

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Advocacy Network (DHHCAN)

Mission & Bylaws

Approved December 7, 2011

Section 1.0 Name:

The name of this organization shall be the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Advocacy Network (DHHCAN).

Section 2.0 Mission:

The organization shall serve as the national coalition of organizations representing the interests of deaf and hard of hearing people on public policy and other issues related to improving the rights of deaf and hard of hearing persons and their quality of life, including affirmation of their right to consumer leadership, self-representation, and equal access to education, employment, community life, communication and technology.

Section 3.0 Vision:

The coalition shall provide a forum and proactive coordination of relevant information for the purpose of addressing and influencing legislation crucial to the lives and welfare of deaf and hard of hearing people. The coalition shall further the movement towards universal, barrier-free access for deaf and hard of hearing persons with emphasis on quality, certification and standards.

Section 4.0 Membership:

4.1 Membership

Membership in this coalition is limited to the following requirements:

- Consumer-based national organization
- Non-profit status
- Governance by and for deaf and/or hard of hearing people
- Consumer-oriented focus
- Membership base of at least 50 individuals

4.2 Acceptance and Endorsement

Regardless of whether an organization meets all of the criteria described in Section 4.2, full regular membership becomes effective only by endorsement through a $\frac{3}{4}$ votes in support from the current DHHCAN membership and upon payment of membership dues.

4.3 Organizational Partners

Organizational Partners do not have voting privileges. Professional and advocacy non-profit organizations that cannot meet the DHHCAN membership criteria but are committed to advancing the mission of DHHCAN may apply to become a DHHCAN Organizational Partner. Organizations that cannot meet the criteria specified in Section 4.2 may apply, may be admitted with $\frac{3}{4}$ vote in support of their application by current DHHCAN members.

4.4 Organizational Partner Application

To receive consideration for Organizational Partner status, applicants must submit a written statement attesting to the absence of financial interests and conflict of interest with DHHCAN goals as well as other documents necessary to determine the purpose, relevance, philosophy and organizational structure.

The Chair shall submit all documents to membership representatives at the next scheduled meeting, along with any comments or opinions of the Chair. Representatives shall have at least 30 days to review the information and share it with their organizations for input/feedback. Once all documentation is reviewed and satisfactory answers have been received to all questions, the matter of acceptance and endorsement of the applicant shall be brought to a vote no later than 60 days after being received by the representatives.

To receive consideration for Voting Member status, applicants must submit nonprofit status, Bylaws, breakdown of deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing Board members, a copy of meeting minutes.

4.5 Membership Dues

- Dues for DHHCAN membership and Organizational Partners shall be determined by DHHCAN resolution.
- Membership payments are due in September of every calendar year. Renewal notices will be sent out during the final meeting prior to the summer break in June.
- Reinstatement to active membership shall be made immediately upon full payment of any arrears.

Section 5.0 Governance:

5.1 Officers

The officers of DHHCAN shall be a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Secretary-Treasurer. These officers shall be a representative of a full (regular) member organization of DHHCAN. Voting members of DHHCAN may create additional officers or committees as necessary.

5.2 Authority and Duties of Officers

The Chair shall serve as the DHHCAN spokesperson and contact person and have the responsibility for ensuring that DHHCAN activities and operations are conducted effectively and efficiently. This includes ensuring the timely announcements of meetings and agenda items,

ensuring the recording and distribution of meeting minutes, ensuring clear communications including utilization of interpreters and CART regarding DHHCAN business, overseeing all appropriate and approved financial matters.

The Vice Chair shall assume responsibility for becoming familiar with all aspects of DHHCAN activities and operations and shall assist the Chair in areas designated by the Chair and the membership. The Vice-Chair shall serve in the absence of the Chair and shall succeed to the office of the Chair upon the completion of the Chair's term of office.

The Secretary-Treasurer shall maintain all correspondence, records including minutes of meetings and notification of meetings, dues payments, and other matters of communications under the direction of the Chair, and shall have the responsibility for collecting all dues, processing all expense reimbursements, and maintaining the financial records and bank accounts of this organization.

5.3 Elections

Elections of officers shall take place in December at the end of each two-year term. Nominations shall be announced in writing thirty days prior to the meeting. The Chair shall appoint a DHHCAN representative as the nominations officer. Election to office shall be by simple plurality vote of regular voting members present. The first meeting led by the new officers shall take place in January.

If a vacancy in the office of Chair occurs at any time, the Vice-Chair shall assume the position automatically. If a vacancy occurs with the position of Vice-Chair or Secretary-Treasurer, the Chair shall ensure that elections of a replacement for either position will occur within 30 days. Such elected replacement shall serve the remaining term of office until the next regular election, unless less than 60 days remain until the expiration of the resigning officers term.

5.4 Term of Office

All of the officers shall each serve for a two-year term.

5.5 Quorum

A quorum shall be defined as a majority of regular members in good standing.

5.6 Voting

Organizations with regular member status shall be entitled to one voting representative.

5.7 Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order New Revised shall govern DHHCAN in all cases where they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order DHHCAN may adopt.

5.8 Amendments:

The DHHCAN bylaws may be amended by a two thirds (2/3) vote of DHHCAN members present and voting at DHHCAN business meetings. Bylaws amendments shall be documented in the meeting minutes and distributed to all DHHCAN members by the preceding DHHCAN business meeting prior to vote.

5.9 Suspension of Bylaws:

The DHHCAN bylaws may be suspended for a specific purpose by four-fifths (4/5) vote of the DHHCAN members present and voting.

5.10 Minutes

Minutes of the official meetings shall be distributed to members no later than 15 business days after adjournment.

5.11 Meetings:

Regular meetings will be held at a time and place announced at least one week in advance to all members in good standing. Normally meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of the month.

5.12 Mailing Lists:

Any mailing lists compiled by DHHCAN may be used only for organization's own purposes. All mailings must be authorized by the Chair.

5.13 Ad Hoc and Special Committees:

The Chair may also form ad hoc or special committees as needed.

Section 6.0 Dissolution:

In the event that the coalition is dissolved, after payment of all debts and liabilities, remaining assets shall be distributed evenly among active DHHCAN member organizations.