



Why is defining and analyzing your Health Council membership important?

Having a clear definition of membership and an agreed upon way that new members are added to the group are basic tools for maintaining consistency and managing expectations for membership. Clarity on what membership means should be outlined in your Health Council's Bylaws or Rules of Engagement.

A membership analysis will prompt your team to actively engage new members to ensure strong and diverse representation of your community.

What is included in a definition of membership?

Some elements to define your Health Council membership might include:

- A broad explanation of who serves on your council
- How new members are identified and added to the group
- The minimum and maximum number of members on your council
- An aspirational statement of desired representation on your council

Below is an example of how one cross-sector collaborative defines "membership" in their Rules of Engagement:

Health Coalition Membership

The Health Coalition consists of stakeholders representing key organizations, coalitions, and/or communities as well as Subcommittee Co-Chairs.

All New Members are voted in by majority vote of existing Health Coalition members. Preference is given to individuals from organizations who have demonstrated commitment to the Health Coalition through active participation in the quarterly learning collaborative meetings and/or at least one of the four subcommittees.

The Health Coalition will strive to maintain a diverse multi-sector membership with a minimum of 15 members and a maximum of 50, with an emphasis on strategically filling gaps regarding sector and demographic representation, especially as numbers increase.

The following guidance is offered with respect to team membership demographics, sectors and skillsets:

Demographics:

- At least 33% communities of color
- Equitable sex/gender representation (male, female, LGBTQ)
- A broad age representation, including seniors and youth

Sectors:

- Social Services
- Healthcare
- Education
- Government
- Business
- Advocacy
- Faith-Based

Skillsets:

- Advocacy
- Communications
- Event Planning
- Policy or Law
- Healthcare
- Health/Mental Health
- Strategic Planning

Worksheet: Defining Your Health Council Membership

As a group, complete the following worksheet together in order to define, refine, and/or clarify the criteria related to your Health Council membership. You can utilize the agreed upon information in this worksheet to document membership details in your Rules of Engagement or Bylaws.

1. In a broad sense, our Health Council is made up of: (Check all that apply) *(For a more detailed analysis of current and desired membership representation, complete the County Health Council Membership Analysis table on the next page)*
 - a. Community Organizations
 - b. Government Organizations
 - c. Members of other Coalitions
 - d. Individuals who live in the community
 - e. Individuals with lived experience of health inequities
 - f. Other: _____
2. How are new Health Council members identified?
 - a. Through participation in Health Council subcommittees or other Health Council activities
 - b. Through membership analysis and efforts to fill gaps in membership representation
 - c. Through relationships with existing Health Council members
 - d. Self-identified volunteers
 - e. Other: _____
3. How are new members added to the Health Council?
 - a. Appointment by local leadership
 - b. Majority vote of existing members
 - c. Invitation from Health Council leadership
 - d. Other: _____
4. *Optional:* What is the desired minimum number of members on your Health Council? ____
Maximum? ____
5. What are some other desired membership criteria that you wish to outline for your Health Council?

Worksheet: County Health Council Membership Analysis Current Composition and Wishlist

How to use this worksheet: After you have laid out the basic criteria and definition of membership for your Health Council, discuss the current and desired makeup of your Health Council. During your discussion, a facilitator or note-taker can fill in the table below. Here are some questions to guide your discussion:

- Which categories do our current members fit into? (some may fit into more than one category)
- Where are there gaps in representation? Who are some organizations and/or individuals in our community that would help us to fill those gaps? **Be specific.** For this part of the discussion, consider:
 - Who will help us to achieve our goals?
 - Are we missing leaders in our community? Influencers? Subject matter expertise? Specific skillsets?
 - Do we want to be mindful to include high-level decision makers as well as frontline workers?
 - How can we include/invite members who have lived experience with the issues we are trying to address?
 - Are we lacking the voice of key demographics in our community?
- For the organizations/individuals we've listed, which ones are a priority or should be approached first? (**Bold** these)
- For the organizations/individuals we've listed, who is best to approach them? How should they approach them (Will they just be starting a conversation to gauge interest? Will they extend a direct invitation?)

Again, try to be as specific as possible so that everyone agrees to expectations and next steps for adding new members.

Individual and Organizational Representation	Current Representation (List specific organizations and/or individuals)	Desired Representation (List specific organizations and/or individuals)	Who will reach out? (Preferably has a relationship)
Sectors/Organizations			
Early Childhood Services			
Elementary Education			
Higher Education			
Adolescent / Young Adult Services			
Health Care			
Social Services			
Mental Health			
Anti-Drug Coalition			
County Government			
Faith-Based			

Individual and Organizational Representation	Current Representation (List specific organizations and/or individuals)	Desired Representation (List specific organizations and/or individuals)	Who will reach out? (Preferably has a relationship)
Sectors/Organizations			
Chamber of Commerce			
City Government			
County Government			
Agriculture			
Academia			
Development District			
First Responders			
Planning			
Other: _____			
Other: _____			
Individuals - Skillsets			
Accounting			
Administrative			
Legal			
Project Management			
Legal Expertise			
Data Expertise			
Group Facilitation			
Project Evaluation			
Grant Writing			
Media/Communications			
Other: _____			
Other: _____			
Individuals - Lived Experience, Identity			
Unaffiliated Community Member			
LGBTQI+ Persons			
People Experiencing Homelessness			
Individuals with Disabilities			
Individuals Who Speak Limited English			
Racial / Ethnic Minorities			
Seniors			
Veterans			
Women			
Youth			
Other: _____			
Other: _____			

*Adapted from: [Equity Analysis of Group Membership Template](#)