

# **COUNCIL ON DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING EQUALITY BY-LAWS**

## **ARTICLE I - AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE**

The Council on Deaf and Hard of Hearing Equality (CODHHE) was established by Executive Order 80 on July 7, 2000 with the following responsibilities:

- To increase knowledge, awareness, and appreciation of the rights of individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the State of Delaware;
- To work for a better quality of life for individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the State of Delaware [by improving the quality, accessibility and capacity of their services];
- To promote coordination among state agencies, programs, and services for individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing;
- To monitor and advise the Delaware Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing with respect to the services it provides;
- To inform and advocate with service providers for improved services for individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- To provide policy makers and the general public with an analysis and recommendations on federal, state and local legislation, regulations and policies affecting state programs for individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

## **ARTICLE II**

The Council shall consist of the following members: individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing; legal representatives or guardians of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing; state and local agency representatives; representatives from statewide deaf and hard of hearing consumer organizations; family members of individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing; and other individuals and entities as approved by both CODHHE and the affected person or entity. In appointing members, preference should be given to individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. Any vacancy among Council or Committee members should be filled within two months of the vacancy.

## **ARTICLE III - TERMS OF MEMBERS**

CODHHE membership shall serve at the pleasure of the Chairperson.

CODHHE members may be represented at Council meetings by an alternate who has been duly elected or appointed by an agency or organization. These alternates shall be empowered with the rights and responsibilities of full membership.

Any member who misses either three (3) consecutive without valid excuse shall be presumed to have

resigned from CODHHE. However, the Chairperson, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will decide the appropriate course of action if a member cannot commit to the minimum number of meetings necessary for sustained membership.

CODHHE members shall serve without compensation, except that they may be reimbursed by the Office of Disability Affairs, Department of Safety and Homeland Security, for reasonable and necessary expenses incident to their duties as members of this council to the extent funds are available in accordance with state law.

CODHHE members, except for the Chair or Vice-Chair or the Chair or Vice Chair's designee, shall not have contact with the media on behalf of the Council. However, members shall be allowed to represent themselves or other organizations as they deem appropriate.

#### **ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS**

Officers of the Council shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Treasurer. The membership of CODHHE shall elect all officers at a CODHHE meeting prior to the end of the appropriate state fiscal year. Officers shall take office on July 1 of the subsequent state fiscal year. Officers shall serve two year terms and are eligible for reelection for up to two consecutive terms. If any of the officers should resign, a new election shall be held during the next full Council meeting. The newly elected officer shall serve out the remainder of the term.

If the Chairperson should resign, the Vice-Chairperson will assume the duties of the Chairperson for the remainder of the term and a new Vice-Chairperson shall be elected at the next full Council meeting. If the Vice-Chairperson should resign, a new election will be held during the next full Council meeting. Service as an officer for a partial term (e.g. due to resignation or vacancy) shall not count as a term for purposes of determining the two-term limit. CODHHE may elect such other officers as it deems appropriate.

#### **ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

The duties of the Chairperson shall be those normally assigned which include presiding over CODHHE Council meetings, serving as Chair of the Executive Committee, and ex-officio member of any committees. The Chairperson shall have the full right of discussion and voting at Council and Executive Committee meetings.

It shall be the duty of the Vice-Chairperson to preside in the absence of the Chairperson and to assist the Chairperson as requested.

It shall be the duty of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, Office of Disability Affairs, to provide staff support to CODHHE.

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to keep the financial records of CDHHE in good order and to exercise fiscal responsibility according to basic accounting principles.]

#### **ARTICLE VI –COMMITTEES**

Committees may be created by the full Council. The CODHHE Chairperson, with advisement from the Executive Committee, shall appoint the Committee chairpersons and members. Committee chairpersons shall serve terms at the pleasure of the CODHHE Chairperson. Persons and/or organizations who are not CODHHE members may be appointed by the CODHHE Chairperson to serve on any of the Council's committees.

CODHHE shall have an Executive Committee which consists of the officers of the Council. The Executive Committee shall be the decision making body to expeditiously facilitate the activities of the Council in the most effective and efficient manner consistent with its purpose as defined by Executive Order 80.

#### **ARTICLE VII - COUNCIL MEETINGS**

CODHHE shall meet no less than five (5) times per year. A simple majority of CODHHE or their duly authorized alternates shall constitute a quorum. A simple majority vote of members present and voting shall be required for any action. Duly authorized alternates may vote as members. Voting by telephone, fax, e-mail or proxy is allowable. All meetings of CODHHE shall be open to all interested parties who wish to attend; however, such persons shall not be entitled to vote.

#### **ARTICLE VIII - RULES OF ORDER**

All meetings and activities where preliminary rules are involved shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order, Current Revised Edition. Rules of operation of CODHHE may be adopted to fit the needs of the organization provided a majority of the members are in agreement.

#### **ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these by-laws may be adopted by a quorum of CODHHE at any duly authorized official Council meeting and must be in compliance with the Governor's Executive Order.

Approved June 24, 1998  
Revised January 16, 2008