

VIRGIN ISLANDS ADVOCACY, INC.
d/b/a Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands
(DRCVI)

GUIDELINES
PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY FOR INDIVIDUALS
WITH MENTAL ILLNESS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

ARTICLE I: Name and Objectives:

- a. The name of this body shall be the PAIMI Advisory Council.
- b. The PAIMI Advisory Council shall advise the Board of Directors of the Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands, hereinafter referred to as DRCVI on policies and priorities to be carried out in protecting and advocating the rights of individuals with mental illness pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1080 *et. seq.*
- c. The Council shall prepare an annual report describing the activities of the council and its assessment of the program.

ARTICLE II: Membership

- a. The Advisory Council shall consist of not more than seven (7) members and shall include: (1) individuals who have received or are receiving mental health services; (2) family members of such individuals; (3) mental health professionals; and (4) individuals from the public who are knowledgeable about mental illness. At least sixty percent (60%) of the

membership shall be comprised of individuals who have received or are receiving mental health services or who are family members of such individuals.

- b. The Executive Director of DRCVI shall serve as an ex-officio/member of the Advisory Council and shall designate one other staff person to be an ex-officio member as well.
- c. Advisory council members shall be elected by members of the council to serve a three (3) year term. For purposes of these guidelines, current members shall be deemed to be starting on a staggered basis of 1, 2, and 3 year terms, their first term at the date of acceptance of these guidelines.
- d. An Advisory Council member is eligible to serve two consecutive terms. Additional terms may be served based upon the consent of the member and the PAIMI Advisory Council. Vacancies in Advisory Council membership positions, however created, shall be filled by the Advisory Council membership within a reasonable period of time.
- e. A vacancy may occur by resignation or removal. A member resigning shall notify, in writing, the Chairperson of the Advisory Council and the Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

- f. Advisory Council members or their designees are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the Advisory Council. Any member who misses three consecutive meetings without good cause shall be contacted by letter to determine whether the member wishes to continue to serve on the Advisory Council.
- g. Upon the formal recommendation of the members of the Advisory Council and 30 days notice, the Advisory Council may remove any member with cause.

ARTICLE III: Officers

- a. Officers shall be a chairperson and vice-chairperson. The Chairperson of the Advisory Council shall be elected by the members of the Advisory Council and shall be a person who has received or is receiving mental health services or who is a family member of such individual. The Chairperson will serve as a member of the DRCVI Board. The Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by the Advisory Council.
- b. Duties shall be those usual for each office except that other duties may be assigned by the Council as necessary and appropriate.
- c. The Chairperson shall serve as a member of the Board of Directors of DRCVI.

- d. In the event of a vacancy in the Chairperson's office, the Vice-Chairperson shall serve as Chairperson until a Chairperson is elected by the members of the Advisory Council. Vacancies in the Vice-Chairperson's office shall be filled for the remainder of the term by a special election of the Advisory Council at the next scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE IV: Meetings

- a. The Advisory Council shall hold its annual organization meeting in the month of September. In the event it cannot be held then, at such other times as determined by the Advisory Council.
- b. The Advisory Council shall meet at least three (3) times per year and at other times as the Council deems necessary.
- c. A quorum shall be constituted by the attendance of a simple majority of the membership. Vacant positions on the council shall not be counted in establishing a quorum.
- d. When a member is unable to attend they may appoint a proxy to represent their interest by submitting a written authorization to the Chairperson. Individuals acting as proxies are not eligible to vote.

ARTICLE V: Committees

- a. The Advisory Council may establish committees to investigate areas of interest to the Council and report back to the Council.
- b. The chairperson of each committee shall be designated by the Advisory Council Chairperson.
- c. The Advisory Council Chairperson shall choose committee members in consultation with the committee chairperson.

ARTICLE VI: Conflict of Interest

- a. Whenever a council member has reason to believe that the actions of any member(s) including her/himself may be in violation of DRCVI's Conflict of Interest Policy, that member shall immediately notify the Advisory Council chair.
- b. No council member shall knowingly vote in any matters that may result directly or indirectly in financial advancement for her/himself or any family member.
- c. Whenever a member is aware that the agency or group for which such member acts as a representative has a conflict of interest in matters presented, the member shall report this conflict to the Council.

- d. Each Advisory Council shall annually execute the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement.

ARTICLE VII: Amendments

- a. These Guidelines may be amended by the Advisory Council at any regular meeting by a two-thirds vote of the Advisory Council members present, provided there is a quorum. Proposed amendments to the guidelines must be in writing and sent to all Advisory Council members at least two (2) weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- b. The guidelines of the Advisory Council shall be reviewed annually.
- c. The guidelines and any amendments thereafter are subject to the review and approval of the Board of Directors of DRCVI.

Certified a true and correct copy as adopted this 15 day of March 2018

Alma Cruz
Chairperson, PAIMI Advisory Council

Attest:

Ricardo P. Acuña
Secretary, PAIMI Advisory Council