



**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH  
POLICY/PROCEDURE**

<b>SUBJECT</b> <b>SERVICE AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEES</b>	<b>POLICY NO.</b> <b>100.02</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b> <b>04/01/1994</b>	<b>PAGE</b> <b>1 of 4</b>
<b>APPROVED BY:</b> <b>Original signed by:</b> <b>ARETA CROWELL</b>  Director	<b>SUPERSEDES</b> <b>301.1</b> <b>04/01/1994</b>	<b>ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE</b> <b>10/20/1986</b>	<b>DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S)</b> <b>1</b>

**PURPOSE**

1.1 To provide policy direction and procedural guidelines for the Department of Mental Health (DMH) Service Area Advisory Committees (SAAC's).

**POLICY**

- 2.1 Each of the designated service areas will have a Service Area Advisory Committee (SAAC) to function as a local forum for consumers, families, service providers and community representatives. The SAAC's will have responsibility for providing the DMH with information, advice and recommendations regarding:
- 2.1.1 the functioning of local service systems;
  - 2.1.2 the mental health service needs of their geographic area;
  - 2.1.3 the most effective/efficient use of available resources; and
  - 2.1.4 the establishment and maintenance of two-way communication between the DMH and various groups and geographic communities within the County. This will include, but is not limited to: the homeless, substance abusing mentally ill, older adults, children and youth, residential care providers, diverse racial and cultural groups, the disabled, the Alliance for the Mentally Ill, and consumers, family members and friends of the mentally ill.

**GOALS**

3.1 To provide the DMH with community perspectives in program functioning and new/changed programs needed for residents of the Services Areas to assure optimal performance outcomes.



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3.2 To review all proposed new programs and changes that impact on the access to services for both directly operated and contract programs.

**MEMBERSHIP**

4.1 To ensure that those groups and persons with knowledge, experience and stakes in offering optimal levels of care to the mentally ill are represented, have opportunities to communicate with each other, and articulate their special perspectives, five categories of membership are to be equally represented on the SAAC's: (1) consumers; (2) family members; (3) community service providers; (4) local management staff of the DMH; and (5) community representatives. Each SAAC will have a minimum of two members from each category of membership, and its numbers will increase in proportion to the size of each particular SAAC.

4.2 Each SAAC's membership should reflect the particular geographic area's demographics in terms of cultural diversity and racial, ethnic, gender and age distribution.

4.3 Each SAAC shall have a Nominating Committee composed of one representative from each of the five membership categories. The Nominating Committee will suggest persons who may be eligible and should be considered as potential members.

Each SAAC and its Service Area Deputy Director should actively work to identify and recruit persons who can be of benefit to the community and consumers of the Department's programs and services.

4.4 SAAC members should live and/or work in the area.

4.5 The Deputy Director responsible for each Service Area should submit an annual report (June 1 or each year) to the Director, indicating the pertinent population trends and developments that should be considered for the recruitment, selection, and retention of SAAC members.

4.6 At least annually, the Program Support Bureau (PSB) should offer new SAAC members appropriate orientation, training and preparation regarding the



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Department’s goals, objectives, policies and programs. Training will be offered to SAAC members to assist in further development of communication, negotiation, decision-making and leadership skills.

- 4.7 All SAAC appointments shall be made by the Director for terms of two (2) years. Following biennial reviews, the Director may reappoint members or initiate a rotation of various members in order to respond to a particular SAAC’s need. The Director may replace SAAC members who are absent from three (3) meetings per year.

**PRINCIPLES OF SAAC FORMATION AND OPERATION**

- 5.1 Each SAAC shall consist of *not less than* ten (10) members, with at least two members representing each of the five categories of membership. New members should be recruited and appointed in multiples of five (5) to ensure that each category is fully represented. While there is no fixed size limit on the number of members for each SAAC, the Director can set limits for the size of each group to assure that each can function at optimal levels.
- 5.2 SAAC should present (on January 1) an annual report to the Director with particular attention to the Committee’s activities, projects, and accomplishments. In addition, problems, obstacles, needs, new issues, and changing priorities should be addressed.
- 5.3 Each SAAC will have Co-Conveners or Co-Chairpersons, who will be appointed by the DMH Director. These persons will function as a team, dividing responsibilities and activities in a complementary manner in order to promote full and complete discussion and deliberation by members and to increase SAAC productivity and effectiveness. There will be no other standing officers.
- 5.4 Each SAAC will form sub-committees and task forces as appropriate and necessary each year for the conduct of business. The number and types of such task groups may vary from one SAAC to another.
- 5.5 Each SAAC may adopt its own bylaws and procedures to facilitate its work, as long as there is no conflict with Departmental policy, County/State statutes, regulations and policies.



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5.6 Each SAAC should participate in the Countywide Planning Committee to foster consensus on the planning strategies and directions to be taken by DMH.

**SAAC MEETINGS**

- 6.1 Meetings may occur as needed during the year, at places and times to be determined by the SAAC's themselves, based on their objectives, issues to be addressed and tasks to be accomplished.
- 6.2 All of the SAAC general meetings are to be open to the public.
- 6.3 Brief action minutes (including records of attendance, proposals, recommendations, etc.) shall be taken at every general and special meeting of the SAAC's. Instead of formal voting, each matter reported should reflect the consensus of the Committee as well as alternative perspectives. Copies of the action minutes should be forwarded to the Director and other Management staff, Co-Conveners/Co-Chairpersons of each SAAC, the Los Angeles County Mental Health Commission, and other staff as appropriate.
- 6.4 Each Deputy Director shall strive to ensure full and appropriate participation and involvement of all SAAC members. Clerical support and services shall be made available as appropriate and needed to further the work of the SAAC and its task groups.
- 6.5 The Deputy Director, PSB, will take responsibility for providing each SAAC with a range of appropriate, informational materials concerning DMH, County and State guidelines, policies, procedures, evaluations and programs. The PSB will endeavor to assure that these and other materials are received by SAAC's and distributed to members in a timely manner.

**AUTHORITY**

Department of Mental Health Policy