

SAN DIEGO COUNTY COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN BYLAWS
Revised November, 2006

ARTICLE I
Purpose and Authority

Section A: Establishing Authority

The San Diego County Commission on the Status of Women was established by the Board of Supervisors on May 26, 1970. The Commission's establishing authority is found in the San Diego County Administrative Code, Article IV Section 85, and it operates under Board Policy A-74.

Section B: Purpose

The Board of Supervisors of the County of San Diego declares that it is the policy of the County to take action to identify needs and problems of women in the County that are affected by public policy decisions; and furthermore, to eliminate the practice of discrimination and prejudice on the basis of sex within the County. In order to promote this policy and to provide an open forum for discussion and action, there is hereby established a San Diego County Commission on the Status of Women in the Chief Administrative Office. (Article IV Section 85.)

Section C: Lack of Affiliation

The Commission on the Status of Women is a non-partisan, non-sectarian, non-profit making organization. It does not officially take part in, nor lend its influence to, any political issues.

Section D: Advisory Capacity

The Commission on the Status of Women acts in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors only. It is not empowered by ordinance, establishing authority or policy to render a decision of any kind on behalf of the County of San Diego or its appointed or elected officials.

ARTICLE II
Membership, Term of Office, Vacancies

Section A: Selection of Members

1. Each Supervisor shall appoint two members to the Commission all of whom shall be residents of the County of San Diego.
2. The Commission shall have the authority to nominate up to three additional members for appointment by the Board of Supervisors, in order to assure comprehensive and balanced representation. These members are designated "at-large members." (Article IV Section 85.1)

Section B: Number of Members

1. The Commission is limited to 10 Board of Supervisor appointed members and 3 at-large members in accordance with the establishing authority. (Article IV, Section 85.1)
2. The Commission may appoint advisors who, although acting in an unofficial capacity, through their qualifications, experience, and leadership are in a position to offer advice to the Commission on issues related to the status of women. The number of advisors is limited to three advisors.

Section C: Terms of Office (Article IV Section 85.3)

1. Supervisorial District Appointees: Each Commissioner's term shall expire on the date of expiration of the current term of the appointing member of the Board of Supervisors, or at such time as s/he ceases to hold office, whichever occurs first. Any Commissioner whose term expired may continue to discharge her duties as a Commissioner until her successor is appointed and qualified. The re-election of a member of the Board of Supervisors for a succeeding term shall not automatically extend the term of any member of the Commission.
2. At-large members shall serve a two-year term beginning April 1 and ending March 31.
3. Commissioners shall be appointed for no more than two consecutive terms. For purposes of this limitation, a term shall include any appointment to fill a vacancy for one-half or more of a term.

Section D: Vacancies and Recruitment (Article IV, Section 85.4)

1. A vacancy shall occur on the happening of any of the following events before the expiration of the term:
 - (1) The death of the incumbent,
 - (2) The resignation of the incumbent,
 - (3) The ceasing of the incumbent to be a resident of the County of San Diego, or
 - (4) Absence from more than one-third of the regular scheduled meetings in any 12-month period or three consecutive meetings.
2. When a vacancy occurs as the result of missing one-third of regular scheduled meetings in one 12-month period or three consecutive regular meetings:
 - (1) Both the member and the appointing Supervisor shall be notified.
 - (2) Vacancies shall be filled by the appointing Supervisor.
 - (3) At-large members: The Chair will notify the at-large member of her removal. The Commission is authorized to nominate a new member for appointment by the Board of Supervisors.
3. Midterm vacancy: New appointees shall serve for the unexpired term of the member being replaced.

4. Commissions are encouraged to continually recruit diverse women living anywhere within San Diego County who will contribute positively to the work of the Commission.

5. "Recruit" means:

- (1) Educate members of other women's groups,
- (2) Invite individuals or delegates of a group of Commission meetings,
- (3) Invite individuals/delegates to join Commission sub-committees,
- (4) Encourage filing of applications with Clerk of Board of Supervisors and submission of resumes to Commission, and
- (5) No promises are made of a position on the Commission or its sub-committees.

ARTICLE III

Duties of the Commission, Commissioners, and Administrative Staff

Section A: Duties of the Commission

The Commission shall have the power and duty to:

1. Study and evaluate County Charter provisions, ordinances, policies and proposed policies, and their implementation to determine if there are instances of discrimination against any person because of sex.
2. Cooperate with Federal, State, County, City and other public agencies and refer to the respective agencies any matters, disputes, or controversies already in the jurisdiction of their existing powers, with the intent that duplication of efforts should be avoided. The Commission may initiate investigations of such matters and make recommendations to such agencies.
3. Study areas of possible discrimination as they pertain to women's lives and needs including but not limited to:
 - (1) Employment opportunities,
 - (2) Education opportunities,
 - (3) Medical and health services,
 - (4) Legal services,
 - (5) Credit and loan policies,
 - (6) Criminal justice policies and procedures,
 - (7) Housing and transportation facilities,
 - (8) Child care needs,
 - (9) Human care services.
4. Conduct workshops for County personnel and community groups to explore specific subject areas and improve relationships.
5. Conduct public hearings dealing with matters before the Commission.

6. Utilize County resources and facilities to accumulate information for the purpose of furthering the objectives of this Commission.
7. Prepare and disseminate information on matters related to sexual discrimination and prejudice.
8. Formulate programs or legislation to promote and insure equal rights and opportunities for all women.
9. Provide liaison and assistance to citizen groups interested in the problems facing women.
10. Apply for and administer grants from all levels of government and private sources for carrying out the functions of the Commission.
11. Annual Report: The Commission shall write, approve, and submit an annual report to the Board of Supervisors of its policies, activities, findings and recommendations.

Section B: Duties of Commissioners

Each Commissioner has the responsibility and duty to:

1. Attend all regularly scheduled meetings.
2. Accurately and timely perform any filing obligation with Clerk of Board.
3. Know all ordinances, by-laws, and rules governing the Commission.
4. Serve on at least one sub-committee.
5. Understand she/he does not represent the Commission in an individual capacity or in any political activity.

Section C: Duties of Administrative Staff (A-74)

1. Record the minutes of all Commission meetings and file as required by Board policy.
2. Assist the chair with correspondence.
3. Maintain a list of all active Commissioners, keep the roll and certify the presence of a quorum, and advise the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of membership changes.
4. Post all meeting notices in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act, in a publicly accessible place for 72 hours before the meetings, and keep a record of such posting.
5. Reproduce and distribute Commission information and minutes of all meetings.
6. Act as custodian of all Commission documents, records, books, and correspondence.

7. Act as liaison between the Commission and other County staff.
8. Perform such other duties as may be designated by the Commission.

ARTICLE IV
Officers

Section A: Election of Officers (Section 85.5(a))

At the last meeting of each calendar year, the Commission shall elect from its membership a Chair and no more than three Vice-Chairs.

Section B: Term and Vacancies

1. Term: Each officer shall serve for one year, and no more than two consecutive terms in the same office.
2. Vacancies: If an office is vacated, a new officer shall be elected within 30 days of the vacancy to serve until the term expires.

Section C: Duties of Officers

1. Duties of the Chair:

- (1) Provide general supervisory guidance to the Commission.
- (2) Set the agenda of Commission meetings.
- (3) Preside over meetings.
- (4) Assign duties to the Vice-Chairs as necessary.
- (5) Act as sole official spokesperson for the Commission, unless delegated in writing.
- (6) Draft correspondence as directed by the Commission, or to which an immediate response is required.
 - 1.6.1. Make in writing through the Chief Administrative Officer or designee any request which requires response from County management staff not readily obtainable within four hours time. (A-74 Section C.5)
- (7) Serve as *ex officio* member of all ad hoc subcommittees, and meet with chairs of sub-committees to exchange information.
- (8) Initiate strategic planning and evaluation of Commission activities.
- (9) Oversee resources.
- (10) Orient new Commissioners.
- (11) Formally send meeting invitation to potential candidates and recruits.
- (12) Submit nomination of candidates to clerk of board for board's consideration.

2. Duties of the Vice-Chair(s):

- (1) In the absence of the Chair, one Vice-Chair agrees to assume the duties and responsibilities of that office, or they may flip a coin.
- (2) Recommends sub-committee members and other nominees for Commissioner.

ARTICLE V
Ad hoc Committees

Section A: Formation of Ad hoc Committees

1. The Commission may appoint ad hoc committees comprised of Commissioners and community members for the purpose of carrying out the functions and duties of the Commission. Actions and recommendations of ad hoc committees shall not be deemed the action of the Commission and shall in no way bind the Commission or its members until voted on by the whole Commission at a regular meeting. (Article IV section 85.6)
3. The ad hoc committees shall be formed as needed and cease to exist on completion of its assignment.
4. Ad hoc committees shall consist of no fewer than three members, including at least one Commission member who shall chair.
5. A coordinating committee comprised of the chairs of the ad hoc committees may be formed to assemble information from each ad hoc committee for presentation to the advisory committee. The Chair or a Vice-Chair shall act as the chair of the coordinating committee.
6. Any volunteer or consulting work shall not be considered as service for or employment for the County.

Section B: Duties and Responsibilities of Ad Hoc Committee Chairs

1. Ad hoc committee chairs duties include:
 - (1) Call ad hoc committee meetings and run meetings.
 - (2) Keep records of all actions and reports of the ad hoc committee
 - (3) Submit these actions and reports to the Commission at least one week prior to the regular meeting.
 - (4) Report on ad hoc committee meeting and actions taken at the Commission meeting.
2. An ad hoc committee chair shall not act as spokesperson for the Commission unless authorized to do so in writing as set forth above.

ARTICLE VI
Organization & Procedures

Section A: Rules of Governance

1. Robert's Rules of Order govern the operation of the Commission in all cases not covered by these by-laws. The Commission may formulate specific procedural rules of order to govern the conduct of its meetings.

2. The Commission shall prepare and adopt the necessary by-laws and other rules, which may be necessary for the conduct of its business.

Section B: Quorum and Voting

1. A majority of members currently appointed to the Commission shall constitute a quorum.
2. An affirmative vote of a majority of members in attendance shall be required for the passage of adoption of any business or matter before the Commission.
3. Voting is on the basis of one vote per person and no proxy, telephone or absentee voting is permitted.

Section C: Meetings

1. Public Meetings and Notice of Agenda:

All meetings of the Commission and its sub-committees are open to the public as required by the Ralph M. Brown Act and are held in accessible, public places. Notice and agendas of all regular Commission meetings shall be e-mailed or faxed to Commissioners and posted in a publicly accessible place for a period of 72 hours prior to the meeting. Special meetings require 24 hour notice to Commissioners and posting in a publicly accessible place for 24 hours. Notice to Commissioners may be waived if all members are present when the meeting is called. Notice will be mailed on request.

2. Regular Meetings:

A schedule of regular meetings of the Commission shall be established at the first meeting of the year, including the time, dates, and location of the meetings. Sub-committee meetings will be scheduled at the call of the Chair of the committee. Meetings may be adjourned to a specific place, date, and time by a majority vote.

3. Special Meetings:

Special meetings may be called by the Chair, or by not less than one third of the Commission members in a signed writing.

Section D: Order of Business

1. The regular order of business shall be: Call to order, roll call, approval of minutes, public comment, committee reports, old business, new business, adjourn. The order of business may be varied by a vote of the Commission.

2. Time may be allowed for public input prior to a decision. Individuals wishing to speak on an agenda item must submit a request to be heard in writing to the Chair prior to the item.

3. Persons wishing to speak longer than three minutes shall request time on the agenda at least five days in advance of a scheduled meeting.

4. No vote of the commission shall be considered as reflecting an official position of the commission unless passed by a majority of its quorum present at the specific meeting when the vote was taken.

Section E: Minutes of Meetings

1. Minutes of meetings shall be prepared by administrative staff in the following manner:

- (1) Minutes shall be in summarized form, except motions shall be recorded verbatim.
- (2) Minutes of all meetings of the Commission shall be maintained for two years.
- (3) Copies of the agenda and minutes of each meeting shall be filed with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.