

# Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Coalition

## BYLAWS

### **Article I. Name**

The name of this body shall be the Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Coalition, henceforth referred to as NSSPC or the Coalition. As a statewide organization, the NSSPC is a cooperative and representative group of organizations, businesses, healthcare providers, state agency representatives, advocacy groups, survivors, interested individuals, and faith and community-based organizations committed to suicide prevention in Nebraska.

### **Article II. Vision, Mission Statement and Goals**

#### **Vision**

The vision of the NSSPC is to significantly reduce the number of suicides, suicide attempts, and help alleviate the traumatic after-effects of a death by suicide.

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the NSSPC is to increase awareness, decrease stigma, and implement programs throughout Nebraska aimed at suicide prevention.

#### **Goals**

1. Increase awareness and knowledge among the target audience of warning signs, risk factors, and interventions to prevent suicide.
2. Reduce the stigma that surrounds suicide and suicide survivors in order to increase help seeking behavior.
3. Positively influence the suicide rate for Nebraska.

### **Article III. Executive Committee and Officers**

Section 1      The Executive Committee shall consist of the two Co-Chairpersons, a Secretary, Treasurer, and an Outreach Coordinator.

Section 2      The duties of the Executive Committee shall include the following:

- a) Monitor the overall policy and direction of the Coalition.
- b) Take necessary action to continually improve the progress of the coalition.
- c) Convene regular monthly meetings of the Coalition.
- d) Ensure that the activities of the Coalition are in alignment with the goals and the implementation of the Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Plan.
- e) Approve or disapprove membership applications to the Coalition and tend to other membership issues as they arise.

Section 3      The Executive Committee shall meet at as needed.

Section 4      The term of Executive Committee officers shall be three years, beginning in January. Executive Committee officers may serve two consecutive terms.

Section 5      Each member of the Executive Committee shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the committee.

Section 6      The Executive Committee shall receive no compensation.

Section 7      Vacancies

When a vacancy on the Executive Committee exists mid-term, the Secretary must receive nominations to fill the vacancy from the members of the full Coalition two weeks in advance of a meeting. These nominations shall be sent out to Coalition members with the regular Coalition meeting announcement, to be voted upon at the next meeting. These vacancies will be filled only to the end of the exiting Executive Committee member's term.

Section 7      Resignation, termination, and absences

- a) Resignations from the Executive Committee must be in writing and received by the Secretary 30 days prior to leaving the position.
- b) An Executive Committee member shall be terminated from the Committee due to excess absences, as defined in the Membership Contract.
- c) An Executive Committee member may be removed for other reasons by a three-fourths vote of the remaining Executive Committee.

## **Duties of Executive Committee Officers**

Section 8 The duties of the Co-Chairpersons shall include the following:

- a) Convene regularly scheduled Coalition meetings and preside, or arrange for other members of the Executive Committee to preside, at each meeting.
- b) Ensure that the meetings are started and ended on time.
- c) Call for corrections to the previous monthly minutes. If there are no corrections, the Co-Chairperson shall call for a vote to accept and adopt the minutes. In the case of corrections, if there are minimal corrections, the Co-Chairperson will call for a vote to accept and adopt the minutes to include the corrections. In the case of many conflicts in the minutes, the minutes will be tabled until the next meeting and the secretary will circulate the minutes again for corrections and revisions, and vote moved to the next meeting.
- d) Serve as the official spokesperson(s) for the Coalition.
- e) Carry out other duties as deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee.

Section 9 The duties of the Secretary shall include the following:

- a) Record the minutes of the monthly Coalition meetings and make them available to the Executive Committee and Coalition members in a timely manner.
- b) Create the agenda for the monthly meeting with the assistance from the Co-Chairpersons and distribute the agenda prior to the meeting.
- c) Establish and keep the formal organizational records of the Coalition, including bylaws, meetings, minutes, activities, elections and policies.
- d) Assign another member to sit in for the Secretary in his/her absence and ensure that the minutes are taken at each meeting.
- e) Carry out other duties as delegated by the Co-Chairpersons.

Section 10 The duties of the Outreach Coordinator shall include the following:

- a) Work with the Executive Committee and Coalition members to develop the goals and priorities of the Coalition with measureable outcomes and a strategic plan to meet the goals.
- b) Monitor and manage the process of the activities.
- c) Report the progress of Coalition activities at the regular monthly meetings.
- d) Carry out other duties as delegated by the Co-Chairpersons.

Section 11 The duties of the Treasurer shall include the following:

- a) Prepare an annual budget and monitor spending.
- b) Supervise all assets and disbursement of funds.
- c) Provide monthly written reports of all financial transactions.
- d) Carry out other duties as delegated by the Co-Chairpersons.

## **Article IV. Coalition Membership – Roles and Duties of Members**

- Section 1 Membership of the Coalition shall include any interested person, such as representatives of public and private agencies and organizations as well as individual stakeholders, survivors, advocates, and non-profit organizations interested in suicide prevention, intervention, aftercare, and related issues.
- Section 2 Membership in the Coalition shall be established by interested parties submitting a membership form to the Secretary for general membership in the Coalition. Membership shall then be decided by vote of the Executive Committee.
- Section 3 Membership in the Coalition shall also include becoming a member of one of the three (3) general committees: Awareness, Intervention, and Methodology.
- Section 4 To be a voting member of the Coalition, a member must attend three-quarters (3/4) of the meetings within a given year. Exemptions to this rule may be granted by vote of the Executive Committee.

## **Article V. Meetings and Voting**

- Section 1 Coalition Meetings
- Regular meetings of the Coalition will be held on the fourth Friday of every month, unless a change is formally announced by the Co-Chairpersons.
- Section 2 Notice of each meeting shall be given to each voting member by email.
- Section 3 The members present at any properly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum.
- Section 4 Committee Meetings
- Each committee (Awareness, Intervention and Methodology) shall hold one or more meetings, either in person or by teleconference, prior to, or concurring with, each regular monthly meeting of the Coalition. The specific date, time and place of each committee meeting will be designated by the committee chairperson and notice will be sent out to each committee member by email.
- Section 5 Special Meetings
- Special meetings of the Coalition may be called by the Co-Chairpersons of the Executive Committee. Special meetings of a committee may be called by the chairperson of that committee.
- Section 6 Voting
- All voting by Coalition members shall be conducted at the regular monthly meetings of the Coalition, and each eligible voting member present shall be entitled to one vote. The items to be voted on shall be decided by a simple majority of those present at the meeting in which the vote takes place or by the Executive Committee.
- Section 7 All meetings of the Coalition shall be open to the public in accordance with the State Freedom of Information Act.

Section 8 Robert's Rule of Order, Current Edition, shall govern the conduct of business in all cases when applicable and not in conflict with these bylaws. Other decision making methods may be employed at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

## **Article VI. Committees**

### Section 1 Awareness Committee

The goal of the Awareness Committee is to broaden the public's awareness of suicide, the associated risk factors, and how they can aid in suicide prevention.

- a) Promote public awareness that suicide is a public health problem and many suicides are preventable. Use information technology to make facts about suicide and suicide prevention widely and appropriately available to the general public and health care providers.
- b) Expand awareness of, and enhance access to, resources for suicide prevention programs in communities.
- c) Develop and implement strategies to reduce the stigma associated with suicide, mental illness, substance abuse, and with seeking help for such problems.

### Section 2 Intervention Committee

The goal of the Intervention Committee is to enhance suicide prevention services and programs.

- a) Extend collaboration with, and between, public and private sectors to meet the goals of the Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Coalition which are modeled after the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention.
- b) Improve the ability of primary care providers to recognize and treat depression, substance abuse, and other major mental illnesses associated with suicide risk. Increase referrals to specialty care when appropriate.
- c) Support insurance parity which has the goal to eliminate barriers in public and private insurance programs for provision of quality mental health treatment and create incentives to treat patients with coexisting mental and substance abuse disorders.
- d) Institute training for all health, mental health, and human service professionals (such as clergy, teachers, correctional workers, and social workers) about suicide risk assessment and recognition, treatment, management and aftercare interventions.
- e) Develop and implement effective training programs for family members of those at risk and for natural community helpers on how to recognize, respond to, and refer people showing signs of suicide risk. Natural community helpers are people such as educators, coaches, hairdressers, and faith leaders, among others.
- f) Develop and implement safe and effective programs in educational settings for youths that address adolescent distress, crisis intervention and incorporate peer support for seeking help.

- g) Enhance community care resources by increasing the use of schools and workplaces as access points for mental and physical health services and by providing comprehensive support programs for suicide survivors.
- h) Promote public/private collaboration with the media to insure that entertainment and news coverage represent balanced and informed portrayals of suicide, suicide prevention, mental illness, and mental health care.

Section 3      Methodology Committee

The goal of the Methodology Committee is to advance the science of suicide prevention and enhance research to understand risk and protective factors, their interaction, their effects on suicide and suicidal behaviors, and increase research on effective suicide prevention programs, clinical treatments for suicidal individuals, and culture-specific interventions.

- a) Develop additional scientific strategies for evaluating suicide prevention and/or intervention programs and ensure that evaluation components are included in all suicide prevention programs.
- b) Establish mechanisms for federal, regional, and state interagency public health collaboration in order to improve the monitoring systems for suicide and suicidal behaviors. Develop and promote standard terminology in these systems.
- c) Encourage the development and evaluation of new prevention technologies to reduce easy access to lethal means of suicide.

**Bylaws Committee**

Section 5      The Bylaws Committee shall be designated by the Executive Committee. The duty of the Bylaws Committee shall be to maintain the Coalition rules of membership, conduct and activity.

**Article VII. Amendments**

Section 1      Bylaws may be amended when necessary by two-third majority vote of the Executive Committee. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Bylaws Committee. Those amendments shall be presented to the Executive Committee and considered within 60 days of receipt. The amendment will be offered for review by Coalition members at the following regular meeting of the Coalition and may be amended by a simple majority vote of Coalition members.

**CERTIFICATION**

**These Bylaws were approved and adopted at a regular meeting of the NSSPC by two-thirds majority vote on December 3, 2010.**

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**Secretary Date** \_\_\_\_\_