

NORTH CAROLINA'S
CERTIFIED PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST PROGRAM

Workgroup Self-Governance Guidelines



**Behavioral Health Springboard (BHS)
School of Social Work
The University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill**

NCCPSS Workgroup Procedures for Self-Governance
Updated June 26, 2024

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Purpose of Self-Governance Guidelines

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Use Services (DMH/DD/SUS) established the North Carolina Certified Peer Support Specialist (NCCPSS) Program Workgroup in 2013. The role of the Workgroup is to provide input on policies for the NCCPSS Program to enhance the certification, training, and accountability of CPSS in NC. The Workgroup works with the Behavioral Health Springboard (BHS) and the NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Use Services (DMHDDDSAS) staff to identify strategies to achieve the above goal. The NCCPSS Program's vision is to develop a qualified Peer Support Specialist workforce with the support, access, credibility, competency, respect, and valued role within the mental health and substance use disorder service delivery system to positively impact the lives of individuals experiencing mental health and addiction challenges. The State aims to accomplish this vision by collaborating with the NCCPSS Program, the (DMH/DD/SAS), and the NCCPSS Program Workgroup.

Guiding Values for the NCCPSS Program

The guiding values of the NCCPSS Program are as follows:

- Individuals with lived experience have an essential role in the public mental health/substance use disorder system and are considered peer supporters.
- The roles created for peers within the service system should fully utilize the peer supporter's lived experience, viewing it as a credential that the individual brings to their work.
- Lived experience is necessary, and ongoing skill development for peer supporters is essential.
- The recovery environment of the workplace is fundamental to the success of peer supporters and recovery for the individuals served.
- Peer supporters are highly valued members of an agency; therefore, they are fully integrated members of the mental health/substance use disorder delivery system.
- Equality and respect between peer supporters and traditional professionals must be reciprocal.
- Choice and self-determination are essential components in everyone's recovery, including individuals receiving and providing services.
- Self-directed recovery does happen, with or without professional help.

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Membership

Composition - The Workgroup will include CPSS, NCCPSS Program staff, and DMH/DD/SUS staff. There will be a minimum of nine and a maximum of fifteen CPSS members. The Workgroup will also have one representative from (each) Local Management Entities/Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO) and the North Carolina Providers Council (NCPC). The LME/MCOs are encouraged to consider persons with recovery experience or recovery allies for this position. The number of NCCPSS Program and DMH/DD/SUS staff on the Workgroup may vary as needed.

- 1. Qualifications and Representation** - All Certified Peer Support Specialists (CPSS) must be certified in NC and have lived in the state for at least three years. Additionally, CPSS must have at least three years of experience in work, supervision, or volunteer roles. Membership should represent a broad geographic distribution across the state and reflect the state's demographics concerning gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, category of lived experience, military/veteran status, and more. **Only CPSS members are eligible to vote.** All NCCPSS Program and DMH/DD/SUS members will participate as supporting staff.
- 2. Length and number of terms** – Starting July 1, 2024, new CPSS members joining the NCCPSS Workgroup will serve a 4-year term. After completing this term, they must take a one-year break before reapplying for another term. There are no limits on the number of terms CPSS members can serve. However, LME/MCO and NCPC representatives can serve a maximum of 2 years and must be replaced by their respective organizations at the end of their term. CPSS Workgroup members who joined before July 1, 2024, will not be subject to term limits. However, if they resign and rejoin after July 1, 2024, they will be subject to the new term limits.
- 3. Application/Selection Process** - Individuals interested in joining the Workgroup must apply online through the PSS Website during the application period. The following are the steps toward selecting a person to become a member of the Workgroup:
 - The NCCPSS Program staff will compile and share applications with the Workgroup.
 - The Workgroup will review and select applicants for interview by a Subcommittee.
 - A Subcommittee of the Workgroup will interview applicants and submit a list of recommended persons to the full Workgroup for approval (a quorum must be present for approval).
 - The Program staff will engage the selected candidate and coordinate an orientation with

members of the Workgroup.

4. **Support** - Members must obtain their employer's support (as applicable) for their time. All CPSS will be reimbursed for their travel, accommodations, and meals related to in-person meetings.
5. **Orientation** -The NCCPSS Program staff and members will introduce the group's history, processes, and policies to those selected.
6. **Vacancies** - Vacancies will be filled as needed when members complete their service terms.
7. **Resignation** - Members wishing to resign from the Workgroup should submit their notice to BHS in writing with an effective date.
8. **Termination** - The Workgroup may end a member's term for causes related to unethical behavior by a two-thirds CPSS vote. A member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without contacting BHS with sufficient cause may be deemed to have resigned from the Workgroup.
9. **Officers** - This workgroup operates without officers, following a non-hierarchical, cooperative governance model. Shared leadership is implemented through a yearly rotating schedule of CPSS members who serve as communication leads.

Duties / Expectations

The duties or expectations of Workgroup members generally include:

- Attending up to eight-day long (in-person and virtual) meetings annually (historically held in the Triangle area).
- Attend monthly virtual special meetings (as needed) to address urgent program needs.
- Participating in time-limited work subgroups (typically conducted via Zoom or other platforms). Examples of time-limited work subgroups may include peer review of NC CPSS trainers, development of new specialty certification, consultation regarding the certification exam, and others.
- Email correspondence related to feedback and consensus-building regarding the various initiatives undertaken by the Workgroup.

Work Subgroups

The following constitutes the description of Work Subgroups:

- They are project-oriented, and the Workgroup may establish time-limited work subgroups as needed.
- The Workgroup will identify subgroup members to work outside regular Workgroup meetings to accomplish the identified task(s).
- Non-members may be added to subgroups as needed to accomplish the designated task of the Workgroup.

Meetings

- **Place**—Meetings generally occur at a site centrally located within the State, with overnight accommodation for members who travel to attend. Through funding contracted from DMH/DD/SUS, the NCCPSS Program reimburses the travel expenses of CPSS members of the Workgroup.
- **Frequency**—The Workgroup generally meets quarterly throughout the year. The meeting frequency will be determined based on the Workgroup's recommendations, with final decisions based on budgetary parameters by BHS and DMH/DD/SUS.
- **Agenda** - Agendas are created and distributed before meetings by the NCCPSS Program staff using the following format:
 - The designated facilitator opens the meeting.
 - The PSS Workgroup Comfort Agreement is reviewed and printed on the agenda at each session's start.
 - Meeting notes from the previous meeting are reviewed, necessary revisions made, and notes approved.
 - The business carried over from the last meetings is addressed.
 - New business is addressed.
 - Lunch
 - Meeting schedules are set and reviewed. Attendee expense reports are turned in to the NCCPSS Program staff
 - Identifying facilitator and recorder for the next meeting is established and recorded.
- **Attendance** -Meetings are open to non-members, but non-members should be invited by a member and notify BHS and the Division of their intent to attend. The invitee will announce visiting non-members to the Workgroup before the meeting and the reason for the non-member's attendance.
- **Quorum** - A quorum at meetings shall consist of the majority of current active CPSS membership (i.e., the membership representing lived experience). The members present (in-person and virtual) at a duly called and held meeting at which a quorum is initially present may continue to do business but not make decisions if a quorum is not present due to the withdrawal of members from the meeting. The Workgroup may not reach a consensus due to insufficient CPSS at the meeting. An agreement may be postponed if insufficient CPSS members are present for a called meeting to constitute a quorum. If a workgroup member is absent for three

consecutive regular meetings without contacting the Program staff with a good cause, they may be deemed to have resigned from the Workgroup. In such a case, a quorum may be calculated based on those members considered to be active.

- **Rules of Order and Conduct** - The “Comfort Agreement” developed by the Workgroup explains the rules of conduct. The Workgroup may update these rules as needed.
- **Special or Emergency Meetings** - From time to time, the Workgroup may hold additional meetings beyond the quarterly meetings. The Program will organize special meetings via email, in-person, conference call, or webinar (via Zoom).
- **Meeting Minutes/Notes** - Meeting notes are taken by a member designated from the last meeting as the recorder for the current session. We will also use "closed captioning and live transcript" to aid in completing meeting notes.

Governance and Decision Making

- **Participatory Decision-making** - The Workgroup has also valued a participatory decision-making process for meetings. Having a BHS staff member facilitate allows all members to participate fully in discussion and debate.

Facilitator Role - A facilitator's job is to help everyone do their best thinking. A facilitator encourages everyone to participate fully and promotes mutual understanding and shared responsibility. A facilitator is an individual who is trained to enable groups and organizations to work more effectively, collaborate, and achieve more than their members could achieve alone. The facilitator is content-neutral. That means the facilitator does not take sides, express opinions, or advocate for a point of view during the meeting. Because the facilitator is content-neutral, the person can advocate for fair, open, and inclusive meetings to accomplish the Workgroup's activities. The facilitator is a process advocate, which means that the person holds the Workgroup members to their guiding values and the ground rules and thinks deeply about its assumptions, beliefs, and values.

- **Consensus Decision-making** - As a goal, members shall always seek consensus on issues requiring action, resorting to a vote only as needed due to an absence of agreement.
 - In keeping with its commitment to using a consensus decision-making process, the Workgroup seeks to reach decisions unanimously. However, where timely action is required and the group cannot reach an agreement, decisions will be made by a simple majority vote. In such cases, each member is entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote. Voting shall be done by voice vote. Members shall not be permitted to vote or act by proxy (see Appendix A and B).
 - When a matter is taken to a vote, only CPSS may vote.

Conflict of Interest

Purpose - The purpose of the conflict-of-interest practice is to protect the interests of the North Carolina Certified Peer Support Specialist Program when it is contemplating entering a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a member of the Workgroup or employee of BHS or the Division or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This practice is intended to supplement, but not replace, any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest relevant to governmental organizations.

- **Full disclosure** - Members are expected to disclose potential conflicts of interest about a matter under discussion. After the disclosure, the Workgroup may discuss how to proceed. To avoid a conflict of interest, Workgroup members must recuse themselves from all deliberations concerning programs or funding for projects directly involved with the person's organization. Any Workgroup voting member directly concerned with developing and implementing a proposal or contract funded by the DMHDDSUS will declare a potential conflict of interest at each Workgroup meeting when the proposal or contract is discussed. This declaration will be recorded in the minutes and will include refraining from voting on the proposal or contract. If the conflict of interest continues, consideration will be given to the removal from the Workgroup.

Confidentiality

- General Workgroup discussions, agendas, and meeting notes are not for public distribution. However, due to the public sector's focus on the work, all documents are subject to the North Carolina Public Records Law. Notwithstanding legal public release, the Workgroup will decide which agenda items and discussion topics should be shared beyond its limits.
- Workgroup members are not to speak on behalf of the Workgroup without expressed designation by Workgroup consensus.

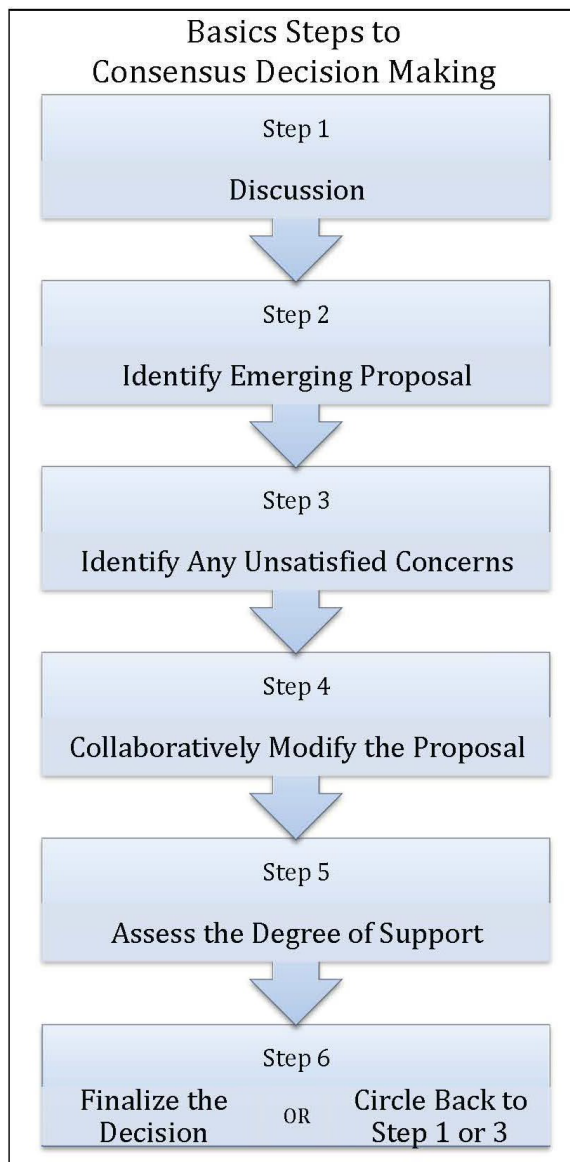
Amendments and Revisions

The NCCPSS Program Workgroup reserves the right to amend and modify the Procedures for Self-governance using the regular Governance and Decision-Making Process outlined in this document. When the NCCPSS Program Workgroup makes any changes to the Self-Governance document, the Program staff will post them on the PSS website and notify all members by email when they become effective.

If you have any concerns or questions, you may submit them to the Program at
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E-mail: nccpssprogram@unc.edu
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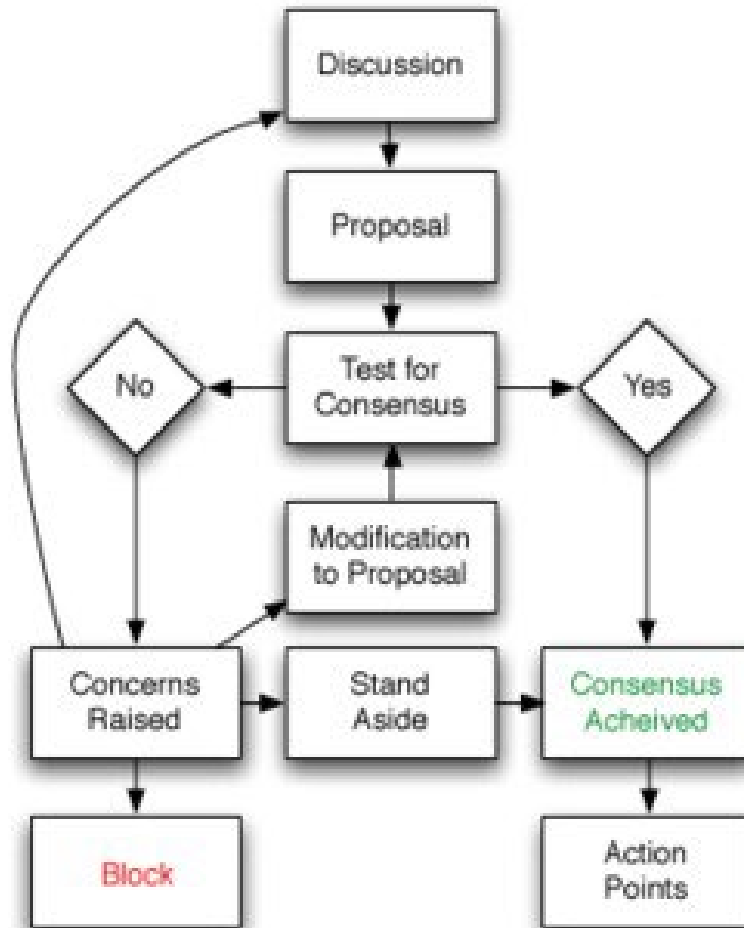
Appendix A

Basics of Consensus Decision-making (*From The Basics of Consensus Decision-Making by Tim Hartnett, Ph.D.*)



Appendix B

Consensus Decision-making Model (<https://www.consensusdecisionmaking.org/articles-consensus/#ConsensusBasics>)



Webster's dictionary defines consensus as "agreement of the majority in sentiment or belief" and by the Oxford dictionary as "general agreement." A consensus is most helpful for group facilitators when describing the collaborative decision-making process. Thus, a consensus-oriented process is one in which people work together to reach as much agreement as possible. Unanimity (or unanimous consent) is more specific. It refers to the outcome of a voteshowing that all members agree. Consensus is the process. Unanimity is one possible result of a consensus process.