



Quick Reference Handout 8.7: PC/PB Support

Introduction

Planning council support (PCS) is the term used to describe the personnel and other resources used to assist Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) planning councils and planning bodies (PC/PBs) in carrying out their legislative roles and operating effectively and efficiently. PCS includes personnel either hired directly through an agency of the city or county receiving Part A funds, or employed through a contractor. It also includes costs related to PC/PB and committee meetings and other planning activities, hiring of consultants, reimbursement of meeting-related expenses for unaligned people with HIV who receive Part A services, and other administrative expenses. Funds for planning council support are part of the 10 percent administrative funds the recipient receives for managing the local Part A program.

The Health Resources and Services Administration's HIV/AIDS Bureau (HRSA HAB) expects PC/PB support to cover reasonable and necessary costs associated with carrying out the PC/PB's legislatively mandated functions. HRSA HAB allows many different PCS staffing structures, and the PC/PB support function can be contracted or provided through municipal staff. The procedures used for hiring staff or consultants should be agreed upon with the recipient. As the Part A Manual indicates, "Planning council staff may be employed through the grantee's payroll system, but measures must be taken to ensure that the planning council, not the grantee, directs the work of the PC's staff."¹

There is no set amount or percent of administrative funds that should be used for PC/PB support. HRSA HAB expects the recipient and PC/PB to negotiate the amount each year based on the funds required to complete the work, balancing the needs for planning support, other administrative activities, and direct services for people with HIV. Once the amount has been determined, HRSA HAB expects the PC/PB to work with PC/PB support personnel to develop a budget that meets RWHAP Part A and local fiscal requirements. The budget is included in the annual Part A application and finalized after an award is received. If support staff are employed by the Part A recipient, the recipient manages PC/PB expenditures within its fiscal system, with support staff involvement. If the support function is contracted, the contractor manages expenditures. The PC/PB is expected to monitor expenditures, usually through a committee, and revise the budget during the program year as necessary.

Roles and Duties of PCS Staff

PC/PB support is essential to enable the PC/PB to do its work. PCS personnel play a critical role in supporting day-to-day activities, assisting with both legislative tasks and ongoing operations, especially full PC/PB and committee meetings. PCS personnel help the PC/PB operate effectively, working collaboratively with the recipient. Large Eligible Metropolitan Areas (EMAs) often have several planning and administrative staff, while smaller EMAs and many Transitional Grant Areas (TGAs) often have a Manager and a full- or part-time administrative assistant. Planning bodies may have staff assigned solely to them or be staffed by recipient staff that also have other responsibilities. It

can be challenging for a small staff to manage multiple committees, each requiring logistical and content planning and coordination, including materials preparation and distribution, minutes, and technical support to the Chair during the meeting. Some PC/PBs use interns or volunteers to provide additional support, and sometimes members assist. For example, committees may prepare their own minutes.²

PC/PB support staff roles typically include the following:³

- **Meetings:** Staff committees and full PC/PB meetings, coordinate logistics and provide technical advice.
- **Program requirements:** Understand and help the PC/PB follow HRSA HAB requirements and expectations, including legislation and guidance, as well as its own Bylaws and policies and procedures.
- **Legislative tasks:** Coordinate and help implement technical tasks such as needs assessment, data analysis, and preparation of materials for the annual Data Presentation.
- **Open nominations:** Support and assist with the open nominations process, from recruitment and management of online applications to working with the office of the Chief Elected Official (CEO) to facilitate appointments after the PC/PB has made recommendations.
- **Orientation and training:** Work with the committee responsible for Membership on new member orientation, and ensure ongoing training, which may include sessions with the full PC/PB, committees, and PC/PB leaders.
- **Consultants:** Help the PC/PB hire and oversee consultants when they are needed to help carry out tasks like needs assessment.
- **Member participation:** Encourage member involvement and retention, and provide support to members, with special focus on individuals who receive RWHAP Part A services.
- **Liaison roles:** Serve as the PC/PB's liaison with the recipient, the community, and sometimes the office of the CEO.
- **Budget:** Help the PC/PB negotiate, develop, and manage its budget.

PC/PB members, especially officers and committee leaders, work closely with PCS staff. PCS staff are employed by the recipient or a contractor, but the PC/PB may play a role in selecting PC/PB staff or consultants and contractors “to carry out activities directly related to” their functions and responsibilities – always addressing possible conflict of interest (real or perceived) related to hiring decisions.⁴ The PC/PB typically helps develop staff job descriptions and determine qualifications, PC/PB leadership is represented on the interview panel if recipient personnel rules permit this, and the PC/PB – usually through the Executive Committee – participates in annual performance evaluation for its staff. For hiring of PC/PB contractors or consultants, the PC/PB typically prepares or approves the statement of work, sets selection criteria, and evaluates proposals, and the recipient ensures that procurement requirements are met. If there is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the PC/PB and recipient that outlines how the two entities will work together, it typically addresses the shared responsibilities for hiring, supervising, and evaluating PC/PB support staff.⁵

Different Staffing Models Used for PC/PB Support

- Support staff report to the recipient (a model most often used by planning bodies) – HRSA HAB prefers other models to demonstrate that the PC is not managed by the recipient.
- Support staff and the Part A recipient both report to the same supervisor – often a senior Health Department official.
- Support staff are city or county employees, but are employed and supervised in a different city or county department or unit from the recipient.
- The support function is contracted out to a nonprofit or for-profit organization.
- The support function is provided partly by staff, using any of the first three models, and is partly contracted out.
- Support personnel are housed at the recipient’s offices, but are contractors rather than staff.

End Notes

¹Part A Manual, 2013, p 105.

²For more information and a template for summary committee minutes, see Training Guide, Module 9: Working Together—Effective Committee and PC/PB Meetings, Quick Reference Handout 9.1: Preparing Minutes of PC/PB and Committee Meetings—Do’s and Don’ts, which includes an Example of a Committee Meeting Summary.

³For more detailed information on PC/PB support staff, see two documents in the Compendium of Materials for Planning Council Support Staff, section on Planning Council Support: Structure, Staffing and Responsibilities – Expectations for Planning Council Support Staff and Model Position Description for a PCS Director or Manager, developed by EGM Consulting, LLC for HRSA HAB under the Ryan White Technical Assistance Contract (TAC).

⁴Part A Manual, 2013, p 105.

⁵See the model Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) Part A Planning Council and Recipient, developed by EGM Consulting, LLC for Planning CHATT.