

IDAHO
GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE
ON CHILDREN AT RISK

MISSION STATEMENT
AND
PROCEDURES

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Revised 2001
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GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN AT RISK

MISSION STATEMENT

"The Governor's Task Force on Children at Risk, a non-partisan, broadly representative organization with concerns related to children at risk in Idaho, is dedicated to providing informed recommendations to the Governor of the State of Idaho regarding the full scope of issues related to child abuse and neglect."

GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN AT RISK

PROCEDURES

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1.0 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

1.1 Task Force Selection

1.1.1 Composition

The Task Force shall consist of not less than twelve (12) nor more than eighteen (18) voting members. The Task Force may request the Governor to provide additional members if it is determined that certain interests are not adequately represented.

1.1.2 Selection Criteria

Membership on the Task Force requires a sincere interest in issues related to the full scope of child abuse and neglect, as well as the time to study, discuss, and reach agreement as a group relative to those issues.

Task Force appointment shall be in accordance with the criteria and guidelines established in the Executive Order that established the existence of the Governor's Task Force on Children at Risk. It is designed to ensure that membership reflects the demographic composition of the state and includes a broad, representative cross-section of stakeholders.

Individuals representing the following perspectives shall serve on the Task Force:

- Law Enforcement Community
- Criminal Court Judge
- Civil Court Judge
- Prosecuting Attorney
- Defense Attorney
- Child Advocate Attorney for Children
- Court Appointed Special Advocate Representative (where such programs are in operation)
- Health Professional
- Mental Health Professional
- Child Protective Service Agency
- Individual experience in working with children with disabilities
- Parent Group Representative
- Education Representative
- Juvenile Justice Representative

1.1.3 Process for Membership Rotation

Members serve at the pleasure of the Governor for a four-year term. Reappointment is at the discretion of the Governor with a recommendation from the Chair. Should the Governor change, the Chairperson will poll the group to determine which members want to remain and draft a letter to the Governor recommending the members that would like to continue to serve.

1.1.4 Chair and Vice Chair Positions

The Chair position shall be chosen by the Task Force from among volunteer members every two years during the May Task Force meeting, beginning in May 1997. Nominations (open or self-nominations) will be made via secret ballot at the beginning of the meeting. Ballots will be drafted, and voting will be by secret ballot at the end of the day.

Terms of office shall be two (2) years. The Chair will be responsible for agenda development and will work with support staff to ensure that agenda commitments are met. The Chair will also facilitate Task Force meetings, interface with each issue committee, and will be the main point of contact for the Task Force, i.e., with the Department of Health and Welfare. In addition, the Chair will have signature authority for all Task Force correspondence. The Vice Chair will support the Chair, aiding as needed.

The Chair and Vice Chair will function as equal members of the Task Force during all discussions and deliberations. Every attempt will be made by the Task Force Chair to ensure diversity of perspective and equitable division of workload.

Should a Task Force member believe that the Chair is not performing in a fair and balanced manner, it is the responsibility of the member to raise his/her concerns with the Chair and the full Task Force.

If the position of Chair or Vice Chair becomes vacant because of removal or resignation, a replacement to serve the remainder of the two-year term shall be selected by secret ballot at the next regular meeting of the Task Force.

1.1.5 Roles and Responsibilities

Task Force members are expected to attend all meetings. Legitimate reasons for *occasional* absence may include:

- Employment conflicts
- Personal or family illness
- Travel problems (weather, etc.)

Task Force members are expected to respond to all requests for comment on drafts, agenda contents, etc., by stated deadlines, and fully participate in discussions and decisions. Task Force members are also expected to be accountable for excessive absences and inform the Task Force promptly if there is a change in their status so that they no longer reflect the representative capacity they were appointed to represent.

1.2 Meetings

1.2.1 Frequency and Location

The Task Force will meet monthly; however, meetings will not be held during July, August or December. Meetings will be primarily held in Boise, with the option of meeting in other areas of the state.

1.2.2 Meeting Support

Administrative support will be provided by contract as funded.

1.2.3 Agenda Development

A draft agenda for the next meeting will be completed at the conclusion of the previous meeting. This draft will be based on the adopted priorities and will include necessary time for administrative issues. Modifications to the agenda may be made through the Chair as issues are developed between meetings.

1.2.4 Minutes

The support staff will be responsible for drafting meeting minutes. The Chair will review the minutes for accuracy and submit changes to support staff or its designee for correction. The entire Task Force will receive the final minutes prior to the following meeting whenever possible.

1.2.5 Quorum

One half of the Task Force, plus one individual will constitute the quorum required to conduct business.

1.2.6 Decision-Making

All Task Force decisions will be reached by simple majority of the members present and voting. However, voting by electronic means may be allowed. Decision by electronic voting requires a simple majority of the total Task Force membership.

1.3 Task Force Responsibilities

The Task Force is responsible for developing, establishing and operating programs designed to improve:

1. The handling of child abuse and neglect cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation; and
2. The handling of cases of suspected child abuse or neglect related fatalities; and
3. The investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation; and
4. The handling of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related problems who are victims of abuse or neglect.

In particular, funds should be used to implement State Task Force recommendations in the following three categories:

- A. Investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as cases involving suspected child maltreatment related fatalities and cases involving a potential combination of jurisdictions, such as interstate, Federal-State, and State-Tribal, in a manner which reduces the additional trauma to the child victim and the victim's family and which also ensures procedural fairness to the accused.

- B. Experimental, model, and demonstration programs for testing innovative approaches and techniques which may improve the prompt and successful resolution of civil and criminal court proceedings or enhance the effectiveness of judicial and administrative action in child abuse and neglect cases, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation cases, including the enhancement of performance of court-appointed attorneys and guardian ad litem for children, and which also ensure procedural fairness to the accused; and

- C. Reform of State laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols and procedures to provide comprehensive protection for children from abuse, particularly sexual abuse, and exploitation, while ensuring fairness to all affected persons.

2.0 COMMITTEES

The Chair may appoint committees as needed.

3.0 MEETING ETIQUETTE

- Everyone will be allowed the opportunity to speak.
- Individual members shall respect group time.
- The chair will have control of who has the floor.
- Members will recognize individual perspectives and competing opinions.
- Members are expected to treat each other with respect.
- Once the group has decided, the group will move on.