

# California Child Welfare Council

## By-Laws

### I. AUTHORITY

The Child Welfare Council's general authority is granted under Sections 16540-16545 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. Under this statute, the Council is authorized to serve as an advisory body responsible for improving the collaboration and processes of the multiple agencies and the courts that serve the children and youth in the child welfare and foster care systems. The Council shall monitor and report the extent to which child welfare and foster care programs and the courts are responsive to the needs of children in their joint care.

### II. ORGANIZATION

The authorized membership of the Council is comprised of:

- The Secretary of California Health and Human Services, who shall serve as co-chair.
- The Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, or his or her designee, who shall serve as co-chair.
- The Superintendent of Public Instruction, or his or her designee.
- The Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, or his or her designee.
- The Executive Director of the State Board of Education.
- The Director of Social Services.
- The Director of Health Services.
- The Director of Mental Health.
- The Director of Alcohol and Drug Programs.
- The Director of Developmental Services.
- The Director of the Youth Authority.
- The Administrative Director of the Courts.
- The State Foster Care Ombudsperson.
- Four foster youth or former foster youth.
- The chairpersons of the Assembly Human Services Committee and the Assembly Judiciary Committee, or two other Members of the Assembly as appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.
- The chairpersons of the Senate Human Services Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee, or two other members appointed by the President pro Tempore of the Senate.
- Leaders and representatives of county child welfare, foster care, health, education, probation, and mental health agencies and departments, child advocacy organizations; labor organizations, recognized professional associations that
- represent child welfare and foster care social workers, tribal representatives, and
- other groups and stakeholders that provide benefits, services, and advocacy to families and children in the child welfare and foster care systems, as recommended by representatives of these groups and as designated by the co-chairs.

*(Authority: Welfare and Institutions Code §16541)*

Members of the Council not specifically identified in statute shall not accrue more than three absences from Council meetings within one year. If such member is absent from more than three meetings, he or she shall be deemed to have resigned from the Council and the co-chairs shall appoint a new member, except in cases where the member's absence has been excused by one of the co-chairs (Welfare and Institutions Code Section 16541).

**Official Address**

California Health and Human Services Agency  
1600 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Committees**

Committees may be appointed by the co-chairs. Committees may be composed of council members, experts in specialized fields, foster youth, program stakeholders, state and county child welfare and foster care staff, child advocacy organizations, members of the judiciary, foster care public health nurses, or any combination thereof. Committees may advise the Council on any functions of the Council, may assemble information, make recommendations to the Council, but shall not exercise any of the powers vested in the Council.

*(Authority: Welfare and Institutions Code §16542)*

**III. MEETINGS**

The Council shall meet at least quarterly, at the call of the co-chairs, at times and locations convenient to the public as it deems appropriate.

*(Authority: Welfare and Institutions Code §16541.5)*

**Notice of Meetings**

Notice of Council meetings, special meetings and Committee meetings shall be given pursuant to Government Code § 11125 of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. Notices shall be mailed to all members of the Council and all other interested persons, at least ten (10) days prior to each meeting. Notice shall be given and made available on the Health and Human Services website at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting and shall include the name, address and telephone number of any person who can provide further information prior to the meeting. The notice of a meeting of the Council shall include a specific agenda for the meeting, with a brief description of the items of business to be transacted or discussed in either open or closed session.

**Quorum**

A majority of the members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

*(Authority: Government Code §11122.5)*

**Designees**

The Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Chancellor of California Community Colleges may send an alternate or designee who may be counted for a quorum and vote. No other alternate or designee may be counted for a quorum or vote.

**Open Meetings**

All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public. Closed meetings can only be held in accordance with provisions of Government Code § 11126.

*(Authority: Government Code § 11123)*

**Written Material**

Any writings distributed to any member of the Council for discussion or consideration at a public meeting, are public records under Government Code § 6250 et seq., the California Public Records Act, and shall be made available to members of the public. A reasonable fee for reproduction and mailing of

materials may be charged to any person requesting a copy of a public document. The Council shall not be required to make public information which is proprietary, privileged or otherwise protected.

*(Authority: Government Code § 6254 and §11125.1)*

**Mailing List**

An official Council mailing list shall be maintained and annually updated, consisting of all interested persons, public agencies, etc., requesting notification of meetings.

**VI. AMENDMENTS**

**Amendment**

All amendments to these Bylaws, except where specified by statute, may be adopted at any regular business meeting by a majority affirmative vote of the total authorized membership of the Council.