



Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

Roles and Responsibilities

This document summarizes both statutory and agreed-upon roles and responsibilities for all parties involved in the work of the Children's Commission. Those rules and responsibilities that are listed in statute are indicated with an asterisk (*). The remainder of the document has been agreed upon and approved by a majority vote of the members of the Children's Commission.

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1. Commission as a Body
2. Commission Members
3. Commission Chair
4. Executive Committee
5. Standing Committees
6. Task Forces
7. Executive Director

1. Commission as a Body

- a. Study and evaluate issues related to vulnerable youth*
- b. Review and make recommendations concerning legislation*
- c. Promote information sharing, best practices, policies, and programs*
- d. Cooperate with other child-focused commissions, the judicial branch of government, the executive branch of government, stakeholders, and members of the community*
- e. Submit a report by September 1 of each year to the Legislative Council, the Governor, and the Chief Justice*
- f. The affirmative votes of a majority of members are required for the Commission to take action.*
- g. The Commission shall follow Roberts Rules of Order.

2. Commission Members

- a. Make every effort to attend all meetings
- b. Make every effort to review provided materials in advance of meeting
- c. Act in the best interests of Indiana's vulnerable youth

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- d. In instances of a conflict between a member's personal professional opinion and that of the agency or governmental entity he or she represents, it is understood that a member may abstain from voting, or clarify in which capacity he or she casts a vote on a particular action.

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3. Commission Chair

Chairmanship of the Commission rotates among the three branches of government annually by calendar year.* The three rotating chairs are: the judge or justice appointed by the Chief Justice of Indiana, a legislative member of the Commission designated by the chairperson of the legislative council to serve as Commission chair, and the member of the Governor's staff appointed by the Governor.* Responsibilities include:

- a. With assistance from the Executive Director, determines agenda for the Executive Committee
- b. With assistance from the Executive Director and Executive Committee, determines the agenda for the Commission.*
- c. Chairs/facilitates Commission meetings and Executive Committee meetings. In case of unavoidable absence, designates another member of the Commission to chair the meeting.
- d. Provides guidance to the Executive Director
- e. Reviews and approves Commission press releases
- f. With assistance from Executive Director, proposes Task Force and Committee co-chairs for approval by the Commission.

4. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee helps the Commission accomplish its work in the most efficient manner, facilitating decision making in between Commission meetings or in the case of a crisis or other urgent circumstances.

Responsibilities include:

- a. Determine Commission's meeting agendas (final authority for the agenda rests with the Commission chair).
- b. Address specific questions and matters referred to it by the Commission.
- c. Address issues that require preliminary discussion and refinement prior to Commission consideration.
- d. Act on behalf of the Commission on routine matters that arise between regular Commission meetings and in urgent situations that cannot wait for the next full Commission meeting.
- e. Act as liaison with the executive director
- f. Provide counsel, feedback and support to the executive director as needed.
- g. Facilitate the annual assessment of the executive director
- h. Review compensation and benefits of the executive director.
- i. Provide regular, thorough and timely reports of its actions to the Commission.

Of note:

- The Executive Committee should limit itself to making decisions on a limited, as-needed basis.
- The Executive Committee reports to and is accountable to the full Commission and is not a replacement for the full Commission.
- The Executive Committee should report all decisions and actions taken to the full Commission as soon as possible.

5. Standing Committees and Task Forces

The standing committees of the Children's Commission serve at the pleasure of the Commission and provide support in their area of expertise for the Commission's task forces and members as needed for execution of the Commission's strategic plan.

There are ~~three~~ four standing committees, ~~with duties as follows:~~

1. Data Sharing & Mapping:

- ~~Review the CISC Strategic Plan and work with Task Forces to provide data sharing & mapping services needed to implement the objectives of the strategic plan~~
- ~~Respond to assignments from the CISC Executive Committee and/or Task Forces~~

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- ~~Submit an annual report before May 1 of each year to the CISC~~
~~It is recommended that the committee meet at least quarterly.~~

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2. Communications:

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- ~~Implement components of the CISC Operational Plan for which they are responsible, including:~~
 - ~~Develop processes for improved information sharing among Commission members and between Commission members and their agencies, including development and implementation of a comprehensive Communication Plan~~
 - ~~Promote the work of the CISC through the media and other outlets~~
 - ~~Identify ways for CISC to access reports of other organizations doing work in similar areas as CISC~~
- ~~Respond to assignments from the CISC Executive Committee and/or Task Forces~~
- ~~Work with CISC staff to develop and disseminate the CISC annual report~~
~~It is recommended that the committee meet monthly, at least for the first 12-18 months after formation.~~

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3. Child Services Oversight Committee:

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~~The duties of this committee are outlined in statutory directive as follows:~~

- ~~Review bi-annual data reports from the Department of Child Services (DCS)~~
- ~~Review annual reports from the DCS ombudsman~~
- ~~Make recommendations to the CISC~~
- ~~Submit an annual report before May 1 to the CISC~~
~~Statutory directive requires the Child Services Oversight Committee to meet at least bi-annually.~~

4. Equity, Inclusion, and Cultural Competence Committee

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The task forces of the Children’s Commission serve at the pleasure of the Commission and provide research, consultation, and deliberation in their area of expertise as needed for execution of the Commission’s strategic plan.

There are four task forces:

1. Child Safety and Services

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2. Juvenile Justice and Cross-System Youth

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3. Mental Health and Substance Abuse

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4. Educational Outcomes

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All ~~three~~ standing committees and task forces have the following general responsibilities:

- a. Terms: Suggested membership terms shall be for at least one year, beginning from the time of appointment. Members can be added as needed throughout the year. Terms are at the discretion of the Committee Co-Chairs.
- b. Responsibilities and Ways of Work for Committee and Task Force Members: By accepting appointment, Committee and Task Force members agree to:
 - Make a good faith effort to attend meetings.
 - Commit to review materials and attend meetings prepared to discuss the topics at hand, and participate fully.
 - Give advice and make recommendations.

- When speaking with others outside the Committee or Task Force, members should indicate they are not speaking on behalf of the Committee or Task Force, or the Commission, and should present only their own views.
- Committee and Task Force members will serve without compensation.

c. Values of the Committee or Task Force

- The Committee /Task Force is intended to be a collaborative entity. Transparency is valued and expected.
- The Committee /Task Force values innovation and excellence.
- The Committee /Task Force seeks to create outputs and decisions which are well thought out and inclusive of internal staff and system partners/stakeholders, and which incorporate an equity lens.

d. Co-Chairpersons, appointment and terms. The Committee or Task Force may have a single chair or two co-chairpersons. Co-chairs are appointed by ~~CISC~~ the Commission on a voluntary basis for a term of two years. Co-chairs may be asked and accept to serve a second two-year term. After two consecutive two-year terms, a co-chair must step down and a new co-chair be appointed. Former co-chairs may serve as members of task forces and committees if appointed by the current co-chairs. Former co-chairs may be re-appointed to that role after a period of two years, if so desired by the Commission.

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~~d.~~ Co-chairpersons, Responsibilities of the co-chairs include:

- Appointing Committee or Task Force members.
- Finalizing meeting times, location, and agenda ~~(with input from other Committee members).~~ This information should be finalized at least five days in advance of Committee meetings and forwarded to Commission Staff for posting on the Commission's website.
- Facilitate Committee /Task Force meetings, or appoint a facilitator.
- Recording minutes, to include date, time and place of meetings; members present and absent, and a brief summary of discussion. A template is provided. A copy of approved minutes should be forwarded to Commission Staff for posting on the website.
- Appoint sub-committees as needed, and ~~assist in ensuring~~ ensure sub-committees are meeting their objectives and timeframes for task completion.
- Communicate with the eExecutive director on recommendations and progress.
- Attend Commission meetings and give presentations on the work of the Committee or Task Force as scheduled.
- Submit an Annual Report no later than May-June 1 of each year regarding the work of the Committee during the previous year. A template is provided

e.f. Staffing. Committee Co-Chairs are responsible for staffing Committee meetings, either directly or through identification of a staffing resource under their direction.

f. Meetings. The Committee is recommended to meet bimonthly, in the months between Commission meeting months. Committee and Task Force meetings are open to the public, a minimum of once a quarter, but may meet more frequently based upon need.

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g.h. Decision Making and Reporting. Formal recommendations of the Committee or Task Force shall be decided by majority. ~~CISC~~ The Commission has final decision-making authority on ~~Committee~~ recommendations. The Committee or Task Force will submit an Annual Report no later than May-June 1 of each year regarding the work of the Committee during the previous year. A template is provided.

h.i. Communication with the Executive Director and the Executive Committee. The Commission eExecutive director will facilitate all communication between the Committee and the Commission, including the Executive Committee. Committee chairs will keep the eExecutive director informed of their needs, questions, and recommendations, and the Executive Director will provide the necessary connection to the Commission. The eExecutive director will communicate deadlines and formats for Committee

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recommendations and presentations to the Commission. [Committee and Task Force co-chairs may request time on the Executive Committee agenda to seek guidance or feedback on particular issues.](#)

[i.](#) *Minutes.* Minutes shall be kept at every meeting of the Committee [or Task Force](#) and distributed to its members for review prior to the next meeting. The [Committee](#) co-chairs will designate someone to take and distribute meeting minutes. Committees [and Task Forces](#) will utilize the [CISC-Commission Meeting mMinutes](#) template. The approved meeting minutes will be submitted to Commission Staff for inclusion on the [CISC-Commission](#) website.

[j.k.](#) *Specialized Sub-committee.* The Committee [or Task Force](#) may form such sub-committees or workgroups it believes necessary to complete its work. A specialized sub-committee should consist of select members of the Committee and such other persons who the co-chairpersons believe will assist in a full exploration of the issue under review. Where possible the Committee [or Task Force](#) will identify key system partners and stakeholders to participate on specialized Sub-committees.

Specialized sub-committees should remain relatively small in size, generally not exceeding 3-6 members. Once it is determined that a specialized sub-committee is needed, the Committee will ensure that clear objectives and timeframes for completion of the sub-committee task(s) are identified and agreed upon. A lead person will be identified for each sub-committee and will report to the Committee [or Task Force](#) chairs on a regular basis. This person will ensure that the sub-committee is moving forward with completion of their task(s) within the indicated timeframe(s). The [Committee](#) co-chairs and lead person for the specialized sub-committee will be responsible for ensuring that bi-directional communication occurs between the sub-committee and the larger Committee [or Task Force](#) at each Committee [or Task Force](#) meeting.

6. Task Forces

~~The task forces of the Children's Commission serve at the pleasure of the Commission and provide research, consultation, and deliberation in their area of expertise as needed for execution of the Commission's strategic plan.~~

~~There are four task forces, with the following purposes and compositions:~~

Educational Outcomes

~~*Purpose.* The overall purpose of the Educational Outcomes Task Force is to promote interagency collaboration to better connect vulnerable youth with appropriate education and career pathways that lead to successful completion of high school or equivalency, post-secondary education, job certification, and sustainable employment. The Task Force is responsible for implementation of objectives identified in the CISC's Strategic Plan for 2017-2019.~~

~~*Membership.* Membership will be broad-based so as to represent a cross section of stakeholders and should be comprised of individuals representing disciplines including Department of Child Services, Department of Corrections, Indiana Workforce Development, Department of Education, Residential Education Programs, Juvenile Justice, Post-Secondary Education, Public School Superintendents, etc. The maximum recommended number of Task Force members is 12-15. Task Force Chairs will identify and review Task Force membership on an annual basis.~~

Child Safety and Services

Purpose. The overall purpose of the Child Safety and Services Task Force is to support the well-being of Hoosier children by promoting a continuum of prevention and protection services for vulnerable youth and their families. The Task Force is responsible for implementation of objectives identified in the CISC's Strategic Plan for 2017-2019.

Membership. Membership will be broad-based so as to represent a cross-section of stakeholders and should be comprised of individuals representing disciplines including child mental health providers, child advocacy organizations and research/policy experts as well as representatives from state government (i.e., child welfare, Medicaid, mental health). The maximum recommended number of Task Force members is 12-15. Task Force Chairs will identify and review Task Force membership on an annual basis.

Juvenile Justice and Cross-System Youth

Purpose. The overall purpose of the Juvenile Justice and Cross-System Youth Task Force is to serve as a focused, accountable structure to promote interagency communication and collaboration to improve prevention, outcomes and address the unique and complex needs of Juvenile Justice and/or cross-system involved youth. The Task Force is responsible for implementation of objectives identified in the CISC's Strategic Plan for 2017-2019.

Membership. Membership will be broad-based so as to represent a cross-section of stakeholders and should be comprised of individuals representing disciplines including the Office of Court Services, Department of Mental Health and Addiction, Department of Correction, Department of Child Services, Indiana Association of Resources and Child Advocacy, Indiana State Bar Association, Probation Officer, Public Defender, Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative, Court Appointed Special Advocate, and Justice Re-Investment Advisory Council. The maximum recommended number of Task Force members is 12-15. Task Force Chairs will identify and review Task Force membership on an annual basis.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Purpose. The overall purpose of the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Task Force is to support creative and effective methods of improving assessment, access to treatment, and wrap-around resources for vulnerable youth, and households in need of mental health and substance abuse services. The Task Force is responsible for implementation of objectives identified in the CISC's Strategic Plan for 2017-2019.

Membership. Membership will be broad-based so as to represent a cross-section of stakeholders and should be comprised of individuals representing disciplines including Department of Correction; Mental Health and Addiction; Youth Voice; Department of Child Services; Child Advocacy; and Higher Education. The maximum recommended number of Task Force members is 12-15. Task Force Chairs will identify and review Task Force membership on an annual basis.

All four task forces have the following general responsibilities:

- a.—*Terms:* Suggested membership terms shall be for at least one year, beginning from the time of appointment. Members can be added as needed throughout the year. Terms are at the discretion of the Task Force Co-Chairs.
- b.—*Responsibilities and Ways of Work for Task Force Members:* By accepting appointment, Task Force members agree to:
 - Make a good faith effort to attend meetings and represent the concerns and interests of the organization they represent.

- Commit to review materials and attend meetings prepared to discuss the topics at hand, and participate fully.
- Give advice and make recommendations. Members should strive to find common ground and articulate this in their recommendations.
- When speaking with others outside the Task Force, members should indicate they are not speaking on behalf of the Task Force or the Commission and should present only their own views.
- From time to time, based on their work, activities or specific topic areas, Task Force members may hold focus groups or other events to gather specific feedback from non-Task Force members.
- Task Force members will serve without compensation.

c.—Values of the Task Force

- The Task Force is intended to be a collaborative entity. Transparency is valued and expected.
- The Task Force values innovation and excellence.
- The Task Force seeks to create outputs and decisions which are well thought out and inclusive of internal staff and system partners/stakeholders.

d.—Co Chairpersons. The Task Force may have a single chair or two co-chairpersons. Co chairs are appointed by CISC on a voluntary basis. Responsibilities of the co chairs include:

- Appointing Task Force members.
- Finalizing meeting times, location, and agenda (with input from other Task Force members). This information should be finalized at least five days in advance of Task Force meetings and forwarded to Commission Staff for posting on the website.
- Facilitate Task Force meetings, or appoint a facilitator.
- Recording minutes, to include date, time and place of meetings; members present and absent, and a brief summary of discussion. A copy of approved minutes should be forwarded to Commission Staff for posting on the website.
- Appoint sub-committees as needed, and assist in ensuring sub-committees are meeting their objectives and timeframes for task completion.
- Communicate with the Executive Director on recommendations and progress.
- Attend Commission meetings and give presentations on the work of the Task Force as scheduled.
- Submit an Annual Report no later than May 1 of each year regarding the work of the Task Force during the previous year.

e.—Staffing. Task Force Co Chairs are responsible for staffing Task Force meetings, either directly or through identification of a staffing resource under their direction.

f.—Meetings. The Task Force is recommended to meet a minimum of once a quarter, but may meet more frequently based upon need.

g.—Decision Making and Reporting. Formal recommendations of the Task Force shall be decided by majority. CISC has final decision-making authority on Task Force recommendations. The Task Force will submit an Annual Report no later than May 1 of each year regarding the work of the Task Force during the previous year.

h.—Communication with the Executive Director and the Executive Committee. The Commission Executive Director will facilitate all communication between the Task Force and the Commission, including the Executive Committee. Task Force chairs will keep the Executive Director informed of their needs, questions, and recommendations, and the Executive Director will provide the necessary connection to the Commission. The Executive Director will communicate deadlines and formats for Task Force recommendations and presentations to the Commission.

~~i. *Minutes.* Minutes shall be kept at every meeting of the Task Force and distributed to its members for review prior to the next meeting. The Task Force co-chairs will designate someone to take and distribute meeting minutes. Task Forces will utilize the CISC Meeting Minutes template. The approved meeting minutes will be submitted to Commission Staff for inclusion on the CISC website.~~

~~j. *Specialized Sub-committee.* The Task Force may form such sub-committees or workgroups it believes necessary to complete its work. A specialized sub-committee should consist of select members of the Task Force and such other persons who the co-chairpersons believe will assist in a full exploration of the issue under review. Where possible the Task Force will identify key system partners and stakeholders to participate on specialized Sub-committees.~~

~~Specialized sub-committees should remain relatively small in size, generally not exceeding 3-6 members. Once it is determined that a specialized sub-committee is needed, the Task Force will ensure that clear objectives and timeframes for completion of the sub-committee task(s) are identified and agreed upon. A lead person will be identified for each sub-committee and will report to the Task Force chairs on a regular basis. This person will ensure that the sub-committee is moving forward with completion of their task(s) within the indicated timeframe(s). The Task Force co-chairs and lead person for the specialized sub-committee will be responsible for ensuring that bi-directional communication occurs between the sub-committee and the larger Task Force at each Task Force meeting.~~

7-6. Executive Director

- a. Tracks state and federal legislation related to the status of children in Indiana
- b. With the consent of the Executive Committee, speaks for and works on behalf of the Commission by providing information to members of the General Assembly, attending meetings and other events concerning legislation related to children, and testifying on behalf of the Commission.
- c. Assists the Commission in managing its administrative needs, including scheduling of events and overseeing logistics of events
- d. Assists the Commission in the development and implementation of strategic goals, objectives, policies, and procedures
- e. Studies and makes recommendations to the Commission and to the General Assembly on ways to improve services to the children of Indiana
- f. Serves as liaison with and between the judicial, executive, and legislative branches of government, state and local officials, children's service providers and agencies, and the public, including responding to public inquiries about the mission, activities, and goals of the Commission
- g. Works with each committee and task force of the Commission to ensure that there is coordination of services, projects, and information
- h. Is responsible for the format, content, and distribution of the Annual Report of the Commission
- i. Provides reports to the Legislative Council on goals, achievements, and requests of the Commission
- j. Works to ensure that the priorities of the Commission are being met throughout the committees and task forces of the Commission
- k. Promotes best practices, policies, and programs throughout the state
- l. Is an expert resource on availability of services
- m. Is proactive in foreseeing what tasks should be taken on by the Executive Director in order to meet the mission and vision of the Commission
- n. Performs all duties necessary and requested to meet the mission and vision of the Commission