

Kitsap County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee

BYLAWS

Approved March, 2024

1. NAME

Kitsap County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee (ACAC).

2. MISSION

To increase disability awareness and access for people with disabilities in Kitsap County through education and grant-funded projects.

3. PURPOSE OF THE ACAC

The Kitsap County Board of Commissioners established the Kitsap County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee with a letter of Assurance in November of 2016 with the authority granted to counties in RCW 36.01.310.

The Accessible Communities Act (Chapter 215, Laws of 2010) provides resources for counties to promote better disability awareness and access for people who have disabilities.

It assures that members of the ACAC include persons with a diverse range of disabilities who are knowledgeable in identifying and eliminating attitudinal, programmatic, communication and physical barriers encountered by persons with disabilities. It further assures the committee is actively involved in the following activities:

- (1) Advising policy makers on the needs of persons with disabilities in emergency plans.
- (2) Advising the county and other local governments within the county on access to programs, services, and activities, new construction or renovation projects, sidewalks, other pedestrian routes of travel, and disability parking enforcement.
- (3) Developing local initiatives and activities to promote greater awareness of disability issues, and acceptance, involvement and access for persons with disabilities within the community.

4. MEMBERSHIP

a. Members

The membership of the ACAC consists of volunteers who may serve for an unlimited time. Members are not appointed and there are no terms though members are encouraged to commit to at least two years when joining.

b. Representation

Committee members should be persons with a diverse range of disabilities, who are knowledgeable in identifying and eliminating attitudinal, programmatic, communication, and physical barriers encountered by persons with disabilities.

People with disabilities add another dimension to diversity efforts, contributing to the development of unique and creative community efforts. These advisors come from all backgrounds and ages, and have varied skills and perspectives, adding value to a community.

People qualified to be ACAC members include people who:

- Identify as people with disabilities.
- Have a user's perspective on accessibility features.
- Have personal experience with disabilities, disability-related issues and disability-related advocacy.
- Can speak broadly on disability issues as opposed to only addressing their own needs.
- Are knowledgeable about a variety of physical, communication, and program access issues (hearing, vision, mobility, cognitive, neurodiversity, or speech issues, chronic illness, mental illness).

ACAC members are encouraged to:

- Be connected to and involved in the disability community on a state, local or national level.
- Have active involvement in broad-based disability support and advocacy organizations.
- Be familiar with and/or regularly use two-way communication methods that facilitate communication with the disability community they are representing.
- Have disaster-related technical expertise, advocacy experience, management experience and training skills.

ACAC members should be individuals with a diverse range of disabilities who are knowledgeable in identifying and eliminating attitudinal, programmatic, communication, and physical barriers encountered by persons with disabilities and/or parents of children with disabilities and/or individuals with knowledge and experience in eliminating barriers encountered by persons with disabilities.

The majority of members should be persons with disabilities. The ACAC also may include members with specific expertise in areas not represented by other members.

c. Expectations

The ACAC's specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Applying for grants from the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment and other sources to fund projects that will improve awareness, acceptance, inclusion, and access for people with disabilities.
- (2) Advising policy makers on the needs of persons with disabilities in emergency plans.
- (3) Advising the county and other local governments within the county on access to programs, services, and activities, new construction or renovation projects, sidewalks, other pedestrian routes of travel, and disability parking enforcement.
- (4) Developing local initiatives and activities to promote greater awareness of disability issues, and acceptance, involvement and access for persons with disabilities within the community.

The ACAC shall comply with applicable Kitsap County advisory group policies found in the Kitsap County Advisory Board Handbook.

d. Funding Objectives

Projects considered for grant applications by the ACAC (subject to availability of funds and other considerations) will increase access and participation by people with disabilities in Kitsap County. These projects include, but are not limited to, those that:

- (1) Eliminate physical barriers for people with disabilities.
- (2) Result in the implantation of assistive technology for the benefit of people with disabilities.
- (3) Make available specialized equipment which enables people with disabilities to participate fully in daily life.
- (4) Enhance emergency preparedness plans or measures in ways relevant to people with disabilities.

5. TERMINATION

a. Resignation

Resignations by members shall be submitted in writing to the Chair/ Vice Chair and staff. Staff will forward a copy of the resignation to the County Volunteer Services Coordinator.

b. Removal by Board of Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners may remove a member when it determines that it is in the best interest of the ACAC or Kitsap County.

6. ATTENDANCE

All members are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings. When a member is unable to attend a regularly scheduled meeting, they should notify the Chair or county staff in advance. Lack of notification will be considered an unexcused absence. More than three unexcused absences by any member during any 12-month period may result in removal of the member.

7. MEETINGS

a. Open Public Meetings

All meetings will be open to the public and all persons will be permitted to attend. Agendas and meeting minutes will be posted on the ACAC website. The agenda should include time for public comment. Sub-committee meetings of the ACAC that do not include a quorum of membership are not required to be open to public attendance.

b. Regular Meetings

The ACAC shall meet monthly or at intervals that shall in the judgement of the ACAC best serve its needs, as determined by a majority vote of the membership. Administrative county staff support shall include crafting agendas, preparing materials, arranging speakers and presentations, and taking minutes. Regular meetings may be canceled or changed to another specific place, date and time, provided that members are notified preferably at a minimum of one week but at a minimum of 48 hours prior and posted on the county website.

c. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Chair with notice to all members not less than 24 hours prior to the time of the special meeting. A special meeting should be called only if necessary, to conduct business that cannot wait until the next regularly scheduled meeting. Notice also will be posted on the ACAC website.

d. Meeting Location

The Committee meets virtually via an online platform such as Zoom though may occasionally meet in person, preferably in a hybrid format that allows for both in-person and virtual attendance. Meeting locations will be posted in advance on the website.

f. Voting

Each member present at the meeting, including the Chair, is entitled to one vote. A majority of the members present at the meeting are needed to an action.

g. **Minutes**

The minutes of all regular and special meetings shall be recorded by Department of Human Services staff. Minutes will include time and date, meeting length, members present, motions, proposals, resolutions, proposed recommendations and due date, if applicable. Draft minutes should be distributed to the membership not less than five days prior to the next regular monthly meeting for comment and correction and will be formally approved at the next committee regular monthly meeting and submitted to the county staff for posting on the Kitsap County website.

h. **Agendas**

The Chair, Vice-Chair, and staff will coordinate preparation of meeting agendas. Members may suggest agenda items. The agenda should be distributed to members at least five days prior to a regular meeting.

i. **Parliamentary Procedure**

Robert's Rules of Order should govern parliamentary procedure at regular and special meetings.

j. **Decorum and Control**

In the event any meeting is interrupted by an individual or individuals so as to render the orderly conduct of the meeting unfeasible and order cannot be restored by the removal of the person or persons who are interrupting the meeting, the Chair may order the meeting room cleared and continue in session or may adjourn the meeting and reconvene at another location selected by the majority vote of the members. In such a session, final disposition may only be taken on matters appearing on the agenda. The Chair may readmit an individual or individuals not responsible for disturbing the orderly conduct of the meeting.

8. OFFICERS

a. **Process**

The Chair shall open the floor to nominations during the November meeting. Elections shall be held during the last regular meeting of the year during the December meeting. Nominees must be active members who have consented to serve in a leadership role. Members will assume their roles at the January meeting or first meeting of the new year.

b. **Chair**

The Chair shall be elected by a majority vote for a two-year term, beginning on January 1 and ending on December 31 of the second calendar year following election.

c. **Vice-Chair**

The vice-chair shall be elected by a majority vote for a two-year term, beginning on January 1 and ending on December 31 of the second calendar

year following election.

d. Chair Responsibilities

The Chair will lead and conduct public meetings. The Chair is the official representative of the ACAC and shall follow the Public Communications Guidelines established in the Kitsap County Advisory Group Handbook when acting as the official spokesperson to the media. The Chair will be the main contact between the Committee and County staff.

e. Vice-Chair Responsibilities

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will assume the Chair's responsibilities. If neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair is available for a public meeting, the assembled voting members will select a temporary chairperson to conduct the meeting. The Vice-Chair shall assume the role of Chair if the Chair resigns from the Committee.

f. Community Outreach Coordinator

The Community Outreach Coordinator works to identify opportunities where the ACAC can share information on its mission and projects with the public and to solicit input on the needs of people with disabilities in the community. The Coordinator serves at the pleasure of the Chair. The coordinator will make arrangements for ACAC participation in events including the coordination of volunteers and equipment. A sub-committee may be formed to assist with coordination of such events.

g. Vacancies or Removal of Officers

The Board of Commissioners may remove an officer when it determines that it is in the interest of the Committee or the County. If the Chair position is vacated by removal or resignation, the Vice-Chair will assume the Chair's position. If the Vice-Chair is vacated, voting members will elect a replacement.

9. SUB-COMMITTEES

The ACAC may vote to authorize the Chair to create sub-committees as necessary to focus on special projects, issues or opportunities. Sub-committees will give a brief report at each monthly meeting. Reports should also be submitted in writing and attached to meeting minutes or if not in writing, summarized in meeting minutes. Sub-Committees may not make independent decisions; recommendations must be brought to the full Committee for approval during a regular ACAC meeting.

10. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Members are expected to declare a conflict of interest prior to consideration of any matter causing a potential or actual conflict related to funding recommendations. No committee member shall engage in any activity, including

funds from the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, exists.

Such a conflict would arise when: 1) the individual, 2) any member of the individual's immediate family, 3) the individual's partner, or 4) an organization which employs, or is about to employ, any of the above, has a financial or other interest in the firm or organization selected for award.

11. AMENDMENT TO BYLAWS

The Committee will periodically review their bylaws and may propose amendments. A majority vote of the ACAC is required to approve recommended amendments. Amendments must be approved by County Staff.

12. PUBLIC INPUT

Any member of the public will be welcome to attend and provide input at ACAC meetings during designated public comment time. Public comments are encouraged and accepted verbally or in writing. Anyone who wishes to voice an opinion or present information or concerns to the ACAC may attend meetings or contact the Chair or staff.

Approved by a majority vote of the Kitsap County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee:

March 12, 2024

Date

Marsha Cutting
Signature of Committee Chair

Marsha Cutting
Printed Name

Kirsten Murray
Signature of County Staff

Kirsten Murray
Printed Name