

NAMI INDIANA PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE COMMISSION

General Commission: The NAMI Indiana Public Policy Committee commission is to further the NAMI Indiana Public Policy agenda throughout the state of Indiana. This will be accomplished with the Public Policy Platform of NAMI, the coordination of our state affiliates and other organizations consistent with our mission.

Goals:

- To keep NAMI BOD and members informed of any critical issues in legislation.
- To advocate for people with mental illness.
- To educate legislators and public on mental illness.
- To select and prioritize the NAMI IN Public Policy Platform.

Committee Composition

- 1) The Public Policy Committee shall be chaired by a representative of the BOD and appointed by the President.
- 2) Committee members will be selected for their interest, specific skills and knowledge related to the work of the committee. It is recommended that they be NAMI members.
- 3) The BOD President and Executive Director are ex-officio members.

Committee Procedures:

- 1) A bi-monthly Public Policy report will be given to the BOD for review and approval.
- 2) The BOD has given advocacy determination power to the committee chair upon agreement with the Executive Director.
- 3) The Public Policy Committee will select and prioritize issues for the Indiana General Assembly. Determination of issues must comply with the strategic plan and mission statement. To select the issues the Public Policy committee must consider the following:
 - Does NAMI have adequate resources to work on this issue?
 - Is there a need?
 - What would NAMI need to do to make an issue workable, practical or successful, when the issue is important, yet support seems limited or disorganized?
 - Are there political or funding implications, which should preclude involvement?
 - Is there a practical opportunity for a successful impact?
 - Would NAMI have allies or opponents on this issue?
 - Who are the allies and opponents and what might their interests and positions be?
 - Would NAMI's involvement in the issue affect its image, positively or negatively?

4) If an issue is determined to meet the criteria above, a brief statement should be drafted to state NAMI's position. The statement should answer the following questions:

- What law or policy is in need of revision?
- What is the current law or policy?
- What are the arguments for revisions?
- Are there any relevant time considerations?
- Who will support/oppose the revision?
- Does a new law need to be written?

5) Upon completion of the Public Policy Platform, issues must be prioritized.

To prioritize our issues:

- Priority 1: of a critical nature (either for or against); will involve intense lobbying and presentation of testimony
- Priority 2: important (either for or against); may involve lobbying, presentation of testimony or amendments.
- Priority 3: NAMI Indiana's position is warranted, but few resources will be expended.

We will monitor and track bills on which NAMI has not taken a formal position but may be of general interest to membership.

6) Testimony Guidelines:

- NAMI member in good standing
- Professional invited by NAMI as an "expert witness"
- NAMI friend – non-NAMI member with specific issues on NAMI agenda.

7) Sub-Committees: Sub-Committees will be formed according to the strategic plan. Each sub-committee chair shall report back to Public Policy Committee for approval of any and all actions before any action is to be taken.

- The strength of purpose for each committee member should be voiced and pooled to build upon their decisions.
- Each committee is to develop the issue, take a policy stand on it and present to the Public Policy Committee for approval. How to resolve the prioritized problems within the policy will be the committee's responsibility. Their recommendations for resolving will be theirs to activate.

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