

**Region 1 Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition Operating Procedures**  
***(Revised May 11, 2021)***

**Article I: Purpose**

The members of the Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition, otherwise known as the HMCC, in Preparedness Region 1 (*Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden counties minus the communities of Orange, New Salem, Brimfield, Wales and Holland*), agree to work collaboratively to enhance regional capacity to plan for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the impact of a wide range of health and medical threats. The primary agencies that are guided by these principles and comprise the core membership of the HMCC in region 1 are: hospitals, emergency medical services (EMS), local public health (LPH), community health centers (CHC), long-term care facilities (LTC), emergency management, visiting nurse agencies, home health agencies, dialysis centers, and university/college health centers.

During an emergency, the HMCC will serve a multi-agency coordination function for health and medical agencies within Region 1, in order to provide for more efficient coordination of health and medical activities under the necessary Emergency Support Functions (ESF).

The HMCC may accomplish these purposes by:

- Conducting regional planning and developing regional plans that address all phases of the disaster cycle
- Participating in cooperative training and exercising of regional plans
- Identifying, publicizing, writing for (or aiding participating organizations in writing for) grant funds that enhance regional health and medical capacity to respond to emergencies
- Developing and maintaining an emergency response structure with required response roles filled by paid personnel and augmented with voluntary response elements

- Coordinating a cohesive regional response with a single, 24/7 point of contact for communication with Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) state and regional staff, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), and regional public health/healthcare system stakeholders
- Aggregating pertinent information to maintain and communicate situational awareness
- Organizing or supporting a Joint Information System (JIS)
- Coordinating requests for assets and resources
- Assisting with recovery and mitigation efforts.

## **Article II: Governance Structure**

The HMCC shall have the following Committees:

1. Steering (to guide the HMCC activities, identify capability gaps, and determine priorities)
2. Planning
3. Training and Exercise
4. Ad hoc committees to be established by the Steering Committee as needed.

## **Article III: HMCC Steering Committee**

### Section A: Steering Committee Composition.

The HMCC Steering Committee shall consist of ten voting members: two representatives appointed and overseen by each of the following core discipline groups, using a fair and transparent selection process chosen by the discipline:

1. Public health, as nominated by the four region 1 PHEP coalitions and selected by the Western Mass Public Health Advisory Group (WAG)
2. Public and private emergency medical services as coordinated by Western Mass EMS
3. Long-term care centers, as coordinated by MassMAP

4. Community health centers as coordinated directly by the participating CHCs.
5. Hospitals, as coordinated by the Western Region Hospital Emergency Planning Committee.

Section B: Alternates.

Discipline groups may select two alternates who will represent their discipline in the absence of a Steering Committee member from that discipline. Alternates may not vote if the regular appointed member is present.

Resignation and/or change in a group's alternate representative is to be submitted in writing to the HMCC staff and Steering Committee Chair at the earliest possible convenience.

Section C: Steering Committee Seat Fulfillment.

In the quarter prior to the end of their term of service, HMCC Steering Committee seats will be filled through elections by each respective discipline in the process outlined by each disciplinary coordination group cited in Article III Section A. Steering Committee members who must resign prior to the end of their term will have their vacant seat filled by a disciplinary alternate. Disciplinary coordination groups may then elect a new alternate at their earliest convenience according to the process outlined in Article III Section A.

Section D: Steering Committee Duties and Authority.

The HMCC Steering Committee has the following duties and authority:

- Bring concerns from member communities and disciplines to the HMCC and the HMCC staff
- Meet no less than quarterly
- Update the five member disciplines regularly on HMCC activities in a manner that ensures all constituents have the opportunity to be informed and give feedback

- Develop annual and long-term goals and priorities for the HMCC based on hazard vulnerability analyses, capability planning guides, or other gap analysis tools
- Review and approve HMCC-wide policies
- Advise the sponsoring organization on the best methods to meet HMCC goals and deliverables
- Review and act on reports and recommendations from HMCC staff
- Provide feedback to the sponsoring organization on HMCC staff performance
- Review and vote on the sponsoring organization's annual operating budget and work plan
- Submit documentation of successful completion of IS-NIMS 700; incoming Steering Committee members must provide such submission prior to holding voting rights in Steering Committee meetings
- Review and approve grant applications written in the name of the HMCC or that cite the HMCC as active partners in grant activities
- Review Operating Principles annually
- Share information on emergency planning and response efforts throughout Region 1
- Create and dissolve subcommittees and working groups.

Section E: HMCC Steering Committee Officers.

- Officers shall consist of a chair and vice chair. See attached job descriptions for duties. The vice chair shall assume and perform the duties of the chair in the absence or disability of the chair. In the event of the resignation of the chair, the vice chair shall become chair for the unexpired term
- Officers will be elected by nomination and simple majority vote of a quorum of Steering Committee members
- Term of office will be for a period of one year, with elections to take place during the first meeting of each fiscal year
- In the event of an officer vacancy, the Steering Committee shall fill the vacancy at the next regular meeting

- Officers shall have the right to vote and to debate questions the same as any other member. The Chair shall cast the last vote.
- The chair shall have the right to authorize grant applications and make any other time-sensitive decisions between meetings, and shall report interim actions at the next Steering Committee meeting to garner formal approval.

Section F: HMCC Steering Committee Meetings.

Organizational meetings will be held in the quarter following the beginning of the fiscal year to elect officers, set the Steering Committee meeting schedule for the term, and begin annual review of the operating principles. Regular meetings of the Steering Committee shall take place no less than quarterly, on a schedule determined by the Steering Committee. Special meetings may be called as needed.

The quorum for a Steering Committee meeting shall be six members. Steering Committee members are expected to make all reasonable efforts to attend every scheduled Steering Committee meeting in person, but remote participation will count as meeting attendance. Should a member miss two consecutive meetings, the Steering Committee chair or HMCC staff shall contact the member to identify barriers to participation and identify potential strategies to ensure regular future participation. Should any Steering Committee member miss three consecutive regularly-scheduled meetings, the Steering Committee chair and/or HMCC staff shall contact the discipline's coordination group to address the attendance issue.

Section G: HMCC Steering Committee Voting.

Each discipline shall have two votes, for a total of ten Steering Committee votes. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, s/he must inform the HMCC staff, Steering Committee chair, and disciplinary alternates as soon as is reasonably possible. Should a Steering Committee member be absent from a meeting, a duly elected alternate from that discipline shall vote.

Section H: Terms.

Steering Committee terms shall be for two years. In the first year of operation, one member from each disciplinary group will serve a three-year term to allow for staggered representation terms.

Section I: Non-Voting Stakeholders.

Other health and medical preparedness and response stakeholders and subject matter experts may participate as non-voting stakeholders in HMCC Steering Committee meetings as appropriate.

**Article IV: Working Committees of the HMCC**

All core discipline members are encouraged to serve on working committees. Planning, Training & Exercise, and ad hoc committees of the HMCC may consist of members of the five disciplines as well as other relevant regional stakeholder groups, including but not limited to: home health/hospice providers, Medical Reserve Corps, pharmacists, mental health agencies, public safety officials, dialysis centers, MEMA, COADs, etc. Working committees may choose their own members without formal appointments by the Steering Committee. Working committees of the HMCC may have members of the Steering Committee on them, and may be chaired by a member of the Steering Committee. HMCC staff shall serve as non-voting ex officio members of all working committees.

**Article V: Full Coalition**

The sponsoring organization will hold a Full Coalition meeting at least once annually to update all member organizations on HMCC activities. Full Coalition meetings will be held in central locations or rotate among Region 1 sub-regions. Newsletters will be issued to the full coalition quarterly.

## **Article VI: Procedural Rules**

The rules contained in the latest edition of “Robert’s Rules of Order” shall govern in all cases which are not inconsistent with federal and state law and/or guidelines and these bylaws.

Section A: General votes shall pass via a simple majority of members present. The exception is revising Principles of Operation and budgetary concerns, both of which will require a supermajority equal to or greater than 7 of the 10 Steering Committee members.

## **Article VII: Amendments**

These operating procedures may be amended by seven (7) votes at any Steering Committee meeting. All proposed amendments must be presented to membership, in writing, 45 days prior to the vote, to allow disciplines time to comment and direct their representatives.

## **Article VIII: Host Agency Responsibilities**

### Programmatic:

- Ensure completion of all deliverables for grants received by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) for the HMCC
- Identify and seek additional funding to address public health emergency preparedness priorities
- Provide administrative support for meetings by assisting in the development and distribution of agendas and minutes, coordinating meeting speakers and location

logistics, notifying members of meetings dates, and furnishing meeting materials to attendees.

Administration, Contract, and Financial:

- Ensure that financial management and expenditures meet MDPH, state, and federal standards, and FRCOG financial policies and practices
- Ensure compliance with all reporting requirements for funders
- Prepare reports to the HMCC
- Ensure compliance with all state laws and regulations, including procurement, purchasing, Conflict of Interest, and Ethics
- Prepare preliminary budget, taking into consideration funding availability, HMCC priorities, and FRCOG mandated responsibilities
- Hire, supervise, and discipline staff.

*Reviewed and approved by the HMCC Steering Committee on 5/11/21.*



## **Attachment A: Guidance/Job Description for HMCC Committee Members**

In order for a committee to operate effectively and efficiently, its members must commit to a minimum level of participation. Members who are informed, prepared for meetings, engaged, and enthusiastic can move a committee forward and make it more welcoming for new recruits to join. Following are sample job descriptions for an HMCC committee member and committee chair.

### Committee Member:

1. Believe in the mission of the HMCC and champion the HMCC to its constituents and others in the community
2. Demonstrate interest in working collaboratively with all disciplines on behalf of the HMCC
3. Participate fully
4. Be available to attend regularly scheduled meetings, including having the capacity and time to drive anywhere in Western Mass
5. Attend at least 75% of the meetings and be on time for the start of the meeting
6. Do the necessary work before attending the meeting, such as reading the agenda, minutes from the prior meeting, and documents that will be discussed during the meeting
7. Become familiar with the HMCC's Operating Principles
8. Engage in discussion, while being mindful of allowing all voices being heard. Use electronic devices only for emergencies or for note-taking in the meeting
9. Follow through on commitments made during the meeting
10. Participate in HMCC training and exercise events
11. Act on behalf of the discipline represented:
  - Bring a unique perspective based on the area of expertise, while remembering the responsibility is to act in the best interests of the residents of Western Mass as a whole

- Serve as an information conduit from the discipline to the committee and vice versa
12. Maintain awareness of emerging issues that could impact HMCC member disciplines and the committee itself
13. Guide the work of the staff
- Keep the big picture of goals and objectives in mind and let staff worry about the details of how to get the work done

### Committee Chair:

In addition to being a good committee member,

1. Work with HMCC staff to set the agenda
2. Facilitate discussion during the meeting
  - Ensure everyone gets a chance to speak, which might include encouraging the more introspective to share their thoughts
  - When the Chair wants to be able to speak more freely without worrying about keeping the discussion moving, ask another member to temporarily facilitate.
  - Keep discussions on topic
  - Keep discussions moving forward
  - Be mindful of the time. If it seems like discussion is still productive, but time is running out, ask the group for permission to extend the meeting, eliminate other items on the agenda, or table the discussion until the next meeting
3. Call for formal motions and votes in order to ensure clarity.
4. Begin and end the meeting on time
5. Along with staff, liaison and represent the Region 1 HMCC to other state and regional stakeholders as appropriate.