

# Planning Council Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. What is the HIV Services Planning Council?

The Portland Area HIV Services Planning Council is a community planning group that oversees the prioritization and allocation of Ryan White CARE Act Part A funds. The Ryan White Part A funds pay for primary medical care, health insurance, mental health services, dental care, substance abuse treatment, medical case management, early intervention services, housing, psychosocial support, and food services for people living with HIV/AIDS who are low income and uninsured or underinsured. The funds are distributed to community-based organizations, public health programs, community health clinics, and hospitals.

## 2. What does the Council do?

The Council has several major duties, including:

- determining the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS;
- setting priorities for the allocation of funds;
- developing a comprehensive plan for the organization and delivery of health services; and
- assessing the efficiency of the grant administration and the effectiveness of services;

## 3. Who else is on the Planning Council?

The members of the Council represent the broad range of people involved in the fight against AIDS in the Portland area including people living with HIV/AIDS, service providers, public health officials, and community members. Federal legislation requires that at least one third of the Council members be unaffiliated consumers of Ryan White Program services and that they reflect the demographics of the epidemic in the Portland Transitional Grant Area (TGA). Planning Council members must live within the Portland TGA, which includes five counties in Oregon (Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, Yamhill, Columbia) and one county in Washington (Clark).

## 4. What kind of expertise do I need to be on the Planning Council?

We need various types of expertise on the Council. Those who live with HIV or AIDS, either through their own experience or that of a loved one, bring their lived expertise to the table. Professionals who have cared for patients or clients who are HIV positive have another kind of expertise to bring. It is critical that the Council listen to all types of expertise in order to make the best decisions for people living with HIV in the Portland TGA. Planning Council Support staff will provide the necessary training to be able to participate in all the Planning Council activities and decisions.

## 5. How much time will I need to commit as a Planning Council member?

The time commitment to the Planning Council is usually five meetings per year. Planning Council meetings are held in November, January, April, June, and July, usually the first Wednesday of the month, from 4-7:30 pm. The July meeting is extended to a full day (9am-5pm) to allow sufficient time for the Priority Setting and Resource Allocation process. Members electing to join sub-committees may also be required to attend additional committee meetings. The Planning Council website, [www.hivportland.org](http://www.hivportland.org), lists upcoming Council meeting times.

## 6. How long is the Planning Council year?

The Planning Council year runs September 1 through August 31. New members will be required to attend the orientation session in October or in February.

## 7. Where are the Planning Council and committee meetings held?

Both Planning Council and committee meetings are held at the Multnomah County Health Department SE Health Center (3653 SE 34<sup>th</sup> Ave, Portland, OR 97202).

#### **8. How long can I be a member of the Council?**

Each member shall be appointed for a two year term beginning September 1<sup>st</sup>. A member appointed mid-year shall serve a partial term until the following September, at which point their two-year term begins. Members may serve on the Council as long as their interest and commitment exists.

#### **11. What will I get out of being a Planning Council member?**

- Experience and knowledge working with Ryan White legislation and other HIV-related services
- Experience with decision making
- Experience with voting and prioritizing
- Leadership skills
- Networking with other stakeholders
- Updates on current HIV issues
- Experience with shaping the HIV service system by ensuring that resources are allocated where they are needed
- Making a real difference for people living with HIV in the Portland TGA
- The Planning Council is a volunteer commitment. Reimbursement for travel and childcare to attend Council and committee meetings is available.

In addition, members living with HIV who serve on the Council, receive incentive gift cards for each Council meeting attended.

#### **12. Can I speak with current Planning Council members about their experiences?**

Yes, there are two Membership Co-Chairs who are happy to speak with prospective members. Other members of the Operations Committee are also happy to share their experiences. Please contact the Council Office (503-988-3030 x25703 or via e-mail [terry.l.bonnett@co.multnomah.or.us](mailto:terry.l.bonnett@co.multnomah.or.us) for further information.

#### **13. How does one join the Council?**

Membership application forms are available from Council staff and on the Council web site, [www.hivportland.org](http://www.hivportland.org). The Nominations Committee reviews applications and interviews potential applicants on an on-going basis. The Nominations Committee selects nominees and forwards names to the Operations Committee. The Operations Committee votes on the applicants, and the names are forwarded to the Chair of the Multnomah County Commissioners for appointment. The Membership Committee strongly recommends that persons thinking about applying to the Council attend a Full Council meeting first.

#### **14. Is there a deadline to apply?**

No, you are welcome to apply for membership at any point during the year. Applications are available by request and online at [www.hivportland.org](http://www.hivportland.org)

#### **15. Can I be added to the Council mid-year?**

A member appointed mid-year shall serve a partial term until the following September, at which point their two-year term begins.

**16. Can one participate without becoming a member?**

All Council meetings and committee meetings are open to the public. Public comment is taken at the beginning of each full Council meeting. The Council also holds community forums throughout the year to gather input from specific communities or neighborhoods.

**17. How does one contact Council members or staff?**

The Planning Council's Administrative Office can be reached by phone at 503.988.3030 extension 25703 or by mail to 3653 SE 34<sup>th</sup> Ave, Portland, OR 97202 or by email through the link on the Council's website. Council members and co-chairs can be reached through the Administrative Office.

**18. Is there homework?**

Council members are expected to read the information sent prior to Council meetings and come prepared to participate in the meeting activities.

**19. What if I miss a meeting?**

We understand that it is occasionally necessary to miss a meeting. We expect that the member will let the Council office know they will be unable to attend. We also expect the member to contact either the Council office or another Council member to stay abreast of decisions or information shared at the meeting that was missed.