WCHSA

Wisconsin County Human Service Association
Member Handbook

May 2019

(updated February 2021)

Promoting best practice, creating professional alliances, and developing partnerships in service delivery

Wisconsin County Human Service Association Member Handbook

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Letter from the WCHSA President

Hello WCHSA Members,

Welcome to the Wisconsin County Human Service Association (WCHSA). WCHSA exists to support you in your role as a professional in the Wisconsin human services system. Our primary purpose is to promote positive and professional relations in the field of human services, and your membership is essential to the success of that mission.

WCHSA members include human and social services directors from all 72 Wisconsin counties, as well as their leadership teams and subject matter experts. WCHSA is governed by a 17-member Executive Board, and an Executive Director oversees daily operations of the association. Four Policy Advisory Committees (PAC) advance policy and practice in the areas of Behavioral Health, Long Term Support, Economic Support, and Children Youth and Families programs. WCHSA members also participate on numerous work groups and committees both within the association and in collaboration with state departments and other partners.

There are many ways to get involved in WCHSA. Our Executive Board meets monthly, typically on the first Thursday of the month, and all members are welcome and encouraged to attend. You are also welcome at all PAC meetings, which take place monthly or every other month. Most meetings offer a call-in option for those unable to attend in person. Many of our members also enjoy our annual fall and spring conferences, and we hope you will too. You are welcomed and encouraged to attend and participate in any of the WCHSA activities. Your participation is vital to the success of the association and the value it provides to its members.

This handbook was developed during the first year of WCHSA's ongoing Organizational Effectiveness process, undertaken in 2018. The handbook is designed to provide an overview of WCHSA and serve as a handy reference guide for new and veteran members alike. As we continue our improvement process, the association will further examine our procedures and processes in an attempt to develop ways to be more effective and continuously increase the value you gain from being a member.

I hope that you find this handbook to be a useful guide in understanding the association. I encourage you to get involved and be an active participant in advancing the human services system in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Diane Cable, WCHSA President

Value of WCHSA Membership and Participation

All WCHSA member county Human Services Directors and your leadership teams have access to the following benefits and resources.

Participation in WCHSA activities and meetings

Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to attend the meetings listed below, regardless of whether you are an appointed board or committee member. Participation is available in person or virtually.

- Policy Advisory Committees meetings (PAC)
- Executive Board meetings
- WCHSA Conferences
- WCHSA workgroups

Collegiality

- Regular opportunities to develop relationships with fellow Directors and Managers
- A forum for support and mentorship
- Opportunities for partnership and collaboration in service delivery

Voice:

- Amplify and connects your county voice to state leaders and legislators
- Opportunities to influence future state policy that impacts counties
- Creating shared county voice to advance broad interests

Leadership Development Resources

- Information sharing about professional development opportunities
- Access to expertise in best practice and emerging trends
- Access to high quality leadership and organizational development resources through WCHSA Conferences

Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles

Our Mission Statement

To engage administrators and board members in the development of policy, funding and administrative issues that support the development and maintenance of a public human services system.

Our Vision Statement

To achieve the effective and efficient administration of public human services.

Our Purpose Statement

The purpose of WCHSA is to provide a statewide association to promote positive and professional relations in the field of human services among association members, public officials, constituents, and recipients of services, as a means of meeting the needs of local agencies for educational programs, coordinating activities, and administrative exchange.

Our Guiding Principles

A principle is a fundamental truth that serves as a foundation for a system of belief or behavior or for a chain of reasoning.

WCHSA principles:

- Customer Engagement
- Staff Engagement
- Community Engagement
- Leadership Accountability

Our accountability as leaders in the Human Services field is to hold shared beliefs and engage in behaviors that will lead to the engagement of our staff, community and the children, youth, families, and adults we serve.

Our shared beliefs and behaviors for each of Our Principles is defined as follows:

Customer Engagement

As leaders of the Wisconsin Human Services System we believe

- all people are good, recovery is possible for all individuals, everyone deserves a chance to be a successful and productive citizen,
- people are experts on their own lives and know what they need to be successful,

- the customers we serve need to be at the table to share their experiences and make decisions for themselves and decisions that will improve services in all levels of the organization,
- we can impact families positively,
- the success families achieve is because of them and their efforts are supported by the agency,
- customer engagement takes a lot of time and is not always easy, and
- customer engagement is about relationships and training our staff at all levels on "how to engage" is important to supporting our customers in achieving positive outcomes for our customers.

Because of our beliefs on customer engagement, we model the following behaviors

- implement practices that assure the provision of high-quality customer service that ensures the well-being of children, youth, families and adults;
- that ensure unconditional care for customers, we do not label customers as resistant or non-compliant, and as leaders we are always "looking" for interventions and services that are a "good fit" for the needs of our customers;
- are respectful of our customers' beliefs, values and culture; and
- view other counties as our partners and promote cross county collaboration to combine resources to create a collective impact in our community.

Staff Engagement

As leaders of the Wisconsin Human Services System we believe

- our staff approach to the work supports the outcomes we want for our customers;
- our staff needs to be supported through our agency operations, infrastructure, and environment;
- our staff needs to be supported in work force-work/life balance, education training, and tools to be effective;
- All employees in the human services system need to be held accountable and supported through the provision of tools and resources; and
- All employees of the human services system show respect and dignity to our customers and are transparent when implementing compliance driven decisions and the impact on the families served.

Because of our beliefs on staff engagement, we model the following behaviors

- model a parallel process – as leaders we model engagement and accountability, so managers engage supervisors, supervisors engage staff and ultimately staff engage customers;
- create a culture that allows for all staff to look at their practice to assess what's working, what's not working, how to improve practice and plan for next steps;
- create a trusting and healthy culture and environment in order for innovation and creativity to exist, one that is thriving, fun, celebrates success, and staff approach their work with a "customer first" attitude, support incredible outcomes for customers, and are aligned with the vision of human services;
- create a culture where staff understand what it means to work in government, to work in county human service agencies, and provide service to the community;
- provide professional development opportunities that support knowledge and skill development and ensure staff understand the return on investment and impact their work has on the community;
- create a structure that allows the workforce to be a success in providing quality service and places a priority on self-care and well-being of staff, and prepares staff to be the future leaders in human services; and
- share our Guiding Principles with staff at all levels and are transparent on how the Principles influence our decision-making.

<u>Community Engagement</u>

As leaders of the Wisconsin Human Services System we believe

- we can change the "stigma" about the families we serve;
- we know what is best for the local level-value ability to make local decisions;
- we need our entire community to support families in need given the complexity of issues and concerns that face those we serve; and
- a continuum of care in the community is needed to serve families best – prevention, early intervention and education; however, a strong workforce in all community programs is necessary.

Because of our beliefs on community engagement, we model the following behaviors

- educate our community about economic development and the people we serve to lessen "stigma" by linking our service to outcomes the community cares about;
- educate the community about what human services does to address community issues; and

- collaborate with our community partners to combine resources to create a collective impact in the community.

Leadership Accountability

As leaders of the Wisconsin Human Services System we believe

- analytical skills are necessary for leaders to conduct environmental scans to stay on top of research and trends in the field - best practice;
- technical skills are necessary for leaders to learn how to use data with legislators, the community, and our staff;
- fiscal skills are necessary to plan for service delivery;
- fiscal accountability is necessary in order to act responsibly with funds and not allow fiscal constraints to be a barrier to delivery of good services and have the communication skills and negations skills needed to work through fiscal issues to achieve best outcomes;
- evaluation skills are necessary to determine which programs show positive outcomes and what we are doing that is not effective;
- skills to use data to show our work makes the difference or when it does not and why;
- as leaders we are responsible for compliance issues and must have standards in place to explain the importance of compliance; and
- advocating for our agency staff and our community needs are a critical part of our role;
- we are stewards of taxpayer dollars and need to hold this as a value when making decisions on use of funds and ensure all decisions are based on what is good for our communities; and
- a collective voice of membership will have the greatest impact on ensuring quality services for our communities.

Because of our beliefs on leadership accountability, we engage in the following behaviors

- to build competence at all levels and "step up" accountability for decision making that leads to making an impact;
- that value relationships and collaborations with stakeholders, courts, consumers, staff, county agencies, and other directors;
- create a culture that has a spirit of innovation and not settling for status quo;
- create a culture of fairness for everyone by educating, modeling, and taking all information into consideration when making decisions and taking action;
- create a culture of risk-taking that allows for a worker to look at practice and what's working, what's not working, how to improve, and plan what to do next;

- create mission driven organizations that promote a vision, mission and values that allow for input from staff, the community and customers, and embrace continuous quality improvement, and is strategic and persistent in our decision-making;
- develop partnerships with legislators, county board and state partners to advocate for funding and statue to ensure quality services for families in our communities;
- use our Guiding Principles as a standard to drive our behaviors, decisions and advocacy platforms;
- apply the principles of trauma informed care and compassion as leaders in our day to day advocacy work;
- approach our customers with respect when presenting compliance driven regulations and rules;
- use media as a tool to inform, educate and advocate within our community to meet the unique needs of our customers; and
- advocate for the supports and structures needed in our systems to deliver quality services to our customers.

Association Leadership

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WCHSA is governed by a board comprised of representative directors from Full Member Counties. Each of the five WCHSA regions appoints three members to the WCHSA Board; the president and vice president are elected separately. WCHSA board members are listed on the following website. In addition, agendas and minutes from past meetings can be found at this location.

https://wchsa.org/about-us/executive-board/

WCHSA LEADERSHIP: Primary Roles and Major Activities

President

Roles
- Be the face and voice of WCHSA
- Make decisions on development of issue papers
- Determine priority areas for the WCHSA Board to focus on regarding long-term issues
- Collaborate with and oversee the work of the Executive Director
- Participate in expedited decision-making
- Lead annual goal setting
- Lead and/or participate in quarterly Secretary meetings
- Attempt to resolve impasse when consensus cannot be achieved
- In consultation with the WCHSA Board:
  - o Determine how work groups fit into the WCHSA structure
  - o Recommend and review PAC priorities and work products
  - o Facilitate leadership development opportunities for WCHSA members
  - o Delegate to PAC Chairs and Regional Members

Activities
- Set agendas for the WCHSA Board
- Manage discussion time at WCHSA Board meetings
- Provide guidance to PACs on issue papers
- Report to the Board on the quarterly Secretary meetings
- Testify on behalf of WCHSA

Vice President

Roles
- Lead WCHSA's Organizational Effectiveness efforts
- Participate in expedited decision-making
- Stand in for and support President with his/her role
- Learn what is needed to be President
- Participate in collaboration and oversight with Executive Director

Activities
- Participate in contract negotiation with state agencies and other entities
- Serve as a standing member of conference committee

Treasurer

Roles
- Serve as a regional representative on the WCHSA Executive Board
- Assist Executive Director in maintaining status as corporation and tax-exempt status
- Oversee/manage Executive Director spending
- Provide checks and balance for spending
- Provide guidance on spending and WCHSA financial policies
- Collaborate with Executive Director on financial management

Activities
- Collect dues
- Pay invoices
- Prepare and present WCHSA annual budget at annual business meeting
- Provide monthly financial report at Executive Board meetings
- Collaborate with accountant on taxes

Regional Representatives
- Reach out to members within a region to ensure a diverse representation on issues the WCHSA Board is discussing
- Be a conduit of information between the WCHSA Board and Region; PAC and Region
- Bringing work of PAC/Board to region and bringing region perspective to the WCHSA Board for the proposition
- Support directors in home region
- In consultation with WCHSA leadership:
  - o Determine how work groups fit into the WCHSA structure

- Recommend and review PAC priorities and work products
- Facilitate leadership development opportunities for WCHSA members
- Delegate to PAC Chairs and Regional Members

Activities
- Share PAC key messages, board decisions, issue papers, and other WCHSA topics at regional director meetings
- Communicate regional activities and issue to the Executive Board
- Facilitate replacement of self as regional representative prior to end of 3-year term
- Attend regional director meetings and Executive Board meetings
- Recruit representatives from home region to participate in committees/initiatives

Executive Director

Roles
- Serve as a resource for all WCHSA members
- Be a conduit of information sharing and gathering between the state and association
- Be accountable for decisions on the day-to-day operations of the association
- Facilitate/participate in the process for expedited decision-making
- Identify and escalate issues
- Conduit of information with key partners
- Collaborate and coordinate with WCA lobbyist on issues for WCHSA
- Primary role in communicating with members

Activities
- See Executive Director Position Description

WCHSA Executive Board Members

WCHSA Executive Board

OFFICERS

President	Diane Cable	Director, Eau Claire County Human Services	December 31, 2022
Vice President	Shawn Tessmann	Director, Dane County Human Services	December 31, 2022
Treasurer	Deb Suchla	Director, Trempealeau County Human Services	December 31, 2021

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Northern Region	Vicki Tylka	Director, Marathon County Social Services	April 1, 2022
	Mary Rideout	Director, Oneida County Social Services	April 1, 2023
	Tamara Feest	Executive Director, The Human Service Center	April 1, 2024
Northeastern Region	Jason Jerome	Director, Green Lake County Health and Human Services	April 1, 2022
	Matt Strittmater	Director, Sheboygan County Health and Human Services	April 1, 2023
	Erik Pritzl	Director, Brown County Health and Human Services	April 1, 2024
Southeastern Region	Liz Aldred	Director, Waukesha County Health and Human Services	April 1, 2022
	Kathi Cauley	Director, Jefferson County Human Services	April 1, 2023
	Liza Drake	Director, Ozaukee County Human Services	April 1, 2024

Southern Region	Kate Luster	Director, Rock County Human Services	April 1, 2022
	Kelly Oleson	Director, Adams County Health and Human Services	April 1, 2023
	Dan McWilliams	Director, Crawford County Health and Human Services	April 1, 2024
Western Region	Tonya Eichelt	Director, Polk County Human Services, Division of Community Services	April 1, 2022
	Stacy Frolik	Director, Barron County Health and Human Services	April 1, 2023
	Tim Easker	Director, Chippewa County Human Services	April 1, 2024

Policy Advisory Committees (PAC)

The Wisconsin County Human Service Association has four (4) Policy Advisory Committees (PACs) representing the programs and services of the County Human Services system. The membership of each committee is comprised of individuals who express an interest in the programs or services represented by each committee. No more than twenty (20) members of each committee have voting rights. All voting committee members must be members of the Association. The four Policy Advisory Committees are comprised of the following interests: Behavioral Health; Children, Youth and Families; Economic Support; and Long-Term Support.

Membership of the PACs is open to all Association members. The co-chairs of each Policy Advisory Committee assemble their committee and present the roster to the Executive Board for approval. Each committee member is chosen upon an expressed interest in the work of that committee. The co-chairs chair the committees, provide for minutes and a record of all actions taken, provide for an annual report and maintain a listing of active members, which is filed and updated at least annually with the Executive Director. The Executive Board reviews the written annual report from each PAC and recommend goals for the next term.

To read more about each PAC, see the current member list and review meeting agendas and minutes, visit: https://wchsa.org/pac-committees/

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PAC

The WCHSA Behavioral Health Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) is comprised of county experts from around the state in the areas of mental health and substance use. The Behavioral Health PAC follows issues that impact citizens and counties. The Behavioral Health PAC seeks to promote best practices and recovery. The Behavioral Health PAC meets at the Portage County Department of Health and Human Services on the fourth Friday of February, April, June, August and October of each year.

https://wchsa.org/wchsa-committees/behavioral-health/

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

The Children, Youth & Family PAC exists to collaborate on issues related to children, youth and families that are overseen by the Department of Children and Families, Department of Health Services, and the Department of Corrections. The PAC identifies system-wide issues that affect the health, safety and well-being of children and youth. These include issues related to child protective services and

juvenile justice and the correlating services to both areas, such as mental health and community-based services for disabilities.

The CYF PAC members are subject matter experts in varying levels of county management who can provide crucial input to our State partners in relation to new initiatives and changes to programming. We evaluate what effect proposed changes will have locally on children and families, as well as the fiscal impact and unintended consequences to those proposed changes. The PAC represents a diverse group of counties with rural and urban perspectives and strives to educate our association membership on upcoming changes in policy and procedure. The CYF PAC meets every other month on the second Friday of the month, rotating locations between Stevens Point and Madison.

https://wchsa.org/wchsa-committees/children-youth-families/

ECONOMIC SUPPORT

The Economic Support Policy Advisory Committee meets the third Thursday of each month at the Dane County Job Center to provide feedback and guidance to both the Department of Health Services and to the Department of Children and Families concerning topics related to the daily administration and service provisions of Economic Support Programs, including FoodShare, Medicaid, and Child Care programs. With numerous Federal and State changes occurring in Economic Support programs each and every month, the ESPAC provides feedback on recommendation for changes to information technology and computer systems, to implementation strategies for new policies and procedures, to financial allocations and ways to create efficiencies in our workloads, and on strengthening vital communications to Economic Support recipients, advocacy agencies and county staff members.

https://wchsa.org/wchsa-committees/economic-support/

LONG TERM SUPPORT

The Long-Term Support Policy Advisory Committee (LTS PAC) meets bi-monthly at the Green Lake County Health and Human Services Building in Green Lake to share information and provide feedback and guidance to the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services on long-term care related programs and policies that affect both children and adults. Routine topics include Family Care, Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRC), Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS), Children's Community Options Program (CCOP), the Birth to Three Program, and related advisory councils, committees and workgroups. With membership from counties around the State, the LTS PAC provides feedback and

recommendations on policies and proposed program changes to improve services and outcomes for our most vulnerable populations.

https://wchsa.org/wchsa-committees/long-term-supports/

PAC CHAIRS AND MEMBERS: Roles and Responsibilities

PAC Chairs

Roles
- Facilitate PAC determination of recommendations on policy and formulating decisions on policy issues for the WCHSA Board to consider
- Make recommendations on policy and formulating decisions on policy issues for the WCHSA board to consider when the membership of the PAC cannot meet
- Identify and advance PAC goals
- Serve as a subject matter expert in PAC policy areas
- Provide recommendations in expedited decision-making process
- Strategically lead the PAC toward achieving identified goals and responding to program and policy issues as they arise
- Make decisions on policy/program issues unless they meet the requirement for a WCHSA policy position

Activities
- Bring motions to the Executive Board for action on program and policy issues
- Regularly coordinate and communicate with Executive Director
- Participate in contract negotiation with state agencies and other entities
- Facilitate regular PAC meetings
- Set PAC agendas
- Oversee issue paper development
- Ensure meeting minutes are taken at each meeting
- Ensure PAC decisions are recorded and communicated
- Participate in quarterly meetings with other PAC chairs
- Recommend representatives for work groups
- Complete activities delegated by the WCHSA President/Executive Board
- Complete and follow PAC charter
- Provide monthly reports to the Executive Board

PAC Members

Roles
- Participate in determining recommendations on policy and formulating decisions on policy issues for the WCHSA Board to consider
- Educate and offer varied perspectives on policy and program topics as a subject matter expert to work toward a collective position/decision
- Advocate for home county/region as subject matter expert to bring a collective voice on best practice and what is needed to support best practice across the state

Activities
- Serve on subcommittees/work groups as needed
- Identify topics to discuss at PAC meetings
- Actively participate in PAC activities to contribute toward achieving PAC goals

Communication

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

The Executive Director drafts the agenda for each monthly WCHSA Executive Board Meeting. The draft agenda is reviewed by the President, Vice President, and PAC Chairs, who provide additional agenda items as needed. The final agenda is emailed to members and stakeholders a week in advance of the meeting, along with any handouts.

Meeting Agendas include the following:

- Call to order
- Roll call/attendance
- Approval of minutes
- President's report
- Treasurer's report
- Executive Director's report
- Regional updates
- PAC reports and action items
- Partner agency reports
- Association business and action items

Meeting minutes are typically recorded by administrative support staff from Portage County.

Meeting Minutes include the following:

- Attendance of board members, other WCHSA members, and non-members
- Summary of discussion; typically, one paragraph in length for each agenda topic
- Concluding statement at the end of each discussion to indicate the decision and/or recommendation. If no decision or recommendation is reached, explain why and planned next steps.
- Names of individuals will not be quoted in the minutes.
- Names of volunteers and resources to complete the work will be listed.
- List of presentations that occurred at the meeting and who delivered the presentation.

PAC MEETINGS

Each PAC prepares an agenda for its meetings and records minutes and follow up actions to share with the Executive Board and Association. To support communication across the Association and ensure effective meeting management, standard templates have been created for agenda setting, recording decision points and key messages from meetings, and recording minutes from WCHSA Board meetings and PAC meetings.

Meeting Agendas include the following:

- Call to order
- Roll call/attendance
- Agenda items organized into the following categories
  o Updates
  o Items for decision making and/or formulating recommendations
  o General discussion for information purposes
- Agenda items will have a lead contact to facilitate the discussion
- Agenda items will be time limited to include discussion and concluded with a decision

Meeting Agendas are generated by meeting chairs. Members can submit agenda items in advance by submitting items to the chair.

Key Messages Tool to record decision points and key messages includes the following:

- Items to be communicated – decisions, recommendations, and key messages
- Who the information needs to be communicated to, who will communicate the message and by when

The WCHSA Executive Director will complete the tool at meetings. The tool will be posted on the WCHSA website and e-mailed to members within a week of the meeting.

Meeting Minutes include the following:

- Attendance of PAC members and others present
- Summary of discussion; typically, one paragraph in length for each agenda topic
- Concluding statement at the end of each discussion to indicate the decision and/or recommendation. If no decision or recommendation is reached, explain why and planned next steps.
- Names of individuals will not be quoted in the minutes.

- Names of volunteers and resources to complete the work will be listed.
- List of presentations that occurred at the meeting and who delivered the presentation.

The minutes will be emailed to the Executive Director and PAC members within a week of the meeting as a draft. If the Executive Director is not present at the meetings, the chairs will need to complete the task of sharing minutes and the tracking sheet.

Templates for meeting agendas, minutes, and key messages are available on the WCHSA website: https://wchsa.org/pac-committees/pac-chair-resources/.

Other Communication Tools

Conferences

WCHSA conferences provide opportunities for members to network with colleagues from other counties, stay current on the latest in human services policy, learn from engaging speakers, develop leadership skills, and enjoy the comradery of WCHSA members.

WCHSA hosts two conferences annually – the spring conference, typically held in May, and a fall conference, typically in late November/early December. The spring conference is typically two and a half days and includes a variety of plenary and breakout sessions. The fall conference is typically one and a half days, and is preceded by the annual business meeting, where officers are elected for the following year. The conferences are planned by the Conference Planning Committee, on which any WCHSA member may serve. The Executive Director is responsible for the detailed planning, organizing, and execution of each conference.

Website

The WCHSA website is a useful tool for accessing information about Executive Board meeting proceedings and decisions, PAC meetings and actions, conferences, job opportunities at all levels of human services, and news that impacts human service agencies. The website is undergoing constant development and improvement in an effort to provide timely, relevant information and help meet the information and communication needs of WCHSA and its members.

https://wchsa.org/

WCHSA Watch

WCHSA Watch is a bi-weekly digest of information about state policy changes, PAC updates, funding opportunities, upcoming events, educational opportunities, and other pertinent information for human services leaders.

Decision-Making Accountability and Follow-up

WCHSA Decision-Making Practices: Accountability and Follow-Through

The WCHSA makes decisions on a daily basis. Ownership for the decisions occurs at various levels within the WCHSA structure. Clarity on decision-making accountability and follow-through are important to the success of the Association. The impact of a decision needs to be monitored to ensure the desired outcome is achieved or corrections are made if an unanticipated consequence occurs.

WCHSA will consider the following when making a decision:

1. Who "owns" the decision?
2. Who needs to be involved in making the decision?
3. What is the current situation?
4. What are the criteria for satisfaction?
5. What is the decision?
6. How should the decision be implemented?

Decisions within the control of the WCHSA include:

1. The **Systems** we put into place to accomplish our work and create a political platform
   a. Agenda and goals for WCHSA Board meetings
   b. Agenda and goals for PAC meetings
   c. Agenda and goals for regional meetings
   d. Establishing work teams and other committees
   e. Communication flow between the WCHSA and the state – defining how the state should request information and seek input from the WCHSA.
   f. How we use our executive director to manage the communication flow among the WCHSA Board, PACs, members, and the state
   g. Structure of Executive Board and PAC meetings; what the agenda is, who participates, when and how long we have discussions, and length of meetings
2. Deciding when we will **create a position on an issue or topic** in order to organize our voice to have maximum influence on policy, practices and legislative agenda and how we will **allocate resources** when taking a position

3. **Clarifying our expectations** of where and how we want to influence the State's positions on policy and practice during the planning, discussion, and implementation phase
4. Deciding **where decisions are made in the systems** we have put into place – WCHSA Board, PAC, committees
5. Deciding **whom to engage and when** in discussion and decisions
6. Deciding **how messages get communicated** to members and stakeholders
7. Defining **expectations of what our reactions** will be once a decision is made

The Types of Decisions WCHSA makes:

- Policy: Decisions in which WCHSA is taking an official position on a policy or program issue (i.e., state funding decisions, law changes)
- Responsive: Decisions in response to a specific request from partner organizations (e.g., WCHSA representatives on a committee, state agency memo review)
- Operational: Day-to-day operational decisions

Roles and Responsibilities for Decision Making

Policy Positions

WCHSA takes positions on policy issues impacting county human services departments and the services they provide. Such policy issues may include, but are not limited to, new or proposed legislation, significant changes in the administration of federal and state programs, state biennial budget development, allocation of funds across counties, and gaps in county resources requiring state support. WCHSA may take a proactive position on a policy issue, initiating the analysis of a particular topic and developing recommendations for state policymakers. It may also take a position on a policy in response to an initiative of the state, such as new legislation or changes in funding.

WCHSA may take a policy position in one or more of the following circumstances:

- Decision the state is considering will cost counties money to implement
- Decision the state is considering will result in poor outcomes for our communities and/or staff
- Decision will have legislative impact, positive or negative
- Decision will have cross program impact both positive and/or negative
- A PAC disagrees with the state on item being discussed and needs WCHSA leadership involved to reach consensus on WCHSA's position

Taking a position on a policy issue requires outreach to all members to ensure a diverse voice for the WCHSA Board to consider when taking a position. When considering a policy issue requiring a formal position or decision, the WCHSA Board will utilize the PAC and regional representative structures. PACs will help identify and address areas of interest or concern for WCHSA members. PACs can develop, at the direction of WCHSA leadership or on their own, an issue paper to articulate and document a policy challenge, inform the WCHSA Board of important data related to the challenge, and provide potential solutions for the WCHSA Board to consider to address the challenge. The WCHSA Board also engages the regions by sharing the issue paper at regional meetings for discussion and feedback. The WCHSA Board, with the support of the Executive Director, will continue to engage the regions and PACs until a position is decided and adopted by the WCHSA Board.

Responsive Decisions

WCHSA makes responsive decisions on a regular basis to requests for participation, information, or recommendations from state agencies and other partners. Responsive decisions are those that need to be made relatively quickly on behalf of the organization to issues or requests that are limited in scope, technical in nature, or require WCHSA representation. For example, a PAC may be consulted by a state agency for input on technical changes to data systems or business processes. WCHSA is also frequently asked for volunteers to represent county human services departments on various committees, work groups, and other initiatives. Such requests come to WCHSA through communication with the Executive Director, PAC chairs, or other means.

Decisions of this nature are managed as follows:

- Representation on committees for emerging issues
  o Executive Director to manage request from the state and forward to appropriate group based on topic of request.
  o Executive Director to request the following information from the state to decide who to send the request to for decision and/or recommendation:
    § Clarify if the state is looking for a representative position of the association or county input?
    § What is the request?
      ✓ Policy request forwarded to PAC chairs for recommendations and decisions

- ✓ Program and practice decisions forwarded to PAC chairs, regional representatives, and board members for recommendations and decisions
    - What is the turnaround time for submitting names?
        - ✓ If less than one week, request forwarded to WCHSA Board President and Vice President for decision and recommendation
        - ✓ If more than one week, forwarded to PAC Chairs, regional representatives and board members for recommendations and decisions
    - What is the time commitment from individuals submitted?
        - ✓ Executive Director to clarify at time of request if it is advisory (opinion) or a position (decision)
- Advising on technical program and policy issues
    - PAC Chairs will work with PAC members and WCHSA leadership and members, as appropriate, to reach a decision on the issue and work directly with the requester (e.g., state agency) and to communicate and implement the decision.

Operational Decisions
<mark>TO BE DRAFTED</mark>

Expedited Decisions
Certain issues require WCHSA's decision or position in a very short timeframe, sometimes just days or hours. Any of the three decision types described above may be subject to an expedited timeline, depending on the circumstances presented by the party requesting the decision. In the event that an expedited decision is required, WCHSA will take the following steps:

- Whoever receives the request (PAC Chairs, Board member, etc.) will communicate it to the Executive Director immediately, along with initial input/assessment/context about the request and the receiving person's initial opinion/recommendation.

- The Executive Director will consult with WCHSA leadership to determine a plan of action to reach a decision or take a position.

- The Executive Director will facilitate the implementation of the action plan, including convening a meeting of appropriate parties (e.g., PAC Chairs), reaching a decision, and communicating the decision to the requesting entity.

- The Executive Director will facilitate communication of the expedited decision and the circumstances surrounding it to PAC members, WCHSA members, and/or other appropriate individuals or groups.

Impact of our decision-making process:

As a result of taking accountability for our decision-making and follow-through we will be strategic, consistent, organized, and have higher levels of engagement of membership.   The WCHSA will have the impact we seek on promoting best practices, creating professional alliances, and developing partnerships in service delivery.