

St. Louis County Mental Health Local Advisory Council

By-Laws

Section 1: Name

The organization shall be known as the St. Louis County Mental Health Local Advisory Council (hereinafter "LAC").

Section 2: Mission and Values

The LAC brings together diverse perspectives on mental health in order to identify resources, changes, additions and improvements to local mental health services for children and adults.

Values informing the work include:

- **Hope.** The sense that positive change is possible and needed should be the foundation of our work.
- **Prevention.** Mindful nurturing of children's well-being and trauma sensitivity will improve their mental health throughout their lives.
- **Wisdom.** Each person's wisdom has value and requires consideration.
- **Recovery.** Achieving a state of recovery for each person who needs mental health support is vital.
- **Dignity.** Dignity is essential to our work together so each person can deserve and expect to be treated with respect and honor.
- **Inclusivity.** Inclusion is critical to ensure that our mental health services and perspectives are relevant, inclusive, and responsive to the many ways our county is diverse.

Section 3: Purpose

- **Receive and Review Input:** The LAC will receive and share input from community stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of local mental health services.
- **Recommend:** The LAC will provide input to the St. Louis County Board, Public Health and Human Services, and community stakeholders including an annual report on recommendations for how to improve mental health services.
- **Inform:** The LAC will advise the St. Louis County Board, Public Health and Human Services, or other community stakeholders on how to improve coordination of mental health care in the community and share insights on emerging factors, cultural considerations and trends related to mental health for children and adults.

Section 4: Membership

The St. Louis County Mental Health LAC will be made up of two separate LACs (North and South) with comparable membership, both consisting of a variety of perspectives and seeking a majority of members with lived experience with mental illness. The LAC will also strive for a balance of children and adult perspectives, acknowledging that many people bring multiple experiences to the table.

Both LACs intentionally seek the following perspectives:

- Adults with a mental illness including those who are considered vulnerable to untreated mental health, a Mental Health Peer Specialist, persons of color, Indigenous, and veterans.
- Parents of children with mental illness, persons with someone close in their family who has experience with mental illness and those who received treatment for mental illness as a child.
- Professionals including those working with adults and children with mental illness, in community-based support programs, working with Indigenous adults and children who have experience with mental illness, working in schools, and working with programs supporting families.

Each LAC strives to have between 13-15 members. The North LAC is intentionally focused on communities in St. Louis County north of the Meadowlands and seeks geographic diversity in its membership. The South LAC is focused on Duluth and surrounding communities up to the Meadowlands.

Applicants for membership must be residents of St. Louis County and will submit an application to the Behavioral Health Director. Preference is given to applicants who do not work for St. Louis County in public health and human services. The LAC membership sub-committee will work with the Behavioral Health Director to select an applicant to fill any vacancies.

Meeting minutes will be available to community stakeholders after meetings take place.

Section 5: Leadership and Support

The North and South LAC will each have two co-facilitators who share the role of meeting preparation and facilitation. The co-facilitators will be nominated and approved annually by the membership. The co-facilitators will:

- Set the agenda for each meeting

- Communicate at least monthly with members
- Facilitate the meeting
- Review and distribute the minutes
- Upload and share materials and information relevant to the meetings and discussion
- Invite mental health system representatives to attend upcoming meetings to discuss a service or a need.
- Coordinate the documenting and sharing of recommendations.

Each LAC will also be assigned a liaison from St. Louis County. The liaison will:

- Assist with meeting logistics & arrange for financial incentive paperwork
- For the virtual meetings, LAC Liaison will set up the virtual meetings
- For the in-person or hybrid meetings, LAC Liaison will secure the meeting location and email the link to join virtually
- At each meeting, LAC Liaison will take notes, forward to the co-facilitators for editing/distribution, and assure minutes are posted to the LAC page of the St. Louis County website
- Follow-up on LAC meeting ideas, information needs and concerns, as requested by LAC
- After LAC meeting, LAC Liaison will follow-up as requested by the LAC and co-facilitators with St. Louis County staff as appropriate on ideas or concerns.
- Before meeting, LAC Liaison will assist, as requested by the LAC, to contact persons from St. Louis County staff or other mental health system representatives to attend upcoming meeting to discuss a service or a need.
- LAC Liaison will also work with co-facilitators to identify and collect information that will assist with the work of the LAC

Section 6: Terms of Office

Members will serve 2- or 3-year terms based on member preference and may serve two consecutive appointments. Members will be actively recruited, ideally to contribute a needed perspective. Applications for new membership (for those whose terms are expiring) will be reviewed and recommended once per year but vacancies can be filled as promptly as possible. The LAC will vote on current members seeking a second appointment with consensus rule.

Section 7: Meetings

Meetings will be held monthly, 9 times a year. Meetings will not be held in December, June and July unless the group votes to meet during those months.

Section 8: Absences, Termination, and Resignation

A member who is absent from two consecutive regular meetings in one year, without prior notification will be asked about their intentions and commitment. If no answer is received before the next scheduled meeting, a recommendation will be made to review their membership. Considerations will be made for family and life emergencies. A member may be terminated from the LAC with a majority vote of the members. A notice of resignation should be submitted in writing to the LAC co-facilitators.

Section 9: Decision Making

The LAC will operate with a consensus decision making model, unless a vote is needed (for items like member termination).

Section 10: Compensation

A financial incentive will be provided to all members who are not attending in their professional capacity and will be paid at a rate consistent with other St. Louis County Advisory Councils.