



PARTNERS
FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES

CHARTER PARTNERS FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES ADVISORY BOARD

This Charter applies to the creation, organization, and operation of the Partners for Ohio's Families Advisory Board (Board).

- I. Creation.** The Partners for Ohio's Families Advisory Board (Board) is operational under this Charter from the effective date noted herein.
- II. Purpose.** The Board serves as a forum to promote a sustainable and collaborative partnership aimed at improving the Ohio child welfare system.
- III. Authority.** The Board identifies challenges, opportunities, and solutions related to child welfare service delivery and public policy. It is a clearinghouse of information and a venue for collaboration and discussion. The Board shall not have independent policy setting authority and shall report to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) through the Office of Families and Children (OFC).
- IV. Objectives.** To carry out its purpose, the Board shall:
 - A. Respect, honor, and acknowledge the importance of the independent relationships of public children services agencies, private agencies, youth and families.
 - B. Create an environment whereby all members feel they are an important part of the partnership and are advancing the purpose of the Board.
 - C. Develop a framework for identifying challenges, opportunities, and solutions related to child welfare service delivery and public policy.
 - D. Encourage innovation and sharing of information.
 - E. Strive to establish an understanding of, and respect for, all opinions and positions on issues.
- V. Responsibilities.**

Board members agree to:

 - A. Participate and vote as a representative of the demographic or discipline ("peers") for which they have been appointed.
 - B. Serve as a liaison with peers to facilitate the open exchange of information between peers and the Board.
 - C. Bring peer issues to the Board for consideration.
 - D. Provide regular status updates to peers about the activities of, or information shared by, the Board.
 - E. Facilitate expanded participation of peers in activities that promote the objectives of the Board, through focus groups, surveys or other activities established by the Board.

- F. Serve on panels and presentations intended to promote the objectives of the Board as feasible and practical.

ODJFS agrees to:

- A. Provide quarterly policy updates to the Board.
- B. Host and staff Board meetings.
- C. Facilitate the participation of appropriate state program staff as needed.
- D. Identify tasks for the Board as necessary and appropriate staff to support the purpose of the Board.
- E. Respond in writing, when requested by the Board, to any recommendation that is put forth by the Board. The written response is to include rationale for response and be completed within a reasonable time frame.

VI. Organization. The Board shall operate under the following provisions:

- A. Charter. The Board shall review this Charter biannually, and as needed. By vote, the Board shall:
 - 1. Affirm continued need for the Board.
 - 2. Specify the purpose of the Board and activities that the Board is to undertake.
 - 3. Revise and/or approve the provisions of the Charter.
 - 4. Identify terms of appointment that are expiring or unfilled and make recommendations for membership.
- B. Membership:
 - 1. Size. The Board shall consist of at least twelve, but not more than twenty, members.
 - 2. Composition.
 - a. At least fifty-one percent of the membership shall represent a balanced mixture of public and private children service agencies.
 - b. The remaining membership shall include:
 - 1. Deputy Director of the Office of Families and Children, ODJFS.
 - 2. Assistant Director, Health and Human Services, ODJFS.
 - 3. Supreme Court of Ohio, Division of Children, Families & the Courts.
 - 4. A youth representative.
 - 5. A family representative (biological, resource).
 - 6. Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies
 - 7. Public Children Services Agencies of Ohio
 - 3. Diversity. Membership should:
 - a. Be broad based and multi-disciplinary so as to represent a cross section of interests related to the issues of children and families that come to the attention of Ohio's child welfare agencies.
 - b. Represent the gender, racial, ethnic, demographic, and geographic diversity of Ohio.
 - c. Have direct service, administrative, policy, or firsthand experience in child welfare.
 - 4. Terms. Member terms are three years with an opportunity for one term renewal.
 - 5. Chairs. The Board shall be chaired by three members.

- a. One chair shall be a representative of ODJFS; one chair shall be a representative of a public children services agency; and, one shall be a representative of a private child serving agency.
 - b. Chairs are elected by Board membership for three year terms.
 - c. In the event that a chair position becomes vacant, the Board may vote a new chair to fill the remainder of the term. Only current Board members have voting authority.
6. Appointment.
- a. Board members are appointed by the Deputy Director of the ODJFS' Office of Families and Children.
 - b. Recommendations for membership and Chairs are to be submitted to the Deputy Director.
- C. Meetings. The Board shall convene at least four times a year.
- D. Attendance.
- 1. A Board member shall make a good faith effort to attend each Board meeting.
 - 2. Should a Board member miss three consecutive meetings, the member will be asked to relinquish his or her seat on the Board.
 - 3. The Board may, under unique circumstances, have a special vote to maintain the member.
- E. Agenda, Minutes and Reports.
- 1. The chairs are responsible for establishing the agenda for meetings. The agenda and relevant materials shall be distributed to members prior to the next meeting.
 - 2. Minutes shall be kept at every meeting of the Board and distributed to its members for review prior to the next meeting.
 - 3. Minutes for each meeting shall be approved by vote of the Board at the subsequent meeting.

VII. Voting.

- A. There shall be a quorum when a majority of Board members are present.
- B. The Board may take action by affirmative vote of a majority of the members when a quorum is present.
- C. Proxy votes shall not be permitted.
- D. An electronic vote may be:
 - 1. Called at request of the Chairs.
 - 2. Scheduled at a meeting of the Board.

VIII. Work Product; Publications.

- A. The work product of the Board is a public record, and the property of the department.
- B. The Board shall not produce publications under the title of the Board without the express permission of ODJFS.

IX. Dissolution. The Board may be dissolved at any time upon the recommendation of the Board indicating that the Board is no longer productive or has met the purpose for which it was created.

X. Effective Date. This Charter is effective November 14, 2013.