**Sacramento County Disability Advisory Commission (DAC)**

**Introduction to DAC Board Service**

**Objective**

It is essential the Sacramento County Disability Advisory Commission (DAC) provides the tools for success in support of a member serving well in any capacity. It is in the Commission’s best interest to refrain from assuming that a member knows the fundamentals of board service.

Individuals who are considering seeking an appointment to the DAC are encouraged to allow adequate time for building a foundational understanding of how and why the Commission was established, how it functions, and how they can make the most impactful contributions to strengthen and sustain the Commission.

Existing DAC members play a critical role in the transfer of knowledge and in setting a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere for new Commissioners.

It is an initiation to DAC service; an introduction to the Commission, its mission, and purpose; clarification of future time; an opportunity to get to know other Commissioners; and a chance to form an educated foundation for the coming years on the Commission.

It is imperative that Commissioners comply with three duties: commitment, involvement, and compliance. If Commissioners understand and embrace these responsibilities, they can fulfill those duties and hold their fellow Commissioners accountable to do the same.

This starts with an understanding of the fundamental duties of each individual Commissioner, which include:

**Duty of Commitment** — Each Commissioner must put the interests of the Commission before their personal and professional interests when acting on behalf of the Commission when providing informed advice to the Board of Supervisors, County Execs Office, department heads and staff accordingly on matters relating to people with disabilities, and on County compliance with laws and regulations applicable to accessibility and other civil rights of people with disabilities. The Commission’s needs come first.

**Duty of Involvement** — Each Commissioner has a responsibility to participate actively in making recommendations on behalf of the Commission and to exercise their best judgement while doing so.

**Duty of Compliance** — Commissioners bear the responsibility of ensuring that the Commission complies with the applicable federal, state, and local disability civil rights laws, as well as adhering to its mission and purpose.

But these are just the starting point, as the DAC has responsibilities that go far beyond these three duties, such as:

1. Monitoring the implementation of the Countywide ADA Self-Evaluation & Transition Plan;
2. Reviewing the accessibility of programs, services, activities, facilities, and employment process of County agencies and departments, and advising the Board of Supervisors, County Execs Office, department heads and staff accordingly;
3. Reviewing relevant County policies, practices, guidelines procedures, reports and State, Federal and local legislation, and advising the Board of Supervisors, County Execs Office, department heads and staff accordingly;
4. Acting as a liaison with community groups, non-profit and governmental agencies, and individuals to address disability issues impacting the County of Sacramento;
5. Reviewing and making recommendations on the County’s Annual Legislative Policy regarding disability issues; and
6. Serving as the Voters Access Advisory Commission for the County.

Orientation is vital to serving well.

Commitment is paramount when you enter the realm of service on the DAC. It’s important to realize that scheduled Commission and Subcommittee meetings require a quorum to conduct business; therefore, choose wisely when you accept such a responsibility. Accountability leaves no room for excuses when it comes to completing accepted assignments from the DAC or your required, chosen Subcommittee.

As appointed Commissioners, we must remember that we are obligated to work with and on behalf of the Board of Supervisors, County Execs Office, department heads and staff accordingly.

The Commission gives advice or makes recommendations collectively, and a single Commissioner has no authority to act on behalf of or bind DAC unless duly and specifically authorized to do so by the DAC Chair.

DAC members may participate in Commission meetings in-person or by electronic or telephonic means, if allowed remote participation as a reasonable accommodation for a member with a qualifying disability that precludes their in-person attendance at meetings of the Commission. Otherwise, members are only allowed to participate in a meeting remotely for a limited number of times, if there is either “just cause” or “emergency circumstances”:

* “Just cause” can be established based on a need related to a disability that has not been “otherwise accommodated” under the ADA. The exception allowing remote participation for “just cause” may also be met by caregiving needs, a contagious illness, or official travel.
* “Emergency circumstances” defines such circumstances as “a physical or family medical emergency that prevents a member from attending in person.”

Commissioners are urged to prepare in advance to ensure that they are able to actively participate in scheduled regular, special, and subcommittee meetings. Becoming skilled in using the Internet, smartphone or tablet apps, and telephone systems would strengthen the ability to communicate.

New and Current Commissioners are also required to undergo orientation or training sessions to familiarize themselves with the Commission’s operations and strategic priorities. As disability subject-matter experts it is important for DAC members to continuously educate themselves and stay updated on relevant issues and developments in the disability field, as well as maintaining leadership involvement in the disability community.

**Qualifications for Membership**

Thirteen of the 17 members shall be voting members and shall be individuals who reside in Sacramento County or are primarily employed in the disability field within Sacramento County.

The composition of the voting members of the Commission shall include members drawn from people with disabilities or their immediate families, organizations serving or representing people with disabilities, and from the general public who have an interest in and/or knowledge about disability issues with a broad community perspective.

Qualifications to be considered for appointment as a voting member on the DAC include the following:

An interest in and knowledge of disability issues as they impact the unincorporated area within the County of Sacramento; and

Active involvement as a leader in the disability community; and

A combination of education, experience or training that would enable each member to provide a meaningful contribution in any of the following areas: leadership, advocacy, employment, rehabilitation, interpretation of architectural drawings, housing access, legal process of compliance, consultation in the use of assistive technology, the interpretation and formulation of legislation, planning and program development, budget analysis, personnel management, community resources development, as well as a practical understanding of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Standards and the California Code of Regulations Title 24 Accessibility Standards.

Additionally, a DAC member should have practical knowledge and understanding of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, amended; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, amended; California Civil Codes; and other disability civil rights laws.

At least 51% of the voting members shall be people with disabilities. Disability is defined as 1) A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, or 2) has a record of having or is regarded as having such an impairment.

Four of the 17 Commission members shall be ex-officio, non-voting members. The ex-officio members shall be Directors of County Departments and shall be representative of a broad spectrum of County programs and services relevant to issues consistent with the stated mission of the Commission.

**Key Service Indicators**

* Understanding the mission and responsibilities of the Commission is crucial for effective DAC membership.
* Awareness of legal and ethical responsibilities of DAC membership, including duties, confidentiality, and conflicts of interest are especially important.
* Familiarity with the Commission’s governance structure, bylaws, and decision-making processes.
* Understanding and commitment to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within the Commission and its activities.
* Ability to think strategically and contribute to long-term planning and goal setting.
* Effective communication skills in writing, listening, speaking, and expressing ideas, to collaborate with other Commission members and community stakeholders.
* Willingness and ability to work collaboratively with other Commission members, subcommittees, and County staff.
* Understanding the importance of advising (not advocating), as well as performing outreach efforts to advance the DAC’s mission and goals.
* Demonstrated commitment to fulfilling DAC duties and making time for Commission and Subcommittee meetings, as well as needed committee work and other responsibilities.

**Access to Records**

As a DAC member you need to have a general knowledge and reasonable access to the DAC’s records that pertain to the responsibilities of the Commission. This includes establishing resolution, the original bylaws and any amended copies, meeting minutes, etc.

**Preparing to Serve**

A voting member’s term of service on the Commission shall be for two (2) years, beginning July 1st. Terms shall be staggered so that one-half (1/2) expire each year on June 30th.

No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. However, based on exemplary service and commitment of a voting member, upon a 2/3 vote of the Commission, a recommendation may be made to the Board of Supervisors to reappoint that member for additional terms, in which case, the Board may, in its sole discretion, extend or refuse to extend the term of such member.

Become familiar with and maintain easy access to the DAC mission and responsibilities. Visit <https://dac.saccounty.gov/Pages/default.aspx> to access an array of important information that may be needed to reference, such as Work Plans, Agendas and Minutes.

**Established Meetings**

Regular DAC meetings occur on the first Tuesday of every month, from 5 PM to 7 PM.

Subcommittee meetings, which occur once a month, are required to attend, and their meeting dates and times vary per subcommittee.

**Voting on Agenda Items**

DAC members will be given the opportunity to read and review documentation or have issues presented for consideration prior to a vote. When a motion is made and seconded, DAC members will proceed to discussion, then a vote is taken. Options provided are a “yes” when in favor, “no” when not in favor, or a DAC member may choose to abstain from taking a position on the particular matter.

Note: In the best interest of the Commission, DAC members are to strongly consider recusing themselves from a decision-making process based on personal or financial impact to them.