

Idaho Governor's Task Force on Children at Risk

Mission Statement & Procedures



Adopted: September 1997
Revised: January 2022

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."

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1.0 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

1.1 Task Force Selection

1.1.1 Composition

The Task Force shall consist of 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
- Attorney for Children
- Court Appointed Special Advocate Representative (where such programs are in operation)
- Health Professional
- Mental Health Professional
- Child Protective Service Agency
- Individual with experience in working with children with disabilities
- Parent Group Representative
- Education Representative
- Adult former victim of child abuse or neglect
- Homeless Youth Representative

- Administrator of the Court
- Juvenile Justice Representative
- Individual with experience in working with victims of abuse

1.1.3 Process for Membership Appointment and Rotation

Members serve at the pleasure of the Governor for a four-year term. Appointment and reappointment are at the discretion of the current Governor's process for appointment to boards and commissions, with a recommendation from the Chair. In the event that a member is waiting for reappointment, that task force member will continue to serve in their role until the reappointment process is completed.

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 at the beginning of the meeting. If there is more than one nomination or self-nomination for Chair position, voting will be by secret ballot.

Terms of office shall be two (2) years. The Chair will be responsible for choosing a vice-chair, 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 subcommittee, 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 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.

In the event that a task force member is not able to fulfill their roles and responsibilities, then the member may be removed by a vote by the task force. If the position of taskforce members becomes vacant because of removal or resignation, a replacement to serve the role will be recruited and shall be selected at a future regular meeting of the Task Force.

1.2 Meetings

1.2.1 Frequency and Location

The Task Force will meet monthly, eight times a year. 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. In compliance with current Idaho open meeting laws, agenda will be posted to designated website.

1.2.4 Minutes

The support staff will be responsible for drafting meeting minutes. The Task Force 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.

1.3 Task Force Responsibilities

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

1. the assessment and investigation of suspected child abuse and neglect cases, including cases of suspected child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner that limits additional trauma to the child and the child's family;
2. the assessment and investigation of cases of suspected child abuse-related fatalities and suspected child neglect;
3. the investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse and exploitation; and
4. the assessment and investigation of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related problems who are suspected victims of child abuse or neglect.

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, including 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 intrastate,

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 guardians 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, which may include those children involved in reports of child abuse or neglect with a potential combination of jurisdictions, such as intrastate, interstate, Federal-State, and State-Tribal, from child abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse and exploitation, while ensuring fairness to all affected persons.

2.0 COMMITTEES

The Chair may appoint subcommittees 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.