



CALIFORNIA
**PARTNERSHIP TO END
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Together, We're Stronger.

Public Policy & Research Committee
Procedures & Guidelines

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I. OVERVIEW

The California Partnership to End Domestic Violence is a statewide membership coalition that was formed in 2005 through the merger of the California Alliance Against Domestic Violence (CAADV) and the Statewide California Coalition for Battered Women (SCCBW). These two organizations joined together to form one state coalition to foster unity within the domestic violence movement in California. Like other Domestic Violence Coalitions throughout the U.S. States and Territories, the Partnership is rooted in the battered women's movement and the values that define this movement, including working towards social justice, self-determination, and ending the oppression of women.

The Partnership now stands as the nationally-recognized State Domestic Violence Coalition for California. Together with our 150 member organizations and individuals across the entire state, the Partnership has built upon the 30-year history of our predecessor organizations while forging into new territory to provide statewide leadership and successfully pass legislation to ensure safety and justice for domestic violence survivors and their children.

The Partnership monitors the development and implementation of state and federal laws that effect victims of domestic violence, non-profits, and domestic violence programs. We work closely with domestic violence advocates through our Public Policy and Research Committees (PPRC's) to ensure that our public policy work meets the needs of survivors and programs across California. We also collaborate with legislators, state officials and others.

II. PPRC ROLE

Our PPRC members actively participate and engage in the development of the Partnership's legislative priorities. The adoption of legislative priorities is the culmination of a process involving the Partnership members statewide.

Each year, the Partnership staff and members engage in a variety of public policy activities. These activities are identified by PPRC members, members at large and key stakeholders, with input and advice from staff. Criteria used for developing the priority activities include viability, critical need, strong member support and potential for distinctive Partnership contribution. While some of these activities culminate in legislation, some become established as sub-committee areas that are subsets of and run by PPRC members. Our current sub-committees are Domestic Violence Funding, Immigration and Domestic Violence, Teen Dating Violence (TDV), Criminal Justice and Domestic Violence.

III. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

There are seven regional sub-committees of the PPRC. The Partnership strongly encourages the participation of members interested in the legislative process and therefore, encourages all members to consider participating in their regional sub-committee.

A. Regional Sub-Committees/ Meetings

Each regional sub-committee of the PPRC is to meet monthly preferably at the same time each month (e.g. The 3rd Friday of the month) and at a set time and place. Regional PPRC meetings are open to all Partnership members in good standing who are considering committee membership.

B. PPRC Co-Chairs

Each region has two PPRC Co-Chairs serving staggered 2-year terms; may serve up to three 2-year terms, for a maximum total of six years. The co-chairs are expected to:

- Provide input to staff in setting public policy priorities and strategic initiatives;
- Participate in monthly co-chair meetings facilitated by the Partnership staff;
- Ensure at least one co-chair is represented on statewide PPRC-related calls, meeting or other activities;
- Ensure at least one co-chair is present on all Regional Membership Meetings and provide PPRC update to regional participants;
- Maintain liaison with all PPRC members in their respective regions to represent their concerns in PPRC deliberations;
- Direct and chair all regional PPRC caucus meetings;
- Provide written report back to the Partnership Policy Staff on regional caucus outcomes, votes and other regional issues;
- Direct and chair the regional nominating committee in their region, as needed to elect new co-chairs;
- Forward electronic action alerts on behalf of the Partnership; and
- Maintain electronic email distribution list of PPRC members.

The co-chairs work with the Partnership office staff to ensure the smooth functioning of the committee. The PPRC is a function of the public policy department of the Partnership and is officially staffed by a Partnership staff member and under the direction of the executive director.

C. PPRC General Members

Along with the co-chairs, the remaining membership of each regional PPRC is very active and each person shares a large degree of responsibility in ensuring the committee's work is successful. PPRC membership is open to all Partnership members in good standing. Members:

- Regularly participate in the Partnership Policy activities (statewide meetings, regional meetings and Policy Advocacy Day);
- Participate in policy advocacy efforts and promote to key stakeholders in your community;
- Respond to legislative action alerts and identify opportunities to engage other local stakeholders;
- Sit on at least one issue sub-committee working group or volunteer to be an issue area advisor if needed; and
- As-needed travel to Sacramento to testify

D. Statewide Issue Area Advisors

Statewide issue area advisors are individuals with comprehensive knowledge on a policy/legislative issue (i.e., housing, TANF, prosecution, etc.). Issue area advisors:

- Provide background information, guidance, and legal opinions as needed; serve as subject-matter experts to the Partnership staff;

- Provide and solicit testimony for Partnership staff to provide to legislators;
- Present on statewide policy conference calls as needed to provide background information to PPRC members;
- Travel to Sacramento as needed to provide testimony; and
- Co-write talking points or provide feedback to talking points and other policy related documents (op-eds, white papers, support letters, etc.).

E. General Partnership Members

The involvement of the full Partnership membership is essential for our successful advocacy. Member involvement includes:

- Taking coordinated action on policy change and legislation through the Partnership;
- Setting up and participating in “in-district” meetings with legislators or elected officials;
- Participating in the Partnership Legislative Advocacy Day;
- Finding ways to engage youth in the Partnership policy advocacy activities;
- Promoting the Partnership Policy agenda and bill positions in local, regional and statewide discussions;
- Referring possible allies or stakeholders interested in domestic violence policy to the Partnership;
- Providing testimony and stories as needed;
- Requesting technical assistance from Public Policy Specialist on policy issues/bills;
- Requesting technical assistance from Public Affairs Specialist on the development of media advisories, press releases, etc;
- Inviting the Partnership staff to participate or speak at local level rallies, demonstrations or press events;
- Asking Partnership to review domestic violence related legislation/issues they deem important; opt to pursue bills/issues on their own behalf; and
- Completing the Public Policy Priorities survey.

F. Conflicts of Interests

If at any time during a meeting a person in attendance believes that they have a conflict with the item under discussion or thinks that a vote is in conflict with the goals of another organization or agency that they may be working or volunteering for, the person is encouraged to leave the meeting during the discussion or abstain from voting.

All PPRC members agree to represent the Partnership in their legislative efforts as members of the PPRC, and agree not to represent any other organization while representing the Partnership, unless a previous agreement has been established through the co-chairs of all the committees.

Partnership information cannot be used to assist another organization’s legislative efforts without express permission and agreement of the Partnership executive director and committee co-chairs.

IV. LEGISLATIVE WORK

There are three types of bills that PPRC members are involved with each legislative year; they are priority one, priority two and monitor status bills.

A. Priority One

Sponsored Bills

These are bill ideas generated by the PPRC membership at the annual PPRC meeting and voted on by the entire membership which is in attendance. Once a majority of the membership supports an idea for a sponsored bill, the membership must decide how many sponsored bills will be carried that year and then go through a further voting process to decide on the top issues to be carried. Once the bill ideas have been decided on at the annual PPRC meeting, a number of additional actions must take place:

- Assignment of at least one main bill contact to last for the life of the bill;
- Development of the rationale and wording of the legislation; and
- Identification of a legislative author in either the Senate or Assembly and contact with aides.

In some cases, a legislator proposes a bill without prior consultation with the Partnership which relates to domestic violence in either a positive or negative way. In these cases, the PPRC may choose to take up a bill as a P-1 even though it did not vote to do so at its annual PPRC meeting. This occurs by each regional PPRC voting on the bill idea and whether to *support* or *oppose* the bill idea. For example, all of the regional PPRCs could vote to make a bill a P-1 which was opposed by the PPRC.

For all priority one bills, the Partnership will:

- Work closely with the author on bill language and amendments;
- Submit letters of support or opposition in advance of all committee hearings and votes;
- Solicit letters of support or opposition from the Partnership's membership when appropriate;
- Meet with Assembly and Senate offices and other stakeholders to build support for the Partnership's position on the bill;
- Attend and testify at committee hearings, or request PPRC members to testify if appropriate; and
- Communicate with the PPRC about the bill status, strategy, and any relevant updates.

The PPRC membership strives to limit the number of P-1 bills each year because they require a great deal of time and commitment from Partnership staff and each member who is working on the bill, from phone calls to legislators to testifying in Sacramento, and from writing letters to researching the issues.

B. Priority Two

Deciding whether bills are granted Priority Two (P-2) status is determined at monthly PPRC meetings, and must receive a majority vote from the regions. Bills can either be upgraded from P-2 to P-1 or downgraded from P-2 to monitor status by a majority vote of the regional PPRCs.

For all priority two bills, the Partnership will:

- Communicate with the author on suggested bill language and amendments;
- Submit letters of support or opposition in advance of all committee hearings and votes;

- Solicit letters of support or opposition from the Partnership’s membership when appropriate;
- Meet with Assembly and Senate offices to build support for the Partnership’s position on the bill as needed;
- Monitor committee hearings and votes;
- Attend and testify at committee hearings if appropriate; and
- Communicate with the PPRC about the bill status, strategy, and any relevant updates.

C. Monitor Status

Monitor status is decided at monthly PPRC meetings, and must receive a majority vote from the regions. Monitor status is generally assigned to bills which may impact victims or programs but are not directly related to domestic violence and where there is not a clear consensus to take a support or oppose position. The Partnership will track amendments and committee votes for all bills on monitor status and notify the PPRC of any significant changes to the bills.

D. PPRC Sub-committees

Several PPRC sub-committees have formed to explore matters related to specific issue areas, as well as systems change efforts and the implementation of existing legislation. While the tasks of sub-committee members will vary as each sub-committee sets their agenda, participation may include communication with legislators or other groups who are either supporting or opposing matters related to the sub-committee. Other examples of sub-committee tasks might be: attending legislative hearings, meeting with existing committees to learn about how their work interfaces with our agenda, writing and/or delivering training curriculum, or writing position papers for the Partnership on given policies.

The focus of each PPRC sub-committee is decided at the annual meeting. The Partnership currently has the following sub-committees:

- Domestic Violence Funding
- Criminal and Civil Justice
- Teen Dating Violence
- Immigration and Domestic Violence

Each region should designate at least one member to participate on each of the designated sub-committees. A sub-committee may be disbanded when the needs change or the issue is resolved.

The chairperson or co-chairs for the sub-committee is/are expected to:

- Support the sub-committee’s work to meet its goals through regular meetings and communication; and
- Serve as the primary contact for the Partnership office.

E. Bill Chart

The Partnership maintains an updated bill chart which shows each bill number and author, its current status in the legislative process, the Partnership’s position, and a brief summary of the bill. The chart is separated into Priority One, Priority Two, and bills that we are monitoring. The Partnership will distribute an updated bill chart in advance of the monthly co-chair meeting and regional PPRC meetings.

V. ANNUAL EVENTS

A. Annual PPRC Meeting

An annual PPRC meeting is held each year. The annual PPRC meeting is an intensive time of work for the full committee. The intention of the meeting is to examine bill ideas and choose a course of action for the year ahead. The legislative agenda of the Partnership is determined at the annual meeting. Other issues are also addressed, including what worked and didn't work from the previous year, a legislative summary, and an introductory session for new members.

B. Policy Advocacy Day

Every year the Partnership hosts a Policy Advocacy Day at the Capitol. The event brings Partnership members to Sacramento to learn about policy priority and educate their representatives about those priorities and the needs of domestic violence victims in their districts.