birth to eight years of age. Ad hoc sub-committees may be formed if necessary. Committee meets at least quarterly.

### Membership Committee

Chaired by the secretary of the board, the committee includes at least one parent and one other board member. Additional members may be added at the discretion of the committee. The committee is responsible for filling any vacant seats of the board and for developing policies governing the nomination and selection of members to the board. The committee also works with the executive committee and the council administrator to promote membership to the council among the greater community. The committee also recommends stipend amounts and standards.

### Finance Committee

Chaired by the treasurer of the board, the committee includes at least one parent and one other board member. Additional members may be added at the discretion of the committee. The committee is responsible, along with the council administrator, for the annual budget and the development of resources to support the work of the council. The committee may consult with the fiscal officer of the county as necessary.

### Audit Committee

The Audit Committee will be comprised of members of the Finance Committee and may include other community members. The primary function of the Audit Committee is to monitor and review the Council's accounting and financial reporting practices, and to follow up on citations and recommendations made by its auditors.

The Audit Committee should be actively involved in:

- Meeting with the Council's independent auditors before and after each audit;
- Monitoring the progress of the financial and compliance audit;
- Evaluating the results of the financial and compliance audit; and
- Ensuring that the internal control and legal compliance issues identified in the audit are promptly and effectively remedied.

In addition, the Audit Committee should meet regularly to monitor the Council's legal compliance, financial condition, and controls over the safeguarding of assets.

### Personnel Committee

Chaired by the vice president of the board, the committee includes at least one parent and one other board member. Additional members may be added at the discretion of the committee. The committee is responsible for the annual evaluation of the council administrator, establishment of personnel policies, grievance procedures, and reviews as needed, all in accordance with the Washington County personnel policy.

## Prevention Committee

Comprised of identified members of the Governing Board and/or designees, including a minimum of one parent representative, as well as other community representatives as identified. This committee oversees grants and activities related to “prevention”, including Ohio Children’s Trust Fund, and reports to council. Committee meets at least quarterly.

## **ARTICLE V - PROCESS FOR AMENDING BYLAWS**

Proposed amendments to these bylaws must be proposed in writing to all board members at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which voting on said amendment is to take place.

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote at a properly called meeting with a quorum present.

## **ARTICLE VI - FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

### A. Fund Creation

Pursuant to applicable law, the Washington County Commission, by resolution, shall request the creation of such “funds” within the Washington County Treasury as are necessary and proper to carry out the fiscal operation of the council.

### B. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the council shall commence on January 1 and terminate on December 31 of each calendar year.

### C. Fiscal Agent/Depository

Pursuant to applicable law, the Washington County Auditor (hereinafter called Auditor) shall act as “fiscal agent” for the council.

Pursuant to applicable law, the Washington County Treasurer shall act as the “depository” for council funds.

### D. Certification/Appropriation of Revenue

The executive committee shall request, from time to time as necessary and proper a “Certificate of Anticipated Revenue” or any amendment thereof from the Washington County Budget Commission.

On or before December 31 (and as necessary and proper thereafter) preceding each fiscal year, the executive committee shall adopt one or more “Resolutions of Appropriation” of such certified anticipated revenue; said “Resolution of Appropriations” not to exceed the aggregate value of the “Certificate of Anticipated Revenue” or any amendment thereof.

E. Revenue and Other Receipts

All money (grants, contracts, fees, other receipts) paid to the council shall be deposited by the Auditor to the special “fund(s)” of the Washington County Treasury which have been created for the purpose of accounting for Council revenue and expense.

F. Expense - Purchase of Service Contracts

Pursuant to applicable law, the Washington County Commissioners, upon recommendation, shall enter into and administer such contract(s) as necessary for the purchase of human and social services from public and private non-profit corporations or organizations. Such agreements and contracts are exempt from the competitive bidding requirements of section 307.86 of the Revised Code if they have been approved by the county council and they are for the purchase of family and child welfare or child protection services or other social or human services for families and children. (ORC 121.37).

The Washington County Commissioners may delegate responsibility to the governing board for the review and approval of such encumbrances and disbursements as are consistent with the terms of such purchase of service contracts; such approvals being subject to review and ratification by the executive committee.

G. Expense - Administrative Operation

The Washington County Commissioners shall authorize the encumbrance and disbursement of council funds for the procurement of goods and services for the administrative operation of the council.

All expense (encumbrance/ disbursement) for administration operation procurement shall be subject to the provision of Section 307.86 of the Ohio Revised Code regarding competitive bidding requirement.

The Washington County Commission may delegate responsibility to the governing board for the review and approval of such encumbrances and disbursements for administrative operation and procurement.

H. Financial Officer

The Washington County Commission, by resolution, may utilize the services of a qualified employee, designate an existing agency of county government, or contract with an appropriately qualified public accounting entity, to act as the council’s financial officer, processing required financial documents, and maintaining detailed, internal accounting records of the council’s financial transactions.

## I. Financial Reporting

The council administrator, in cooperation with the Auditor and any designated financial officer, shall report the receipt and expenditure of council funds to the executive committee on a regular basis, or as directed by the executive committee, and shall do what the law requires regarding reporting.

## **STANDING RULES**

1. An annual \$500 membership fee will be asked of all members of the Governing Board (excluding parent representatives). These funds will be deposited into the Administrative Fund of Council for administrative support.
2. All Council members are encouraged to serve as a member of at least one committee of Council.

### **ADDENDUMS:** *(Approved by Council January 20, 2010)*

Relative to ORC 121.37 regarding mandated members meeting attendance requirements, Washington County Family & Children First Council shall add the caveat that any mandated member shall be granted an 'excused absence' if notification is made to the FCF office by the member prior to the designated Council meeting. An 'excused absence' shall be considered for absences due to illness; vacation; conflicting mandated meetings; or out-of-town commitments. In the event of an absence, it is recommended that the mandated member identify a staff member to attend the Council meeting, in a non-voting role, to gather information for the mandated member.

