

## **ARTICLE 1. NAME AND PURPOSE**

### **Section 1.1 Name**

The official name of the coalition is Strengthening Families Through Behavioral Health, hereafter referred to as “the Coalition.”

### **Section 1.2 Vision**

The vision of the Coalition is to ensure DC has a fully integrated behavioral health care system in which all DC students, children, youth, and families have timely access to high-quality, consistent, affordable, and culturally responsive care that meets their needs and enables them to thrive.

### **Section 1.3 Mission**

The mission of the Coalition to bring together a diverse group of advocates focused on education, juvenile justice, child welfare, and health, as well as representatives of the provider community and community-based organizations, for the purpose of:

- Engaging with legislators, policymakers, and other stakeholders regarding DC’s behavioral health system;
- Advancing legislation, public policies, and practices that improve DC’s behavioral health system for children and families; and
- Advocating for effective, adequate, and equitable spending on all aspects of DC’s behavioral health system.

## **ARTICLE 2. MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

### **Section 2.1 Membership Composition**

Membership in the Coalition is open to any organization committed to supporting the mission of the Coalition, as defined in Section 1.3. Member organizations may include, but are not limited to, advocates focused on education, juvenile justice, child welfare, and health, as well as representatives of the provider community and community-based organizations, or any other organization that has a shared interest in advocating for improvements to DC’s behavioral health system for children and families. Government agencies and individuals representing only their personal views and interests are not eligible to become members.

## **Section 2.2 Membership Responsibilities**

Membership in the Coalition constitutes a commitment to undertake the following responsibilities:

- Regularly participate in Coalition meetings (see Article 3)
- Make a good faith effort to participate in meeting discussions and Coalition activities (see Article 4)
- Participate in all Coalition votes (see Article 3)

## **Section 2.3 Organizational Structure**

The Coalition will be led by two Co-Chairs, one of which will be a representative from Children's Law Center and one of which will be a representative from the D.C. Fiscal Policy Institute.

## **Section 2.4 Coalition Co-Chair Responsibilities**

The Coalition Co-Chairs are responsible for the following tasks:

- Maintaining an update list of all Coalition members
- Scheduling and attending all meetings
- Drafting and circulating agendas in advance of meetings
- Providing members with advance notice of and means to participate in all Coalition votes
- Serving as points of contact for the Coalition
- Convening annual planning retreats for the Coalition

## **Section 2.5 Admission Procedure**

Any organization wishing to join the Coalition may do so by submitting a written request to the Co-Chairs. The Co-Chairs will notify Coalition members of the request, and if there are no objections to admitting the organization, the organization will become a member of the Coalition (no vote required).

Members have five days after notification to state an objection to a request for admission. If an objection is stated by one or more members, the matter will be discussed at the next Coalition and if the objection is not withdrawn, then the Coalition will vote on whether to admit the organization. See Article 3 for details on voting procedures.

### **Section 2.6 Resignation Procedure**

Any member wishing to resign from the Coalition may do so by submitting a written notification to the Co-Chairs. The resignation will be considered effective upon receipt of the written notification, which will be shared by the Co-Chairs with the members of the Coalition.

### **Section 2.7 Expulsion Procedure**

A member may be expelled from the Coalition if it is determined that they are unable to fulfill the responsibilities described in Section 2.2 above or they no longer support the mission of the Coalition. Members can request for another member to be expelled by submitting a request and an explanation for the request in writing to the Co-Chairs, which will then be shared with all Coalition members. The matter will be discussed and voted upon at the next Coalition meeting. See Article 3 for details on voting procedures.

It should be noted that the goal of the Coalition is to bring together a diverse group of advocates with diverse policy goals and perspectives to support a shared interest in improving DC's behavioral health system for children and families. Differences in opinions or opposing policy positions on issues outside the scope of the vision and mission of the Coalition generally will not be considered grounds for expelling a member.

## **ARTICLE 3. MEETINGS AND PARTICIPATION IN COALITION ACTIVITIES**

### **Section 3.1 Coalition Meetings**

The Coalition will meet at least once a month, except during budget season, when the Coalition will meet or schedule calls once a week or as needed. The Coalition will strive to hold meetings in-person whenever possible, but provisions will be made for members to dial-in or appear virtually as needed.

The Co-Chairs are responsible for identifying meeting dates and times that work for as many Coalition members; communicating meeting dates and times to all Coalition members in a timely manner; and providing an agenda to Coalition members in advance of every meeting. Coalition members may place items on the agenda by providing the relevant information to Co-Chairs.

### **Section 3.2 Recordkeeping**

Meeting agendas and notes will be kept in a running document (e.g. a Google doc) that all Coalition members have access to. A new document will be created each year.

### **Section 3.3. Communications**

The Coalition will communicate primarily during meetings and over email. The Co-Chairs are responsible for creating text or WhatsApp chains as needed for Coalition members who opt-in for rapid response communications.

### **Section 3.4 Decision-Making and Voting**

The Coalition will strive to make decisions by consensus, through discussion, debate, and finding common ground. Because Coalition members represent different organizations with their own priorities and perspectives, it is to be expected that there will be areas of disagreement between members. The goal of the Coalition is to identify shared advocacy goals and areas of common ground where all or most Coalition members can work together to improve DC's behavioral health system for children and families.

Accordingly, the Coalition will only hold votes on the following matters:

- Selecting advocacy goals (see Article 4 for details)
- Identifying budget asks and priorities
- Admitting members to the Coalition over an objection
- Expelling members from the Coalition
- Amendments to the Coalition Charter

All other Coalition activities (see Article 4), including the development of strategy and messaging, committee formation, planning for external meetings and communications, and information-sharing activities will not require the Coalition to vote.

### **Section 3.5 Voting Procedures**

The procedure for voting is as follows:

- The Co-Chairs will notify Coalition members that a matter requiring a vote will be discussed at the next Coalition meeting
- The matter will be discussed during the meeting and options will be identified
- Coalition members will be provided with those options in writing and will be given the ability to vote electronically for up to one week after the matter is discussed
- All votes will be transparent (not anonymous)

- For selecting advocacy goals and identifying budget asks and priorities, voting will be used to identify the options with consensus support from the Coalition
- For all other voting matters, except amendments to the Coalition Charter, which require a straight up or down vote, the option with majority support from Coalition members will prevail
- For amendments to the Coalition Charter, a two-thirds majority is required to prevail
- The Co-Chairs will communicate the results of the vote to the Coalition shortly thereafter

For a vote to be considered complete, at least two-thirds of the Coalition members must participate. The Co-Chairs are responsible for following up with Coalition members to ensure adequate participation in the vote.

### **Section 3.6 Annual Retreat**

The Co-Chairs are responsible for planning an annual retreat for the Coalition in July or August each year. The purpose of the annual retreat is to identify advocacy for the upcoming year, review and refine the Coalition Charter, and renew members' commitment to the vision and mission of the Coalition.

## **ARTICLE 4. ACTIVITIES**

### **Section 4.1 Coalition Activities**

To advance its vision and mission, the Coalition will engage in activities, including but not limited to the following:

- Sharing relevant information and updates relevant based on member organizations' work, network communications, and/or participation in government agency working groups or committees
- Monitoring the implementation of relevant programs, policies, regulations, and legislation
- Developing consistent positions and messaging on the performance of relevant programs and agencies for coalition members and their networks to amplify
- Identifying a common set of budget asks and priorities, and developing related messaging for coalition members and their networks to amplify
- Drafting sign-on letters and other tools with the goal of consolidating support for Coalition priorities

- Drafting main points that members and their networks can use to develop consistent testimony at relevant hearings before the Council
- Support Coalition members testifying at relevant hearings before the Council
- Engaging with Councilmembers and Council Staff through written communications and in-person meetings

#### **Section 4.2 Advocacy Goals**

To advance its vision and mission, the Coalition will identify advocacy goals each year. The activities listed in Section 4.1 will be focused on advancing these advocacy goals. The Coalition will identify an initial set of advocacy goals during the annual retreat prior to the start of the next Council session. These goals may be revised or supplemented during the year, but all changes require a Coalition vote.

#### **Section 4.3 Budget Asks and Priorities**

To advance its vision and mission, the Coalition will identify a set of budget asks and priorities prior to each budget cycle.

#### **Section 4.4. Committee Formation**

To the extent certain Coalition members wish to meet more frequently regarding a specific topic or advocacy goal, they will form a Committee. All Committees must be open for all interested members to join and must identify at least one Committee Chair responsible for organizing Committee meetings and reporting updates during Coalition meetings.

### **ARTICLE 5. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS**

#### **Section 5.1 Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest is defined for the purposes of this section as a situation in which a Coalition member is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made by the Coalition. Differences in opinions or opposing policy positions on issues outside the scope of the vision and mission of the Coalition do not constitute conflicts of interest.

Any potential conflict of interest shall be disclosed, verbally or in writing, to the Co-Chairs. The Co-Chairs will review the disclosure and determine whether to recommend that the member(s) be asked to leave during discussion and voting on the relevant topic, or that the member(s) be allowed

to participate in discussion but refrain from voting. If the Co-Chairs decide to make any such recommendation, the recommendation will be shared with Coalition members at the next meeting and the disclosure of the conflict of interest will be recorded in the meeting notes.

## **Section 5.2 Amendments to Charter**

Any Coalition member may propose an amendment to the Charter for consideration during the annual retreat (see Section 3.6) by proposing the change in writing to the Co-Chairs at least two weeks prior to the annual retreat. The Co-Chairs will circulate a list of all proposed amendments to Coalition members at least one week prior to the annual retreat. All proposed amendments will be discussed and voted upon during the annual retreat.