

**Minimum Operating Standards
for
County Criminal Justice Advisory Boards**

INTRODUCTION

For many years the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) has supported county Criminal (or Community) Justice Advisory Boards (CJABs). PCCD has consistently demonstrated its commitment to the CJAB concept by not only encouraging counties throughout the Commonwealth to establish such boards, but also by making grant funds available to both create new CJABs as well as providing support for CJAB-sponsored projects. And during that time, CJABs have been instrumental in formulating plans, introducing innovative problem solutions, and fostering collaborative approaches in all aspects of our local criminal justice system.

PCCD foresees CJABs playing an even greater role in the future as counties and municipalities become more involved in the strategic planning process. PCCD is looking to further emphasize the work of our CJABs and to continue channeling funds into projects they support. As a result of that desire to advance and expand county CJABs, it was felt that all CJABs should be operating at some minimum, standard level.

BACKGROUND

In order to achieve that goal, a focus group representing several established CJABs from throughout the Commonwealth, as well as other criminal justice practitioners, was convened and a meeting was held at PCCD on March 30, 2006, to address development and implementation of such standards. That meeting generated a set of draft CJAB minimum operating standards, which were subsequently presented to the Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, and Justice System Advisory Committee (HSLEJSAC) on May 10, 2006 and approved by the Committee on August 9, 2006.

MINIMUM OPERATING STANDARDS

The standards shown below represent factors essential to successfully implementing and operating county and local CJABs. The displayed standards are considered the minimum level of activity required of all CJABs and do not prevent a local or county board from supplementing these prerequisites with standards of their own.

In most cases, CJABs are at liberty to meet the required standard in a manner that best suits their unique local needs and organizational structure. There are a few standards that must adhere to prescribed language. Those categories are underlined.

- ❖ Name
- ❖ Authority
- ❖ Mission
- ❖ Role
- ❖ Membership
- ❖ Chair
- ❖ Meetings and Quorums
- ❖ Agenda
- ❖ Voting
- ❖ Meeting Documentation
- ❖ Committees
- ❖ Grant Management
- ❖ Staff Support
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Planning and Performance
- ❖ Reviews and Amendment of Bylaws

SAMPLE BYLAWS

The following is a sample set of bylaws incorporating the minimum operating standards for a fictitious CJAB in *XYZ County*. The **bolded** language in the sample designates the minimum operating standard applicable to all CJABs. The unbolded language in the sample reflects how the fictitious *XYZ County* has decided to institutionalize the minimum standard in its CJAB.

XYZ COUNTY
COMMUNITY JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD
BYLAWS
ADOPTED ON JANUARY 1, 2006

1. Name

The name of this Board is the *XYZ County Community Justice Advisory Board* and it shall be referred to as the *CJAB* in the bylaws.

2. Authority

The XYZ County Board of Commissioners established the CJAB on January 1, 2004.

3. Mission

The mission of the XYZ County CJAB is to examine and address community criminal justice issues from a systemic and policy perspective and recommend ways in which public safety agencies and private organizations can efficiently, effectively, and collaboratively deliver criminal justice programs throughout those communities encompassed by XYZ County.

4. Role

The CJAB is empowered to make recommendations to public policy boards or agencies regarding the community juvenile and criminal justice system.

and/or

The CJAB is empowered to establish and promulgate policies regarding the community juvenile and criminal justice system.

5. Membership

- a. CJAB membership is reserved for individuals with the authority and expertise to affect the delivery of community juvenile and criminal justice programs in XYZ County.
- b. **CJAB membership shall be a diverse and broad-based representation of the community-at-large.**
- c. **Representatives from the following *core group* of community justice system stakeholders shall be invited to become members of the CJAB:**
 - (1) **County governing body**
 - (2) **Judiciary**
 - (3) **District Attorney**
 - (4) **Public Defender**
 - (5) **County law enforcement assets**
 - (6) **Sheriff**
 - (7) **Adult probation**
 - (8) **Juvenile probation**
 - (9) **Adult corrections**
 - (10) **Juvenile detention**
 - (11) **Local victims organization**
 - (12) **Local public and/or non-profit human assistance and services organizations**

6. Chair

The Chair of the CJAB will be selected by and from among the CJAB's *core group* membership.

7. Meetings and Quorum

- a. **Regular business meetings of the CJAB will be held quarterly, at a minimum.**
- b. Special meetings of the CJAB may be convened at the call of the Chair.
- c. CJAB members or their designees representing the core group cited in paragraph 5b will be invited and given reasonable notice of both regular and special meetings.
- d. CJAB members are to designate a substitute to attend and vote in their stead in the event the member is unable to attend a regular or special meeting.
- e. A quorum for the purpose of conducting regular business or calling for a vote shall be one half of the membership, plus one, of the CJAB members in attendance. Membership shall exclude vacant membership slots.

8. Agenda

- a. Meeting Agendas shall include, at a minimum: juvenile and criminal justice data, approval of minutes or meeting summaries, committee reports, items requiring CJAB action and any other items deemed appropriate to bring before the CJAB for discussion and consideration.
- b. Periodic reviews of the CJAB's strategic planning initiative(s) shall be included on the agenda.

9. Voting

All CJAB members or their designees shall be entitled to vote.

10. Meeting Documentation

All of the CJAB's as well as its committees' and subcommittees' meetings shall be documented either in the form of meeting minutes or meeting summaries.

11. Committees

- a. The CJAB shall establish standing and ad hoc committees, as needed, in order to expedite and facilitate the business of the CJAB.
- b. Non-Members of the CJAB may serve on committees and subcommittees after receiving approval of the CJAB membership.

12. Grant Management

- a. All juvenile and criminal justice-related grant concept papers and application proposals will be presented to the CJAB.
- b. The CJAB will maintain an overview of all juvenile and criminal justice grant-related concept papers, applications, and awards.
- c. The CJAB shall investigate and pursue all sources of possible grant funding for XYZ County.

13. Staff Support

- a. **The CJAB will designate an individual or individuals to provide the staff support necessary to conduct the business of the CJAB.**
- b. Staff support for the CJAB shall amount to _____ FTE (Full-Time Equivalent).

14. Communication

The CJAB shall broadly communicate its goals and work to: county and municipal officials who are outside the community justice system, non-profit stakeholders, and the community-at-large as well as practitioners within the community justice system.

15. Planning and Performance

The CJAB will develop strategic plans that define its objectives and the means by which it plans to achieve them.

- a. The CJAB will develop strategic plans that define its objectives and the means by which it plans to achieve them.
- b. The CJAB will develop indicators to measure its performance in pursuit of achieving its objectives.
- c. The CJAB shall conduct periodic self-evaluations of its performance using the indicators it has established.

16. Reviews and Amendment of Bylaws

- a. These Bylaws shall be reviewed biennially at a minimum.
- b. There must be an advance written notice of the intent to amend these Bylaws sent to each CJAB member at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the motion to amend is to be presented.
- c. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the CJAB members attending the meeting at which the motion to amend is raised.

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Please contact Mr. Robert Ardner, at (717) 787-5152, extension 3120, if you have questions or would like additional information concerning the minimum operating standards. He may also be reached by email at rardner@state.pa.us.