

Washington State LGBTQ Commission

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Commission Operating Agreements

ARTICLE I

Name

Section 1. As per RCW 43.114, the name of this agency shall be the Washington State LGBTQ Commission, henceforth referred to as “Commission.”

ARTICLE II

Mission and Vision

Section 1. Mission: The Washington State LGBTQ Commission works to improve the state’s interface with the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit, and intersex community, identify the needs of its members, and ensuring that there is an effective means of advocating for LGBTQ equity in all aspects of state government.

Section 2. Vision: The Washington State LGBTQ Commission envisions a state where every two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit, and intersex Washingtonian of any age feels safe, supported, and empowered.

ARTICLE III

Membership and Responsibilities

Section 1. Terms: All commission members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor, but in no case may any member serve more than three years without formal reappointment by the Governor. All legislative advisory members shall serve for a two-year term and the position of any legislative advisory member shall be deemed vacated whenever such member ceases to be a member of the house from which the member was appointed. Of the persons initially appointed by the Governor to the commission, five shall be appointed to serve one year, five to serve two years, and five to serve three years. Upon expiration of such terms, subsequent appointments shall be for three years.

Section 2. Vacancies: Any vacancies occurring in the membership of the commission shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointments.

Section 3. Travel Reimbursement: Non legislative members must be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. Legislative members shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties in accordance with RCW 44.04.120.

Section 4. Meeting attendance and preparation: Non legislative members are expected to consistently attend and prepare for Commission meetings, study sessions, special meetings, and the Committees of which they are members, in order to be effective and active participants. Commissioners are further expected to stay current in their knowledge and understanding of the Commission’s projects, including monitoring legislation that directly and indirectly affect the LGBTQ community. A request to be excused from regular Commission meetings must be

submitted in writing either electronically or by mail at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Any commissioner who has two unexcused absences to Commission meetings, study sessions, or special meetings in a year will be asked to resign. An absence is unexcused when no prior notification is provided to the Chair or Director. An absence is excused if it pertains to family, medical emergencies or prescheduled work-related commitments.

Section 5. Conflict of Interest: No member of the Commission 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 IV Officer Terms and Voting

Section 1. Designation: The officers of the commission shall be two co-chairs, vice chair, and secretary.

Section 2. Terms of Office: Each co-chair's term will last two calendar years. With the exception that in the first year of the commission one co-chair's term will last for two years and one co chair's term will last for one year Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary shall be elected annually by the Commission at the end of the last plenary meeting of the year and are limited to two one-year terms. Committee leads will be selected by their respective committee.

Section 3. Elections: Elections of officers will be held annually at the last plenary meeting. The Executive Committee will develop a process for establishing a slate of candidates and will facilitate elections for officers and committee leads.

Section 4. Quorum: A quorum for conducting Commission meetings shall consist of a simple majority of the current voting membership. Legislative advisory members are not included in determining a quorum.

Section 5. Voting: Each voting member of the Commission shall have one vote and must be present in person or virtually to cast their vote. No voting shall be conducted by secret ballot. 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. Voting by mail and proxy is not permitted. Legislators do not vote; however, their input will be a part of the decision-making process for the Commission.

Section 6. Parliamentary Authority: The Commission shall be governed by the law, the Operating Agreements, and, as necessary, the newly revised Robert's Rules of Order 11th edition or latest version. The Director shall serve as Parliamentarian during Commission meetings.

ARTICLE V Composition and Duties

Section 1. Composition: The Commission consists of fifteen members appointed by the Governor. The Governor considers nominations for membership based upon maintaining a balanced and diverse distribution of race and ethnic, geographic, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, and occupational representation, where practicable.

Two members of the Senate, one from each of the two major political parties, appointed by the president of the Senate, and two members of the House of Representatives, one from each of the two major political parties, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, who support the legislative intent of the Commission shall serve as advisory members.

Section 2. Commission Duties: The Commission shall have the following duties:

- a. Actively recruit and maintain a list of names of qualified LGBTQ people to fill vacancies on various boards and commissions;
- b. Provide a clearinghouse for information regarding both state and federal legislation as it relates to the purpose of this chapter;
- c. Identify and define specific needs of LGBTQ:
 - (1) People of color;
 - (2) People with developmental disabilities;
 - (3) Seniors;
 - (4) People experiencing homelessness;
 - (5) Economic and small business development; and
 - (6) Veterans, their spouses, and dependents;
- d. Consult with state agencies regarding the effect of agency policies, procedures, practices, laws, and administrative rules on the unique problems and needs of LGBTQ people. The commission shall also provide any data, input, and recommendations to state agencies on proposed agency rules and the development and implementation of comprehensive and coordinated policies, plans, and programs focusing on those problems and needs;
- e. Provide resource and referral information to agencies and the public. The commission may gather data and disseminate information to the public in order to implement the purposes of this chapter;
- f. Consult with nonprofit organizations;
- g. Hold public hearings to gather input on issues related to the unique problems and needs of LGBTQ people;
- h. Advocate for removal of barriers for LGBTQ people; and
- i. Review best practices for discrimination and harassment policies and training and provide recommendations to state agencies as they update their discrimination and harassment policies. The commission shall also maintain a file of discrimination and harassment policies that meet high quality standards and make these files available for agency use.
- j. Submit a report to the appropriate committees of the legislature and the Governor every two years detailing the Commission's activities. The report submitted must be in electronic format pursuant to RCW 43.01.036, and include, at minimum;
 - (1) Recommendations for addressing the needs identified under this section;

- (2) Input received during public hearings and recommendations for addressing the problems and needs discussed at the public hearings; and
- (3) Recommendations regarding preserving the memory and contributions of LGBTQ members lost to HIV/AIDS in Washington State.

Section 3. Executive Committee Composition: The Executive Committee is comprised of the two Co-Chairs, Vice-Chair, and Secretary with the Director serving in an advisory role. The Executive Committee provides overall leadership and guidance, and makes executive decisions necessary for the Commission to carry out its duties.

Section 4. Executive Committee Duties:

- a. Delegate authority to committees and the Director;
- b. Advise and inform the Director as needed;
- c. Develop vision, goals, and strategic planning with the Director and Commissioners;
- d. Develop and approve meeting agendas with the Director;
- e. Work with the Commissioners and Director to meet the mission and objectives;
- f. Work with the Director to submit a report to the legislature and the Governor every two years detailing the commission's activities;
- g. Establish a process and facilitate annual election of officers;
- h. Work with the Director to develop policies and processes;
- i. Work with Governor's office, other commissioners, and Director to help recruit new commissioners;
- j. Ensure that Committee leads have access to information and support needed to advance the work of the commission;
- k. Establish new or additional standing and ad hoc committees as needed.

Section 5. Standing Committee Composition: Each committee shall have a minimum of two commissioners and no more than four commissioners. A commissioner will lead each committee. The committees may recruit volunteers from the community, who identify as part of the LGBTQ community, to assist or serve on the committees.

Section 6. Standing Committee Duties:

- a. Meet at regularly scheduled intervals;
- b. Identify goals and objectives for the committee;
- c. Determine how the committee will meet goals and objectives and a reasonable timeframe;
- d. Leads of the committee will report to the full Commission at each plenary meeting.

ARTICLE VI Member Duties

Section 1. Commission Co-Chairs Duties:

- a. Preside at regular meetings of the Commission;
- b. Call Special Meetings in consultation with the Executive Committee and Director;
- c. Assist committee leads as needed;

- d. Act on issues requiring immediate attention which arise between Commission meetings and report actions taken at next Commission meeting;
- e. In partnership with the Director and as authorized by the full Commission, be a spokesperson for the Commission;
- f. The Commission Chair shall be restricted from being a Committee Lead.
- g. Co-chairs agree within

Section 2. Commission Vice-Chair Duties:

- a. Preside at Commission meetings in the absence of the Chair;
- b. Serve on the Executive Committee;
- c. Assist the Chair to carry out Executive Committee responsibilities as needed or requested.

Section 3. Commission Secretary Duties:

- a. Serve on the Executive Committee;
- b. Maintain effective records of Commission work;
- c. Assist the Chair and Vice-Chair to carry out Executive Committee responsibilities as needed or requested.

Section 4. Committee Lead Duties:

- a. Facilitate the development of committee objectives and priorities;
- b. Facilitate completion of committee activities and responsibilities needed to meet objectives;
- c. Establish a regular meeting schedule that meets the needs of all committee members;
- d. Create and facilitate agendas for committee meetings with support from Commission staff;
- e. Provide reports to the Executive Committee regarding all meetings, activities, and progress of their committee at each plenary meeting in achieving their responsibilities;
- f. Make presentations and present motions on behalf of the Committee to the full Commission.

Section 5. Commission Member Duties:

- a. Operate within state and federal laws and Commission Operating Agreements;
- b. Consistently prepare for and attend Commission and committee meetings;
- c. Not make unilateral decisions or take action as a representative of the Commission without the consent of the Commission, Executive Committee, or Commission Chair;
- d. Commission members may 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 officer or employee;
- e. Participate in at least one committee;
- f. Make presentations and present motions to the full Commission.
- g. When authorized, represent the Commission in public forums and events.

Section 6. Director Duties:

- a. Monitor state legislation affecting LGBTQ people;
- b. Work with state agencies to assess programs and policies that affect LGBTQ people;

- c. Coordinate with the minority commissions, women's commission, and human rights commission to address issues of mutual concern; and
- d. Work as a liaison between the public and private sector to eliminate barriers to economic and health equity for LGBTQ people.
- e. The Director shall make a report of gifts, grants, and endowments from public or private sources to the Commission and the Office of Financial Management on a regular basis;
- f. Supervise and manage the Commission staff and volunteers.

ARTICLE VII

Meetings

*Section 1. **Meeting frequency:*** The Commission shall establish a calendar of meetings with no less than four meetings a year. A meeting notice shall be posted on the Commission website, social media, and any other communication tool used by the Commission; regular Commission meeting notices will be published in the state registrar pursuant to RCW 42.30.075.

*Section 2. **Minutes:*** Commission staff will record and maintain minutes of all meetings. Minutes will be distributed to all Commission members. The Co-Chairs will request formal approval of the meeting minutes at the next Commission meeting.

*Section 3. **Public Comment:*** All interested persons shall be provided an opportunity to present public comment during any plenary meeting according to the guidelines developed and approved by the Commission for this purpose.

*Section 4. **ADA Guidelines and Meetings Accessibility:***

- a. Meetings are held in settings that adhere to accessibility standards outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- b. The Commission is responsive to requests for reasonable accommodation from staff, Commission members, and the public;
- c. The Commission staff works with Commission members to identify and provide disability-related supports necessary to facilitate a member's full participation;
- d. Commission events are fragrance-free: for the health and safety of participants, it is important that everyone come fragrance-free to all Commission events.
- e. Commission staff will arrange for ASL interpretation for regular Commission meetings whenever possible.

ARTICLE VIII

Process for supporting Legislation

*Section 1. **Determination:*** In determining what legislative priorities the Commission will support, the Commission will seek input from legislator advisers, Office of the Governor, and others as the Commission deems appropriate. The Commission will work on determining legislative priorities for the legislative session as early as practicable.

Section 2. Criteria: The Commission will use the following criteria to determine what legislation and priorities to support:

- a. Alignment with the Commission’s mission and statutory authority;
- b. Alignment with the Governor’s priorities;
- c. Expertise and focus of the committees;
- d. Support by stakeholders; and
- e. The Commission’s resources.

Section 3. Director’s Designation: The Director will work with the commissioners, legislator advisers, and Governor’s staff on legislative advocacy and the best approach to advancing the mission and legislative priorities of the Commission.

ARTICLE IX

Amendments to the Operating Agreements

Section 1. Amendments to the Operating Agreements may be recommended by any Commission member, committee, or Director of the Commission. Recommended changes will be presented to the Executive Committee for inclusion on the next regular Commission meeting agenda or Special Meeting agenda. Amendments to the Operating Agreements must be distributed to all Commissioners for review no less than twenty-four hours before the meeting. Any amendment to the Commission’s bylaws require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members of the Commission.