



Working Guidelines
Adopted (9/28/16?)

Article I Name, Formation, and Fiscal Agent

The Sonoma County ACEs Connection officially adopted a grassroots, community coalition model in March 2016. California Parenting Institute (CPI) provides nonprofit status to the Sonoma County ACEs Connection via an agreement (Appendix A) affirmed in May 2016.

The County of Sonoma (Health and Human Services) is providing support to the Sonoma County ACEs Connection through the Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities grant through September 2017. County support specifically includes both in-kind and paid staff support for the Coalition development as well as the sponsorship of an ACE’s and Resiliency Master Trainer program. In addition, the County will create linkages between the Sonoma County ACEs Connection work and other County-led initiatives. Finally, County staff will support the evaluation of the grant project.

Article II Mission, Vision & Values

The Sonoma County ACEs Connection adopted the following working mission statement in March 2016: *“We bring the community together to prevent, heal, and treat ACEs while promoting resiliency.”*

During a Strategic Planning Session in June 2016, the group developed a vision for the future which we will strive to achieve: *“Our community is united, safe, and resilient.”*

Value statements have not yet been developed or vetted by the group. However, members of the group request future statements include the concepts of incorporating cultural competency, of work at both the community and individual level, Trauma Informed Care, and building community awareness.

Article III Membership

3.1 MEMBERS

Sonoma County ACEs Connection is a learning community, welcoming everyone who is interested in learning more about ACEs for themselves or their organizations. Membership in the Sonoma County ACEs Connection indicates that the individual or institution supports the mission and vision of the coalition. There is no term-limit for membership.

Membership representation shall be sought from a wide range of community sectors including, but not limited to: business community; media; early education/schools; youth-serving organizations; law enforcement agencies; religious or fraternal organizations; civic and volunteer groups; healthcare professionals (including mental health and substance abuse treatment professionals); state, local, or tribal governmental agencies; adults and seniors/aging representatives; youth (including transitional aged youth); parents/ foster parents; and under-represented community members (e.g LGBTQ).

3.2 DUES

Annual dues for active members will be paid in September of each year. The amount will be set by the membership. Non- payment of dues by December will be cause for lapse in active membership. Reinstatement of membership will occur with payment of dues. A fee waiver is offered on the membership application form if financial hardships exist.

3.3 CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP: ACTIVE OR SUPPORTING MEMBERS

Active: Membership of the Sonoma County ACEs Connection is open to anyone who is in agreement with the mission and vision of the Sonoma County ACEs Connection, signs a declaration of support for the ACEs Connection's working guidelines, pays dues, and who participates in the coalition activities including attending at least one of previous three meetings:

- *Individual Members:* Individuals who meet the criteria detailed above are considered active members. They are allowed voting privileges for all matters to be determined by the general membership.
- *Organizational Members:* Representatives from interested affiliated groups may participate in coalition activities and discussions; one-three representatives from each organization may vote on coalition affairs and elections. CPI will retain a full organizational membership including voting rights, but will be exempt from membership fees in exchange for providing nonprofit status.

Supporting Members: Individuals, organizations and corporations who support the mission and objectives, but do not meet the requirement for active membership are non-voting supporting members.

3.5 MEMBER INSTATEMENT

Membership applications will be presented to Steering Committee, who will then recommend member instatement to the full membership. The full membership will approve all member applications.

3.6 PRIVILEGES

Dues paying members are eligible to serve as Elected Leaders or Committee Chairpersons for Working Committees. All members that have attended one of the previous three meetings and have paid annual dues will have voting privileges on motions requiring a vote, in nomination or in election of leaders.

3.7 PLACE OF MEETING

Meetings of the Sonoma County ACEs Connection will take place at locations specified in the meeting notice. Meeting locations may rotate to various member sites to encourage enhanced referral

opportunities between members.

3.8 REGULAR MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Sonoma County ACEs Connection shall be held ten times a year. Meetings will normally be scheduled on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 12:30 – 2:00 pm, or as agreed upon by the coalition. Meetings will not be held in August or December. Regular, monthly agenda items for 2016-2017 include: strategic planning, Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities grant updates, learning community activities, mindfulness activities. Other agenda items may include: new business, subcommittee reports, and treasurer updates.

The regular meeting in June shall be the annual meeting. An extended meeting time will be determined for the purpose of electing new leaders (elect), updating working guidelines, and/or updating the Coalition’s Strategic Plan and budget.

Special meetings may be called by the Elected Leaders as needed.

3.9 DECISION MAKING

Sonoma County ACEs Connection strives to reach consensus in its decision making process. Consensus decision-making strives to reach an agreement among a majority of members and alleviate the objections of the minority to achieve the most agreeable decision. Thus, consensus is reached when all members agree to a decision, and each group member can support the decision, whether or not he or she prefers the decision, because all voices were heard and it was reached fairly and openly.

Sonoma County ACEs Connection may give different decision making rights to the Steering Committee and the full Membership. For example, the full Membership may recommend future members, but the Steering Committee will affirm member instatement. The full Membership will vote on decision making guidelines requiring Steering Committee approval and full Membership approval at a future date. These decision making guidelines will contemplate grant applications, letters written on behalf of the group, and other common decisions identified by the full Membership.

The Sonoma County ACEs Connection gives the Treasurer and one other elected officer the right to spend up to \$250 for coalition activities without asking for approval of the full Members.

While most Sonoma County ACEs Connection decisions will occur during meetings, some time-sensitive items may arise and require decisions between meetings. This process will require the following actions:

1. Work with a Steering Committee Member to email the entire group outlining background and requested decision
2. State the following in the email subject line: ACEs Connection: [insert topic] Please Respond by [insert date]
3. Provide timeline for responses in the body of the email
4. Decision made by passive consent. For this purpose, passive consent is assumed if coalition members don’t respond with objections to the proposed decision or action item. In other words, a non-response indicates approval.

3.10 QUOROM & MEMBERSHIP VOTING

At all meetings, the presence of a majority of active members shall be necessary and sufficient to conduct business. A quorum is defined as 50% plus one of the active membership. If a member is unable to attend, s/he **may not** designate an alternate for voting purposes and **may not** be counted towards a quorum. Without a quorum, issues may be discussed, but issues requiring a vote will be considered subject to subsequent approval of the majority.

Agenda items requiring a vote of the full membership, must first appear on the agenda as a discussion item or otherwise give the full membership ample time to contemplate a decision.

The full membership maintains the exclusive right to vote to adopt or amend working guidelines. In addition, the full membership must vote to take any advocacy action for local State, or National policies.

3.11 CORRESPONDANCE AND COMMUNICATION

Meeting notices and agendas will be distributed one week prior to the scheduled meeting time, and meetings notes will be circulated to members before the next scheduled meeting. Meeting notices, agendas, and minutes will be distributed via email and posted on the Sonoma County ACEs Connection website at: <http://www.acesconnection.com/g/sonoma-county-aces-connection>

Email correspondence addressing the full group (all members of the Sonoma County ACEs Connection) is channeled through the Project Staff and sent blind carbon copy to protect the email addresses of members. Please send draft text to the Project Staff with your proposed timeline for sending. It is the discretion of the Project Staff to edit messages and or decide when to send on to the full group. Personal solicitation of the full group is not allowed.

The coalition will use the mailing address of the Project Staff, which will be 490 Mendocino Ave, Suite 101, Santa Rosa, CA 95401 through September 2017.

The Sonoma County ACEs Connection maintains official letterhead. All written correspondence using the Sonoma County ACEs Connection letterhead, logo, or contact information must be approved by two Elected Leaders or a quorum of active coalition members.

Article IV Elected Leaders

4.1 ELECTED LEADERS

Elected Leaders are responsible for the operation of the Sonoma County ACEs Connection. The elected leadership positions shall include: Chair-Facilitator, Vice Chair, Administrative Officer (Secretary-Elect), Treasurer, and Medical Director or Consulting Field Expert. All Elected Leaders must be active members of the Sonoma County ACEs Connection.

The values/principles that the Elected Leaders will demonstrate are: integrity, inclusiveness and sensitivity of all people (including under-served or under-represented communities), communicative, transparent, and demonstrate positive-based strength leadership.

4.2 ELECTION

Members can nominate themselves or others to fulfill roles. All elected leaders shall be elected by a consensus of members during the June monthly meeting. Office duties will begin the following July.

4.3 TERM OF OFFICE

The elected leaders of Sonoma County ACEs Connection shall serve for a term of one year and shall be eligible for successive terms as needed, with the exception of the Vice Chair and Chair. The Vice Chair will serve a two-year term, one as the Vice Chair and then one as the Chair Facilitator. The Chair Facilitator would therefore not be eligible to serve a successive term.

4.4 FILLING OF VACANCIES

Any vacancy shall be filled by the affirmative vote of the membership during a scheduled meeting. Any officer elected or appointed to fill a vacancy shall hold office until the end of the original term of office that they are completing.

4.5 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility of each role is as follows:

Chair-Facilitator: Serves as a liaison between the subcommittees and Coalition, develops meeting agendas with the assistance of the Executive/Steering committee, serves as a meeting moderator, represents the Coalition in the community, promotes collaboration, practice conflict resolution, facilitate decision-making, is open to diverse options and points of view, and serves as the signatory on Coalition letters.

Vice-Chair: Chairs the meeting when the Chairperson is unable to perform this task or any of the other tasks listed above. The Vice-Chair may take on leadership of short-term committees when necessary.

Administrative Officer (AO): Works with the Sonoma County ACEs Connection Project Staff to develop, review and edit written documents created by and for the Coalition. The AO ensures meetings are recorded and ensures the Coalition's activities are in line with the by-laws and work plan. The AO may take on tasks supported by Sonoma County ACEs Connection Project Staff as needed.

Treasurer: Serves as signee on the bank account, deposits and distributes checks by direction of the group, and tracks memberships. The treasurer gives an update on all financial activity and membership status at each meeting, and will annually provide documentation for all expenditures to the fiscal agent for auditing purposes. The Treasurer, with the approval of one other elected official, may also authorize expenditures for \$250 or less without the approval of the full Membership.

Medical Director/ Field Area Expert (tentative): Field area expert representative, provides expertise and oversight of the quality improvement of the coalition, supports related committees, collaborates with Project Staff to develop and implement strategies that support Sonoma County ACEs Connection’s mission and vision.

Article V Project Staff

As part of the Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities grant-funded project, the County of Sonoma will continue through September 2017 to provide project staff to support grant activities. Staff roles include: Project Staff, Project Manager, Evaluation Team Members, and Other In-Kind Staff Support. (See Article I for specific grant activities.)

Project Staff: Convene meetings and workgroups; develop agendas and take meeting minutes; assist in meeting facilitation, develop and implement data collection and evaluation strategies; develop on-line surveys as needed; draft reports; coordinate press releases and media requests with Department of Health Services Communications Manager; coordinate trainings and speakers bureau; manage contract process; oversee strategic planning and create draft plan for review and approval. (.3 PPEA filled by 2 staff)

Project Manager: Manages the activities of the project staff; facilitates meetings in coordination with elected Chairs; creates linkages between County initiatives; and conducts outreach activities to foster new relationships and strengthen network. (.1 Supervising Public Health Nurse)

Evaluation Team Members: Design and implements the local evaluation of the Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities grant-funded project and participate in evaluation activities of the Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities nationwide effort. (.1 Health Program Manager and other County Staff volunteers)

Other In-Kind Staff Support: Healthy Communities Violence Prevention Program’s Health Information Specialist II provides staff support as needed to execute the implementation of grant activities. (.1 Health Information Specialist II)

Article VI Committees

6.1 COMMITTEE FORMATION

Committees are formed based on the goals and objectives of the Sonoma County ACEs Connection. Committees work to develop specific objectives, actions, and decisions identified by the Sonoma County ACEs Connection as priorities.

As of July 2018, the Sonoma County ACEs Connection has yet to set goals, objectives or priorities. However, the goals of the Mobilizing Action for Resilient Community Grant suffice as interim goals for the Coalition. These goals are to: 1.) Develop a community coalition complete with identified structures

or working guidelines, 2.) Develop an ACEs and Resiliency Master Trainer Program, and 3.) Create linkages between the work of Sonoma County ACEs Connection and other Sonoma County Initiatives.

During the June 2016 Retreat, two committees were identified as crucial to carrying forward the interim goals of the Sonoma County ACEs Connection: Steering Committee and ACEs and Resiliency Master Trainer Program Committee.

6.2 STEERING COMMITTEE

Steering Committee Duties include: 1.) coordinating committees and managing business between meetings, 2.) facilitating regular communication between committees, and 3.) setting monthly Sonoma County ACEs Connection meeting agendas.

The Steering Committee should be composed of the following persons:

Position	Representation	Selection Process
Elected Officers	Designated role & responsibility	Elected by full membership
Standing Committee Chairs (or designee)	Representing the Committee	Selection by Committee
At Large Members (up to 3) ¹	Diversity of the community	Elected by full membership
Fiscal Agent	Fiduciary Oversight	Appointed by Fiscal Agent
Project Staff (non-voting) Project Manager (non-voting)	Provides administrative support and technical assistance	Appointed by grant-funded partner agency

6.3 ACES AND RESILIENCY MASTER TRAINER PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Members of the Master Trainer Committee will convene for the purposes of developing the training program, recruiting trainees, reviewing applications, and certifying trainers through the ACE Interface Master Training Program. Members of the Committee should include representatives from the following agencies who are sponsoring the program: Hanna Boys, Public Health, First5, and Human Services. Additional committee members may be sought to help fulfill the certification role.

This committee will convene in July 2016 and continue through the completion of the first cohort’s participation, which is forecasted to be June 2017. The committee may decide to offer a second cohort

¹ The role of at large members is intended to ensure diversity and to offset perceptions that any one entity or one type of group dominates the agenda.

training opportunity, and will seek additional commitment from program sponsors and committee members.

6.4 COMMITTEE MEETING PARTICIPATION

Each committee has a chair responsible for scheduling meetings and ensuring the notes are kept from each meeting. Committee members are jointly responsible for carrying out the agreed upon actions as well as gathering feedback from the full Membership and broader community and networks.

Any Sonoma County ACEs Connection member or community member may attend and observe committee meetings. Only the identified Sonoma County ACEs Connection committee members can add items to the committee agenda and vote on actions.

6.5 COMMITTEE TERMS & VACANCIES

Committee members will serve a two-year term, with no term limit. Terms will be staggered to allow for continuity of the Steering Committee. If a vacancy occurs, a replacement would be nominated and selected by the full Membership. The exception is a vacancy in the Chair position, which could be filled by the Vice-Chair.

Article VI Change of Working Guidelines

These working guidelines may be amended or repealed by a vote at a meeting of the Sonoma County ACEs Connection, provided notice is given to the entire membership for each proposed change. A consensus vote by a quorum of active members is required to pass changes.

Comments

- For the most part, I agree with other steering committee development member comments. But I'd like to share my past experience with large steering committees and boards. I have worked with three organizations that had boards in excess of 12 members and up to 22 members. The size of the board didn't usually slow things down – we just set a quorum and, as long as it was fulfilled, decisions that took votes were made pretty quickly. In fact, I think potentially more quickly/reliably than with a small board, considering we weren't bogged down by not getting a quorum when just a small number of members were absent. A large board or committee does, however, require a bit more prep for meetings and good time keeping during them.
- In a couple of cases, the board chair reviewed and edited/approved in advance the meeting agendas prepared by staff.
- In one case, we had an executive committee of the elected officers who could take quick decisions on a very small number of issues.
- Note: This is only some feedback for the group collaborating to work on SCAC's vision statement to support the idea of inclusion of "Awareness", or *some other form of this concept*, in the vision statement. I feel that awareness is not only part of the work or mission but also part of the end result. We need to exercise caution when we want to see "a healthy community" when many people are not even aware of what are ACE's. Whatever state they live in is what they know and essentially normalized and not seen as a "problem", this can result in the development of a vision statement based on an assumption and essentially ineffective. I am happy to explain further if this makes no sense.
- (There was some discussion on this matter and some thought that chairs of ad hoc groups could be given voting rights for the term of the ad hoc group's charter. However, the majority felt that only committees formally approved by the Steering Committee should have a voting representative. Committees could create subcommittees and task groups, but the chair of such a group would not automatically be a member of the Steering Committee.)
- It should be noted that as proposed, the Steering Committee would consist of over a dozen voting members. This may be close to maximum practical size for an agenda, coordination and operational business committee. The large number of members promotes broader representation of perspectives, but does not lead to agility in responding to time-sensitive matters. It may therefore be helpful to have an Executive Team, composed of the elected leaders and staff support. They should be able to for example, make day-to-day operational decisions between regular meetings and respond to media requests on behalf of the organization.
- On Steering Committee At Large Community Members - For example, most agencies in SCAC are service providers. It may be beneficial to ensure that the persons being served, e.g., foster children, youth, etc., have a separate voice. It might be helpful for example, to have an individual speaking on behalf of the Latino community. Or if there is a concern that the Department of Health Services, or County personnel over-represent Steering Committee members, that could be counter-balanced by community representatives. In general, it is anticipated that these positions would be filled by community members representing the population, rather than a person from an agency serving that population.