



Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network Advisory Council and Committees

Roles, Structure, Operations and Selection Process

Section One: Mission of the Advisory Council

As an integral component of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network, the Advisory Council shall be an independent, non-partisan, voluntary group of individuals, organizations, and agencies (public and private) who promote community awareness of the signs and symptoms of suicide and intervention strategies for the prevention of suicide. The council's goal is to assist with the implementation of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Strategy, based on the U.S. Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent Suicide/National Strategy for Suicide Prevention.

The mission of the Advisory Council for the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network is to provide recommendations and advisement that support the Network's overall mission, and work to eliminate the stigma of suicide, educate the community about the warning signs of suicide, and ultimately reduce the rate of suicide in our state.

Section Two: Role, Structure and Selection of the Advisory Council

Role overview

The Advisory Council will serve as a collective voice representing a broad spectrum of key stakeholders in the area of suicide prevention, ensuring that the Network's operations and activities are informed by a full, balanced range of experienced viewpoints that are invested in its mission. The Advisory Council will provide a forum for review and discussion of reports from the Network's administration, its evaluation process, the committees and workgroups, as well as any promotional materials, research, legislation or other external factors that may affect the vital operations of the Network. The Advisory Council's recommendations will support the continued advancement and development of TSPN towards more effectively accomplishing its mission, as noted above.

Structure of Committee roles

The members of the Advisory Council shall act in accordance with their prescribed roles and in the manner that is appropriate to the leadership of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (eg: representing the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network's mission and goals as defined). The Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Co-Secretary of the Advisory Council are selected by the **Nominating Committee**. The Chair will, in turn, provide leadership in conducting the activities of the group and shall oversee the function of the Council and committees and subsequent workgroups (as needed) and assure compliance with such. The Vice-Chair of the Advisory Council will act as the Chair in his/her absence for regularly scheduled Advisory Council

activities and functions. The Secretary of the Advisory Council will assure that proper documentation, including minutes of Advisory Council meetings, committee meetings, and reports (including workgroup reports) are available to the Council and the administration of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network. Any member who misses two (2) consecutive meetings without good cause may be subject to termination.

Selection of Advisory Council

All Council powers shall be exercised by or under the authority of the Council membership, and all the business and affairs of the Council shall be managed under the direction of the membership.

The membership shall consist of survivors, attempters, private health care professionals, clergy, teachers, correctional workers, family members, older adults professional, day care workers and advocates. Each of the eight regions should have 3 people that represent their regions as voting members. *There should be one extra person for each region to serve as an alternate person.*

The Council shall strive to promote cultural and geographic diversity within the membership. This total number of selected members is limited to a size that eliminates the excess formality required for a larger group, so that productive discussion can proceed. The Council represents individuals and groups with a variety of roles within the suicide prevention community, allowing for a cross section of representation from varied geographic and demographic areas (e.g., regional location, urban and rural area, ethnicity, gender, etc.). Selection of Council members is weighted by such factors as: persons with greater experience in work related to suicide prevention; persons already recognized as leaders within key groups with a stake in suicide prevention; and those satisfying overlapping demographic and experiential criteria.

The membership of the Council will include appointments of representatives to serve as ex-officio from the following departments: *the Tennessee State Executive Branch, the Tennessee Department of Human Services, the Tennessee Department of Children's Services, the Tennessee Department of Correction, the Tennessee Department of Health; Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, Injury Prevention Program, the Office of Minority Health and the Office of Policy, Planning & Assessment, the Tennessee Department of Education, the Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability, the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, the Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities, the Office of the Council on Developmental Disabilities, , the Tennessee Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges, and the Tennessee Department of Labor.*

Section Three: Role, Structure and Selection of Subcommittees

In an effort to draw upon the expertise of the various Council members in the areas of key interest as noted above, the Network has established standing committees.

The following four committees have been created: the Executive Committee, the Special Activities Committee, the Strategies/Outcome/Evaluation Committee, and the Nominating Committee.

Each committee has a chair selected by the Advisory Council Chair. Each committee chair will serve as the leader of that committee to which s/he will provide committee reports and recommendations to the Council.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers and the TSPN Executive Director. The Executive Committee shall conduct necessary business of the Council between semi-annual meetings.

The Special Activities Committee shall assist in the planning of any special activities related to TSPN throughout the year and update the Network with activities across the nation that relates to suicide prevention.

The Strategies/Outcome/Evaluation Committee shall assist the Network in overseeing any changes relevant to the Network's strategies or implementation of such strategies.

The Nominating Committee shall make nominations for the Council membership and slate of officers. The Chair shall appoint the Chair of the Nominating Committee. The Chair shall select a Nominating Committee, which will include a Council member from each of the eight regions. No more than one Nominating Committee member shall be chosen from each region.

Election of Officers and Membership

Nominations may be received from the floor. The slate of nominees will be recommended to the Governor of Tennessee or his designee, Commissioner of the Tennessee Executive Branch that is responsible for mental health for appointment to the Council.

Each Council member will serve on one of these committees during the course of the year. The Advisory Council and standing committees may, in turn, designate work groups when the scope of issues is so broad and/or extensive that they require additional input and work process from experts, members of the Network, and others in the suicidology community. Additionally, on an as-needed basis, committee and Advisory Council members may recommend consultation from outside sources who exhibit expertise or knowledge of import to the issues before the Council (e.g.: the recent formation of our youth suicide prevention committee).

Section Four: Routine Operations and Frequency of Meetings for the Advisory Council and Committees

The Advisory Council will function in a manner that allows for the efficient management of the various issues that the Network will be called upon to address by utilizing the revised Robert's Rules pertaining to small groups. These guidelines offer the operational description as that of "members of the organization meeting with the idea of getting something done and (in this case) acting as a committee in full and free discussion, courses of action to be taken in the name of the entire group." The common purpose of these meetings implies that the gatherings are collegial and not contentious, assuring that all points of view are heard and that there can be no question about fairness and propriety of the outcome.

The Advisory Council will be charged with making recommendations to the Network, based on the feedback and research of the committees determined as appropriate to the issues at hand. The Advisory Council will convene three times a year, including an annual retreat and schedule meetings to run concurrently with other suicide prevention related events (e.g., Suicide Prevention Awareness Day on Capitol Hill).

Members of the Council will fulfill the following obligations:

- Attendance of 80% of regional monthly or bi-monthly TSPN meetings.

- Attendance at all Advisory Council meetings held in Nashville.
- Chairing and participation in regional committees and special Advisory Council committees.
- Attendance at the annual Network retreat and the Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event.
- Recruitment of potential Network members and associates.
- Attendance at other regional, state, and/or national functions related to suicide prevention and/or mental health as necessary.

Advisory Council members will participate in regional meetings within their jurisdictions. These meetings will be facilitated by the regional chair or the regional co-chair in the event the chair is unable to do so. Regional chairs are responsible for collecting and circulating the minutes for each meeting with the assistance of the TSPN office. Advisory Council members will share the responsibility of chairing committees and task forces within their regions

Advisory Council members and alternates serve as the leadership for each region and guide the implementation of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Strategy on the regional level.

Committees will meet as needed throughout the year. TSPN will work closely with MHDD to provide conference calls as needed. Although chairpersons of the committees are expected to attend Advisory Council meetings as previously indicated.

Section Five: Member Replacement and the Nomination Process

Advisory Council seats may become available through a variety of means. Some examples include: a member leaves on his/her own volition; a member is asked to leave due to insufficient attendance, and/or behavior that significantly disrupts committee business, and/or is not in the best interests of the project's mission, goals and objectives; or the committee determines additional representation is needed. Removal of members is determined by an 80% majority vote of the full committee, excluding the vote of the individual in question.

Term

Council members will be appointed for a two-year term beginning in October of each year. There is no limit to the number of terms a Council member may serve.

Signature

Date