

# Bylaws



- Bylaws are the rules the Council follows.
- Our bylaws help the Council run good meetings and make good decisions.

## Who We Are

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- The name of our organization is the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. We are also called “The Council.”
- A federal law called the Developmental Disabilities Act and Louisiana state law created us. Most people call the Developmental Disabilities Act the “DD Act.”
- The DD Act lists the rules we have to follow.

## What We Want

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- The Council advocates for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. That means we work to make sure people with developmental disabilities have the support and opportunities they need to live the way they want.
- We want people with and without disabilities to live, learn, work, and play together.

# What We Do

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Every 5 years we develop a big plan. This is called our “state plan.” The state plan lists the goals and activities we will work on over 5 years.

- Goals describe what the Council wants to see happen.
- Activities are how we will help make it happen.



- We look at how well the plan is working.
- We report on what was done and how money was spent.



- We check to make sure state programs and services are working for people with developmental disabilities’ needs.
- We tell the Governor, state agencies, and the legislature how to make things better.



We:

- Help people in the community include people with developmental disabilities in everyday life.
- Make programs, services, policies, and laws better.
- Advocate for things that help people with developmental disabilities live how they want, with the support they need.
- Train and support people to speak up for what they want.
- Do other work that helps us reach our state plan goals.

- Do everything the DD Act says we should do.

## Council Membership

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- The Council has 28 Council members.

### The Council has the following kinds of members:



1. People with developmental disabilities.
2. Family members of people with developmental disabilities. Family members are husbands, wives, parents, grandparents, brothers, and sisters.

**Most Council members are people with developmental disabilities and family members.**



3. At least one Council member must be a person with a developmental disability or a family member of a person with a developmental disability who:
  - Lives in an institution, or
  - Used to live in and institution.



4. A staff member from these state agencies:
  - Louisiana Rehabilitation Services
  - Louisiana Department of Education
  - Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs
  - Bureau of Health Services Financing
  - Office of Public Health
  - Office of Aging and Adult Services
  - Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities
  - Governor's Office of Disability Affairs

These members must be able to make decisions for their agencies.



5. People who work for community organizations and that care about people with developmental disabilities.
6. A staff member from:
  - LSU Human Development Center, and
  - Disability Rights Louisiana.

### How people become Council members;



- People are “appointed” to the Council by the Governor. That means they become a member.

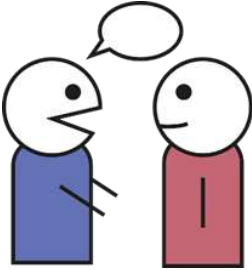
### How Long Members are on the Council;



- Council members stay on the Council for 4 years. This is called a “term.”
- Sometimes people take the place of a member who left the Council before four years. They finish the term of the person they replace.
- Member stays on the Council when their term is over until a new member takes their place.
- Most members must wait 1 year after their term ends before the governor can appoint them for another term.



- Members from the LSU Human Development Center, Disability Rights Louisiana, and state agencies do not have to wait for another term.
- If a new member starts with a term that is one year or less, they can have another term without waiting.



- Council members and other people can tell the Council who should be on the Council, but must be appointed by the governor.

## Council Leaders

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- The Council has a chairperson and vice-chairperson. They are the Council's "officers." They are also called the "chair" and "vice chair."



- A committee called the Nominating Committee recommends who should be the chair and vice chair.
- The Council or Executive Committee picks members to be on the Nominating Committee. The Council chair is on the committee.



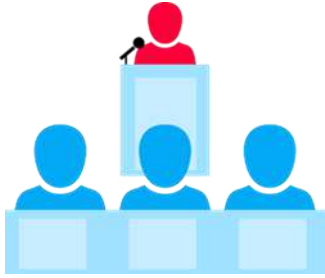
- Council members pick the chair and vice-chair at the July meeting. The committee emails Council members at least 21 days before the July meeting to tell them who they think should be the chair and vice-chair. Members can suggest other people at the meeting.



- A member becomes an officer if more than half the Council members vote for them.
- They are the officers for two years. This is called their “term.” Their term starts on October 1. They can serve two terms in a row.



- If the vice chair leaves before their term ends, the chair picks another Council member to take their place.
- If the chair leaves before their term ends, the vice-chair becomes chair. If the vice chair cannot do this, the Council picks another Council member. They do this by voting. That is a “special election.” The election is held at the next Council meeting.
- Members are told about the election at least two weeks before the Council meeting. Members recommend who should be the next chair at the meeting.



## The Chairperson

1. Runs all Council and Executive Committee meetings.
2. Is on the Nominating Committee. Is on all other committees if they want to be.
3. Picks the members for most of the Council's committees. The Council picks the members of the Executive Committee and Nominating Committee.
4. Gives ideas to the Council staff.
5. Speaks for the Council.
6. Makes sure the Council does what the DD Act says we should do.
7. Picks who goes to different events for the Council.
8. Helps the Council look at how well the Executive Director is doing their job.
9. Talks with Council members when they miss to many meetings.
10. Chooses experienced Council members to help guide new members.



## The Vice-Chairperson

1. Takes over the Chair's job when they are away.
2. Takes over the Chair's job if they cannot be Chair any longer or leave the Council.
3. Leads the process of picking new Council members.
4. Does other work the Chairperson ask them to do

# Voting

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The Council and committees can only take votes at meetings when at least half of the members are there. This includes members who join a meeting using a computer. To vote:

- They must have their video on,
- Their face must be seen, and
- Their first and last name must show on the screen.



- Each Council member has one vote. Members must be at a meeting to vote.



- All votes are done out loud.
- Votes are written down in the meeting minutes.

# Conflict of Interest

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- Sometimes Council members or their family members might “personally benefit” from the decisions the Council makes. That means the decision would help them.
- For example, the Council might discuss giving money to a project that helps people, including you or one of your family members. If this happens, you have a “conflict of interest.”



- If you think you have a conflict of interest, tell the Council. Members must always follow the Council’s Conflict of Interest Policy.

## Meetings

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- The Council meets 4 times each year. The Executive Committee can decide to change when meetings are held.



The Council and committees can only do business when more than half the members are present. That is called a “quorum.”  
A quorum includes:

- Member at the meeting location,
- Members at the anchor location, and
- Members using zoom.



- All Council meetings are open to the public. The Council follows the state’s open meetings law.



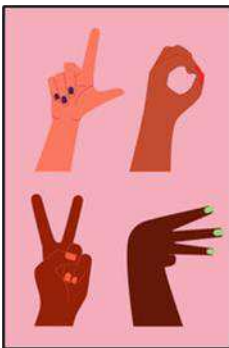
- The Council uses rules called Robert's Rules of Order at meetings. They help the Council run good meetings.



The Executive Committee may ask a member to resign (stop being a member) if they miss too many meetings. The Council can also ask the Governor to take them off the Council. This can happen when a member misses:

- 3 Council meetings and/or committee meetings in 12 months, or
- 2 Council meetings and/or committee meetings in a row in 12 months.

The chair tells the Council when this happens.



- The Council must make sure all meetings are accessible to people with disabilities. That means the Council provides support people need to participate.



- All meetings are recorded. They are on the Council's YouTube channel for 2 years or longer.

# Committees

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The Council has three committees that meet throughout the year. They are called “standing committees”:

- Executive Committee
- Self-Determination/Community Inclusion Committee
- Education/Employment Committee.



These committees meet when needed:

- The Act 378 Subcommittee
- Nominating Committee
- Membership Committee



- The Council picks committee chairpersons at the July Council meeting. A member becomes a chair if more than half the Council members vote for them. They start on October 1.
- Committee chairpersons pick who they want on their committees.

## Executive Committee



Executive Committee includes:

- The Council Chair
- The Vice-Chair
- Chairpersons of the Self-Determination/Community Inclusion and Education/Employment Committees
- One other member called the Member-at-Large.

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The Executive Committee meets at 4 times each year.



The Executive Committee:

1. Makes decisions that the full Council would usually make, when the decision cannot wait for the next Council meeting.
2. Reviews committee activities related to state plan goals and activities.
3. Picks issues for the Council to study.
4. Reviews and approves position papers before they go to the Council.
5. Reviews budget reports.
6. Reviews the Executive Director's performance every year. Sends the review and recommendations to the Council

## Self-Determination/Community Inclusion Committee and Education/Employment Committee



- These committees work on Council goals and activities in the state plan.
- The chairpersons of the Self-Determination/Community Inclusion and Education/Employment Committees:
  1. Develop committee agendas,
  2. Lead committee meetings,
  3. Give committee reports at Council meetings, and
  4. Are members of the Executive Committee.

## Bylaws Committee



- The Bylaws committee checks the bylaws every year and tells the Council if they should be changed.



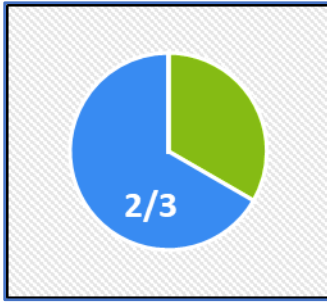
- The Council chair can set up ad hoc committees, caucuses, and task forces if needed. They are different kinds of committees.
- The chair gives them work to do.
- When their work is done, they stop meeting.
- The chair can add people who are not on the Council to these groups. They can be officers. They serve for as long as the chair lets them.
- They cannot work on Council business if they have a conflict of interest.

## Amendments (Changes)

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- The Council can make changes to these bylaws. Changes are called “amendments.”
- Changes to the bylaws are made at Council meetings.
- The Council must email suggested amendments to members at least two weeks before the meeting. The email must include the date of the meeting.
- The Council can only vote to change the bylaws when more than half the members are at the meeting.



- Amendments are made if at least two-thirds ( $2/3$ ) of the Council members at the meeting vote in support of the changes.