

Operating Guidelines for the California Food Policy Council

**[Revised by Peter Ruddock and Michael Dimock
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by CAFPC Members on February 9, 2015]**

1. Name and Status

The California Food Policy Council is a collaborative of organizations working to ensure that the state's food system reflects the needs of all of its communities.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the California Food Policy Council (CAFPC) is to build the capacity of local food policy groups to find common ground on policy priorities, generate public support for those policies, educate policymakers on issues in our food system, and advocate for food systems change in California. Therefore, the CAFPC will:

- a. Advise state and federal policymakers on future-focused policies that incentivize innovation and improvement in food and farming and mitigate state-imposed impediments to progress;
- b. Accelerate change at the neighborhood, city, and county level through sharing of information, resources, and best practices;
- c. Support development of new and enhancement of existing local/regional food systems through regional collaboration to establish complementary policies, processing, distribution and other infrastructure.

3. Relationship to Government

The CAFPC is a non-governmental entity that seeks to provide community-based advocacy to the government on issues of food and farming. The Council will be responsible for keeping key government officials, committees, agencies, and departments apprised of Council decisions, and may choose to seek governmental recognition of the Council's work in the form of study sessions, hearings, resolutions, legislation or other appropriate action.

4. Membership

a. Eligibility

- i. Each active "local food policy-oriented group" operating in the State of California that agrees to the established Guiding Principles and the Operating Guidelines are eligible to be members of the CAFPC.
- ii. A local food policy group is defined as a place-based (i.e., city, county, neighborhood) collaborative of stakeholders working to shape policy and practice around food and farming in their communities. These groups include, but are not limited to, Food Policy Councils, Ag Futures Alliances, and Food Systems Alliances.

b. Membership Types

The CAFPC recognizes that different regions may have different priorities driving their participation. In order to ensure all members can maximize the outcomes for the time and effort they commit to the CAFPC, two types of membership have been established.

- i. Collaborating Member Definition:** Any local food policy group operating in the State of California that agrees to the CAFPC's Guiding Principles and its Operating Guidelines may become a Collaborating Member by accepting the following **Rights and Responsibilities**.

Collaborating Members have the right to:

1. attend all statewide meetings and any learning or capacity-building activity;
2. participate in the planning of and attendance at regional meetings;
3. sign on to any CAFPC letter, report or policy proposal or sponsored legislation issued by the Advocating Members in accord with the Sign-on Protocol (section 6c);
4. receive reimbursement for travel and accommodations associated with the statewide meetings;
5. rotate representatives.

Collaborating members have the responsibility to:

6. brief new representatives on relevant information in order to maximize the value of participation;
7. attend all statewide and regional meetings in order to maintain Collaborating member status:
One (1) absence per year may be excused if due to illness, extreme weather conditions or travel system disruption, but the member must inform ROC of the impending absence as early as possible and seek to find a replacement if possible. One (1) unexcused absence or two (2) consecutive excused absences will disqualify the Collaborating Member from eligibility for travel and accommodation reimbursement. If a Collaborating member fails to maintain their status, a Steering Committee member will notify that Collaborating Member that their right to reimbursement has been suspended until that right is reinstated, as determined by the Steering Committee. During the suspension period the member will be identified as a Collaborating Member with limited rights.
8. include an update on CAFPC activity in each of the Member's own local policy group meetings, including communication of requests for action from the CAFPC to the local policy group in a timely fashion.

- ii. Advocating Member Definition:** Any local food policy group operating in the State of California that agrees to the CAFPC's Guiding Principles and its Operating Guidelines and that commits to development of the annual CAFPC policy agenda, development of policy-related reports, and robust participation

in advocacy campaigns may become an Advocating member by accepting the following **Rights and Responsibilities**.

Advocating Members have the right to:

1. send one (1) representative to serve on the council.
Advocating members are encouraged to select a representative that can serve for a period of one (1) year. If Advocating Members choose to rotate representatives, then they are responsible for ensuring that the representative has been briefed about the workings of and ongoing discussions of the CAFPC in order to maximize the impact of the Advocating Member's involvement;
2. send multiple representatives to CAFPC state or regional meetings, but possess only one vote;
3. receive reimbursement for travel and accommodations associated with the statewide meetings and other travel associated with Policy Work Group work, or advocacy campaigns, if approved by the Steering Committee and/or ROC.

Advocating Members have the responsibility to:

4. deliberate on Work Group recommendations, vote on proposed policies or positions and participate in statewide advocacy;
5. send a representative to all statewide and regional CAFPC meetings and participate in the Policy Work Group to maintain Advocating member status:
One (1) absence per year may be excused if due to illness, extreme weather conditions or travel system disruption, but the Advocating Member must inform ROC or the Steering Committee of the impending absence as early as possible and seek to find a replacement if possible. One (1) unexcused absence or two (2) consecutive excused absences will end Advocating Member status and eligibility for travel and accommodation reimbursement. If an Advocating Member fails to maintain their Advocating Member status, a Steering Committee Member will notify the Advocating Member that their rights to vote and reimbursement are suspended until reinstated, as determined by the Steering Committee. During the suspension period, the Member will be identified as Collaborating Member with limited rights.

5. Structure

The work of the CAFPC will be carried out in five (5) parts: the Full Council, Steering Committee, Regions, Work Groups and Roots of Change.

a. Full Council

- i. **Purpose:** To provide a forum for sharing information, learning new skills, building capacity to make change, fostering regional collaboration, and forming CAFPC advocacy positions and activities on state and federal policy issues.

- ii. **Frequency of Meetings:** Meetings of the full council are held two (2) to four (4) times per year, as determined by the Steering Committee, based on funding levels.
- iii. **Location of Meetings:** The location of the Full Council meetings will be in Sacramento.
- iv. **Quorum:** A quorum consists of 51% of Advocating Members in attendance. Attendance may include participation by webinar or phone call at the discretion of the Steering Committee, and those opportunities will be noticed to the membership in advance.
- v. Votes may be delivered by email prior to a meeting if Advocating Member representatives are unable to attend, but votes by email are not considered attendance at meetings.

b. Steering Committee

- i. **Purpose:** Ensure that the CAFPC functions smoothly by providing process support and strategic guidance to the full council.
- ii. **Composition:** The Collaborating and Advocating Members by region will nominate a Steering Committee of up to nine (9) people. The CAFPC will strive to nominate a group that represents the diversity of the member groups as reflected in region, race, gender, and issue expertise.
 1. Three representatives shall be nominated from each region; at least two out of the three from each region must represent Advocating Members.
 2. Both Collaborating and Advocating Members from each region will be consulted by the Steering Committee to nominate Steering Committee members to a slate.
 3. Each January, Advocating and Collaborating Members will approve or reject a slate of nominees created by the outgoing Steering Committee. A two-thirds (2/3) majority is required to approve a slate.
 4. If a slate is rejected, following consultation with the Regions to address the concerns reflected in the rejection, a new slate must be formed and voted upon within 30 days.
- iii. **Terms:** Members shall be elected annually. The intention of the Steering Committee is to set term limits. This intention will be fulfilled once the culture and maturity of the CAFPC is sufficient to ensure annual election of the Steering Committee without extensive recruitment required. Subject to adjustment, the deadline to set term limits is January 2017. Any Advocating or Collaborating Member of the CAFPC may request a reconsideration and decision by the Full Council related to the setting of term limits.
- iv. **Duties:**
 1. Develop, review and approve meeting agendas; review meetings results.
 2. Select process facilitators with training in consensus-based decision-making techniques for Full Council meetings, as needed and if sufficient funds are available.
 3. Facilitate strategic planning for the CAFPC to be presented for the consideration of the full council.

4. Maintain and supervise updates for the Operating Guidelines and Guiding Principles, as needed.
 5. Review progress of the CAFPC annually.
 6. Plan and implement regional meetings with some support from ROC, as defined in Section e below.
 7. Perform any additional tasks that are assigned or approved by Advocating Members.
- v. **Meetings:** The Steering Committee will meet monthly, face-to-face, by webinar or phone call as determined by its members.
 - vi. **Reimbursement:** Members will be reimbursed for travel and accommodations associated with their duties in consultation with ROC, based on funding levels.
- c. Regions**
- i. The Steering Committee determines the regions based on CAFPC developmental needs and funding levels.
 - ii. Regional groups shall hold two meetings per year. At least one shall be face-to-face.
 - iii. Regional groups are entitled to receive funds from ROC/PHI each year for operating expenses. Expenses may include regionally based coordinating staff and meeting expenses, including travel reimbursements for members in a region attending regional meetings.
 - i. Annual budgets must be provided to ROC by February 1st of each year and must be approved by ROC and the Steering Committee.
 - ii. Through a contract with ROC/PHI, a nonprofit or private contractor may be the recipient of a Region's funds.
 - iv. Regional representatives elected to the Steering Committee will be recognized as the CAFPC authority in the Region, responsible for planning and implementing regional meetings.
- d. Work Groups**
- i. **Purpose:** The Steering Committee may create Work Groups to promote ongoing work and accomplish specific tasks related to CAFPC infrastructure, organization development and/or policy issues. Work Groups will make recommendations to the Full Council on matters related to their assigned area of work.
 - ii. **Work Group Chairs:** CAFPC members may select a chair for each Work Group (using Modified Consensus described in Section 6). The role of a Work Group chair is to provide leadership and coordination of activities, including:
 1. Developing and updating implementation plans;
 2. Planning and facilitating monthly Work Group meetings, including agenda development;
 3. Preparing and delivering Work Group reports at CAFPC meetings;
 4. Following up with Work Group members about tasks;
 5. Delivering research and policy recommendations in the form of white papers to the CAFPC on the timeline agreed upon.

- iii. **Reimbursement:** Work Group Chairs and/or their organizations may be provided stipends to cover the costs associated with time, materials, and travel as it becomes available. The Steering Committee will determine the order of priority for Work Groups to access available funds.

e. Roots of Change

Roots of Change is a project of the Public Health Institute and the legal entity for all financial transactions. ROC will provide support to further the goals of the CAFPC for as long as the arrangement supports fulfillment of both the ROC and CAFPC missions. With the affirmation of the CAFPC, ROC will:

- i. Aid the CAFPC's work with staff support for the Steering Committee, statewide CAFPC meetings, Regional meetings, capacity-building activities, Work Group activities, advocacy campaigns and media outreach. Specific functions include:
 - 1. Provide operational funds;
 - 2. Offer strategic advice related to CAFPC's development and actions;
 - 3. Lead fundraising efforts for ongoing operations and activities;
 - 4. Form strategic partnerships with allied organizations to bring support to the CAFPC's efforts;
 - 5. Provide a budget to the Steering Committee by January 1st each year indicating ROC's funding level for CAFPC.

6. Decision Making

a. The Process

- i. All members of the CAFPC (Full Council, Steering Committee, Regions and Work Groups) will make non-policy related decisions using a modified consensus process, with a designated facilitator from within or without the CAFPC.
- ii. Policy decisions are made by the Advocating Members.
- iii. All policy and non-policy decisions are made using a modified consensus process as follows:
 - 1. Hear all viewpoints;
 - 2. Hear and address concerns and reservations;
 - 3. Seek consensus;
 - 4. If there is no consensus, take a vote noting blocking concerns and abstentions;
 - 5. Decision shall be made by two-thirds (2/3) majority. If more than one third (1/3) of the group strongly disagrees, reopen for discussion to reach compromise with at least two-thirds (2/3) majority of members who are present or who have submitted their votes prior to the meeting;
 - 6. For the purposes of the final tally only yes or no votes will count towards the calculation of the percentage. Abstentions will be recorded, but will not factor into the final percentage.
- iv. Advocating Members may send representatives with the power to represent their local food policy group, including voting.

- v. Advocating Members may send representatives who must take decisions back to local food policy groups for final decision-making.

b. Annual Legislative Report

- i. Each fall the CAFPC will issue an annual report on the food and agriculture policy of the state prepared by the Policy Work Group and ROC. This report may offer a critique of the work of the Governor and the Legislature. Per the decision of the Policy Work Group, it may or may not utilize a grading or percentage system to rate legislators and the Governor.
- ii. The Policy Work Group shall be composed of all Advocating Members and allied national and statewide nonprofits invited to participate. ROC and the Steering Committee will determine the list of nonprofits that will be invited for each year.
- iii. The Policy Work Group shall commence its work in December in the year prior to each report.
- iv. The report shall be released no later than November 15th each year unless determined otherwise by the Policy Work Group.
- v. The report must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the Advocating Members to be issued as a CAFPC report.
- vi. The report shall contain a list of all CAFPC Advocating and Collaborating Members.

c. Policy Sign-on Protocol

- i. Advocating Members may propose a policy for which they seek CAFPC support. The Policy Work Group will be responsible for working with the member to present an analysis of the issue, their recommendation for CAFPC involvement, and a timeline for action.
- ii. A Collaborating Member may propose a policy for which they seek CAFPC support, but must find an Advocating Member to sponsor the proposal. The Policy Work Group will be responsible for working with the two members to present an analysis of the issue, their recommendation for CAFPC involvement, and a timeline for action.
- iii. Any requests for support of a policy proposal must be presented to the Advocating Members 60 days in advance of CAFPC statewide meetings to allow representatives time to consult with their local policy groups.
- iv. With an affirmative by three-quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority vote, the proposal will become a policy of the CAFPC.
- v. If the Council takes a position based on a three-quarter ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority, abstentions and no votes will not be documented.
- vi. If the Council is unable to achieve a three-quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority, but is able to achieve a two-thirds (2/3) majority of support, then CAFPC will not take a position, but the sign-on process will be made available to all Advocating and Collaborating Members and be designated a "CAFPC Coalition."
- vii. The Policy Work Group may seek endorsement for CAFPC policies from any nonprofit, business, individual in the state or nation.

- viii. Dissenting opinions may be represented in CAFPC communications if determined as helpful to the CAFPC's development by the Steering Committee.
- ix. Following consultation with their regions, Collaborating Members may choose to sign on to any policy.

7. Amendments to the Guidelines

- a. The Operating Guidelines will be reviewed by the Steering Committee before the first CAFPC meeting of each calendar year.
- b. The Steering Committee, any Advocating or Collaborating Member or ROC may propose amendments to these guidelines.
- c. CAFPC member regions must be given at least 60 days to review the draft amendments and may offer proposed changes to the Steering Committee.
- d. The Steering Committee shall include the final proposed amendments on the agenda for the next regular statewide CAFPC meeting, provided the proposed amendment is received by the Steering Committee four (4) weeks prior to the meeting to provide time to prepare materials.
- e. The CAFPC's Advocating and Collaborating Members must approve amendments.