



**PUBLIC HUMAN SERVICES ATTORNEYS
BY-LAWS
AS APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Seattle, Washington, November 10, 2015
With Amendments Presented for consideration to the Executive Advisory Committee and
Approved in Columbus, Ohio, October 11, 2022**

PREAMBLE

These by-laws apply to the Public Human Services Attorneys (Affinity Group) as established within the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA). These by-laws are intended to support the affiliate in carrying out its purpose, serving membership, organizing its leadership body, and establishing its operating processes. These by-laws are in conformance with and subject to the APHSA governing by-laws.

ARTICLE I – NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION 1. The name of the Affinity Group shall be the Public Human Services Attorneys (PHSA), an affiliated organization of the APHSA.

SECTION 2. The purpose of the Affinity Group is to provide a forum at national, state, and regional levels for the discussion of legal matters pertaining to the administration of health and human services, and to provide for cordial exchange of experience and knowledge related to the development and implementation of health and human services policy.

SECTION 3. Consistent with the strategic direction set by APHSA, the Affinity Group shall take responsibility through annual national meetings, regional meetings, or by other means approved by the Executive Advisory Committee (EAC), for continuing analysis of federal and state health and human services legislation in terms of its relevance to the needs and problems of those to be served.

SECTION 4. APHSA shall maintain one or more Listservs for the Affinity Group, as approved by the EAC, to promote the exchange of knowledge and ideas among voting members and other persons approved by majority consent of the Executive Committee or one or more designees of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. The membership of the Affinity Group shall consist of members of the bar of any district, state, territory, political subdivision, or tribal entity who is actively engaged as an employee of or contracted counsel to a health or human services agency of any district, state, territory, political subdivision, or tribal entity or as an employee of or contracted counsel to an attorney general, or equivalent officer. Any member who leaves public employment and any member of the Bar who is an employee of the federal government is entitled to membership but may not vote or hold office.

SECTION 2. A person who is eligible for membership under the provisions of Section 1 of this Article is considered a member if the health and human services agency they represent is a paid member of APHSA or may become a member by attending an annual training and continuing education conference or by applying for membership in writing submitted to the Secretary of the Association for action by the Executive Committee at its next regular meeting or by the officers if so authorized by the Executive Committee.

SECTION 3. There shall be six regions of the Association as approved by the EAC.

ARTICLE III – OFFICERS

SECTION 1. The officers of the Affinity Group shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Membership Officer, and two Officers-At-Large. The officers shall be elected by the membership at each biennial meeting of the Association and shall serve a term of two years. Officers of the Affinity Group shall be practicing attorneys of a human services agency. The terms of officers shall commence immediately following their election and shall end upon the election of their successors.

SECTION 2. The Chair shall preside at the annual meeting of the Affinity Group and at all meetings of the EAC and shall make an annual report to the membership concerning the activities of the Affinity Group. The Chair shall appoint members and designate chairpersons of such committees as may be necessary to promote the objects of the Association. The Chair shall make appointments, with the majority consent of the remaining membership of the EAC, to fill any vacant position on the EAC which will not otherwise be filled by any immediate regular election. The Chair shall serve on the APHSA's Leadership Council or may appoint a designee from the voting membership with the approval of the EAC.

SECTION 3. The Vice-Chair shall perform the official functions of the Chair when the Chair is absent or unable to serve and shall serve as the conference coordinator of the annual training and continuing education conference of the Affinity Group.

SECTION 4. The Secretary shall prepare and submit to the President minutes of the Executive Advisory Committee meetings and the biennial meeting of the Affinity Group; shall be responsible for correspondence and such other related matters as shall be referred by the President; shall perform the official functions of the Chair if both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent or unable to serve; shall perform the official functions of the Vice-Chair if the Vice-Chair is absent or unable to serve; shall be responsible for preparing, editing, and disseminating all annual training and continuing education conference materials; and shall act as a liaison with staff of the APHSA.

SECTION 5. The Membership Officer shall coordinate with the chairpersons of all regions; shall be responsible for maintaining the roster of membership information and shall be responsible for working with APHSA to maintain the listservs, recruit new attorneys to participate in the activities of the Affinity Group, hold meetings with the regional representatives.

SECTION 6. The two Officers-At-Large shall serve on the education committee to assist in developing content for the annual conference and shall support the Chair in working with the EAC and executive staff of the APHSA, including helping to assure that the mutual commitments set forth in the APHSA-Affiliate Charter are met.

SECTION 7. The Chairperson of each region or their appointed designee shall serve on the Executive Advisory Committee to represent the interests of their respective region.

ARTICLE IV - NOMINATION OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1. At the earliest possible date, the Chair shall appoint the chairperson and other members of the Nominating Committee and shall notify the membership of the name and contact information of such chairperson in order to facilitate the early submission of nominations for office by the membership.

SECTION 2. The Nominating Committee shall consist of a chairperson and at least two other members. Committee members shall serve from the date of their respective appointments until the next regular election. No members shall receive consecutive appointments as chairperson.

SECTION 3. The Nominating Committee shall nominate a minimum of one candidate for each of the offices specified in Article III, Section 1, to be filled at the next regular election, which shall be announced to the membership prior to the election.

SECTION 4. The membership reserves the right to nominate candidates from the floor during regular elections. The membership reserves the right of secret ballot either by paper ballot, survey, or poll using technology in all elections between multiple nominees.

ARTICLE V - EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SECTION 1. The EAC shall be composed of the officers, the immediate past Chair of the Affinity Group, two members-at-large, and the chairperson, two representatives, and at least one alternate representative from each of the six regions elected by the regional membership coincide with the term of the Chair.

SECTION 2. The EAC shall consider plans and objectives for presentation to the membership at the annual meeting; shall plan the annual meeting and the annual training and continuing education conference; shall approve plans for regional structure; and shall carry responsibility with the Chair for the business of the Affinity Group that must be transacted between annual meetings.

SECTION 3. The chairperson of each region shall engage with the Representatives and Alternate Representatives of that region; shall evaluate and edit the content of the membership roster pertaining to that region as needed to maintain updated information; and shall evaluate and edit proposed content of any newsletter or other literature pertaining to that region or written by a member from that region.

SECTION 4. The Regional Representatives of each region shall cooperate in collecting and updating information for the membership roster from all appropriate persons within the region; respond to inquiries of prospective and current Affinity Group members; and participate in preparation for the annual training and continuing education conference.

SECTION 5. At least one Alternate Representative elected from each region shall assist the Regional Representatives of that region and shall perform the official functions of a Regional Representative from that region who is absent or unable to serve.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

SECTION 1. The Affinity Group shall meet no less than annually and shall, where appropriate and feasible, meet in conjunction with such annual meetings of APHSA and its affiliates as may from time-to-time occur, with priority given to roundtable sessions of APHSA.

SECTION 2. EAC shall establish the time and place of the meetings of the Affinity Group and shall encourage concurrent regional meetings between the Affinity Group and APHSA.

SECTION 3. The Chair shall call such meetings of the EAC at such times and places as shall be necessary for the conduct of the Affinity Group's business and the planning of the national training and continuing education conference. The Chair shall consider calling such meetings in conjunction with meetings of APHSA and its affiliates.

SECTION 4. The annual training and continuing education conference shall be open to all voting and non-voting members of the Affinity Group, non-members who would qualify to be members under Article II, Section 2, and to other persons as approved by the officers or their designee(s).

ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1. These By-Laws may be amended by the majority vote of the membership at the annual meeting. The membership may, by a majority vote, authorize the EAC to approve amendments to these By-laws between annual meetings. The membership may also authorize the EAC to submit amendments to these By-laws to the membership for a vote by electronic means.