

2015 Advisory Council Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided to address the scope of activities outlined in Florida Statute 14.31.

- 1. How faith-based and community-based organizations can best compete with other organizations for the delivery of state services, regardless of an organization's orientation, whether faith-based or secular.**

Faith-based and community-based organizations are uniquely positioned in communities, ready to move forward in providing services to those who may be in need. In order to best compete for the delivery of state services, these organizations must first be aware of opportunities available through the state and attend necessary training(s) to ensure they understand state expectations and have the capacity to meet financial, operational, and compliance requirements. These organizations should consider accessing available opportunities through the My Florida Marketplace – Vendor Bid System website and register and/or sign-up to receive electronic notifications about bid advertisements. When applying to perform services for the state, it is encouraged for these organizations to articulate how they may be able to leverage funding streams and potential volunteers to maximize funds from the state to achieve desired outcomes. The Advisory Council will information available to interested parties and is available to assist organizations connect with the My Florida Marketplace website and provide insight and support on working with the state of Florida.

Additionally, state agencies should consider competitive procurement of services in all parts of the state to limit single source approaches. This would provide opportunities for organizations to demonstrate how they can best deliver services for the state. This is particularly focused on multi-year contracts to enable equal opportunities for all organizations to demonstrate how they can deliver such services for the state. The Advisory Council will work to better locate and identify available funding opportunities for interested parties.

- 2. How best to develop and coordinate activities of faith-based and community-based programs and initiatives, enhance such efforts in communities, and seek such resources, legislation, and regulatory relief as may be necessary to accomplish these objectives.**

As stated previously, the best way to develop and coordinate activities and initiatives is to capitalize on the relationships that exist. A faith-based organization that has a partnership with the State will also have other partnerships within the local community. By facilitating connections with the new partners and ensuring the question of, *“What’s in it for me”*, is answered for everyone involved, opportunities to build momentum around programs and initiatives can occur. Throughout 2015, the Advisory Council has worked to establish resource fairs that can bring together faith and community leaders with program and service providers. By recognizing that many things can get done if you know the right person to speak with, the Advisory Council has made it a point to facilitate connections at our meetings so rapport and relationships can be developed.

To further assist in developing and coordinating activities of faith-based and community-based programs, the Advisory Council recommends for the Office of Adoption and Child Protection to have an additional staff member to assist the Director with the functions of providing administrative support to the Advisory Council and outreach to stakeholders from throughout the state.

- 3. How best to ensure that state policy decisions take into account the capacity of faith-based and other community-based initiatives to assist in the achievement of state priorities.**

To encourage leaders of the state and state agencies to establish review criteria that includes assessment of faith-based and community-based initiatives when determining state policy. As

stated previously, faith-based and community-based organizations can provide assistance and support on a multitude of areas that can align to state priorities. The Legislative Workgroup of the Advisory Council is working to improve its ability to identify proposed legislation that may impact faith-based and community-based organizations in order to share and receive information to assess how it may impact the effectiveness of service delivery among state agencies and partners.

4. How best to identify and promote best practices across state government relating to the delivery of services by faith-based and other community-based organizations.

Throughout 2015, a copy of the Advisory Council's statute was included as part of the meeting packet and posted on the Advisory Council's website in order to illicit input and feedback on the recommendations to be provided to the Governor, Senate President and Speaker of the House. Beyond this approach, a survey mechanism will be developed to obtain perspectives from faith-based and community-based organizations on promising and best practices. Additionally, through conferences hosted by state agencies and through the National Faith Symposium, the Advisory Council will continue to encourage submission of workshop proposals that are inclusive of promising and best practices and work to post this information on the Advisory Council's website.

5. How best to coordinate public awareness of faith-based and community nonprofit initiatives, such as demonstration pilot programs or projects, public-private partnerships, volunteerism, and special projects.

The Advisory Council will continue to utilize its quarterly meetings as a platform to highlight and bring attention to initiatives that are making a positive impact in communities and on families. The Advisory Council will also engage the Circuit Task Forces from throughout the state to provide feedback on initiatives that can raise awareness and inform where individuals and families can go for services and supports.

6. How best to encourage private charitable giving to support faith-based and community-based initiatives.

As stated previously, private charitable giving is best achieved through direct solicitation and when initiatives are supported and communicated by multiple partners and organizations, broader networks can be reached that can encourage additional private charitable giving. The Advisory Council will continue to work to become informed of initiatives and seek opportunities to facilitate connections to businesses and organizations who can consider supporting such initiatives. The Advisory Council also supports the use of development professionals and consultants who can strategize to achieve financial/in-kind goals.

7. How best to bring concerns, ideas, and policy options to the Governor and Legislature for assisting, strengthening, and replicating successful faith-based and other community-based programs.

The Advisory Council will continue to communicate with state agency liaisons and staff, legislative leaders and staff, and through the Governor's Office of Adoption and Child Protection to bring concerns, ideas, and policy options to the Governor and Legislature. Key to communication is the need to first assess each concern, idea and policy option being proposed to determine if they are realistic and viable, and if identified barriers are real or perceived. Advisory Council members serve as regional points of contact for local faith-based and community-based organizations to share concerns, ideas and policy options.

8. How best to develop and implement strategic initiatives to strengthen the institutions of families and communities in this state.

The workgroups established by the Advisory Council are designed to coordinate and facilitate connections that can strengthen communities and families. Additionally, the Advisory Council works with state agency liaisons to identify opportunities to develop and implement initiatives that can strengthen the institutions of families and communities. The Advisory Council will work to support the efforts of and public awareness activities of the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet to ensure information being presented is accurate and consistent.

9. How best to showcase and herald innovative grassroots nonprofit organizations and civic initiatives.

Continue to highlight innovation and civic initiatives at quarterly meetings, at local events, state conferences, through the Champion of Hope Award provided by the Advisory Council, to encourage submission of nominations for the Champions of Service Award provided by Volunteer Florida, and through public meetings of the Advisory Council and other coordinating councils within the state.

10. How best to eliminate unnecessary legislative, regulatory, and other bureaucratic barriers that impede effective faith-based and other community-based efforts to address social problems.

The Advisory Council will continue to engage faith and community-based leaders and members on topics regarding legislative, regulatory and other bureaucratic barriers that may impede effective efforts to address social problems. The public comment portion of the Advisory Council meeting is specifically designed for feedback and perspectives to be shared in order to provide information to make necessary recommendations to eliminate such barriers. The Advisory Council will continue to seek input and feedback from the public on information contained within its statute.

11. How best to monitor implementation of state policy affecting faith-based and other community-based organizations.

Through the collaboration and engagement of state agency liaisons, the Advisory Council will continue working to identify state policies that may affect the efforts of faith-based and other community-based organizations. The Advisory Council's Legislative Workgroup will also seek to monitor implementation of such policies in order to make recommendations that can result in increased collaboration and coordination between faith-based, volunteer and community-based organizations and the state.

12. How best to ensure that the efforts of faith-based and other community-based organizations meet objective criteria for performance and accountability.

The Advisory Council will continue to make itself available to assist faith-based and community-based organizations and work with state agency liaisons and staff to provide technical assistance and training to meet objective criteria for performance and accountability.

