

## ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are provided to address requirements 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.**

**2016**

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 work to post links to the My Florida Marketplace website to enable interested parties to access information available. Additionally, the Advisory Council will continue to work to better locate and identify available funding opportunities for interested parties.

**2017**

Each organization who desires to compete for the delivery of state services must have organizational capacity to meet and/or exceed operational and administrative expectations set by the state. Advisory Council members are located throughout the state and serve as regional points of contact to assist faith and community organizations with questions, provide training and technical assistance, develop visual process maps to help them “tell their story”, and facilitate connections to assist in building necessary capacity in order to compete for the delivery of state services. State agencies are encouraged to have ongoing reviews of the amount and benefits of paperwork required to ensure it is needed, effective training and technical assistance to both agency staff and contractors/providers, and utilize the most effective and efficient approaches to enable contractors/providers to spend more time serving children and families as compared to completing paperwork.

**2018**

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**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.**

**2016**

One of the first challenges to overcome when working to develop and coordinate activities of faith-based and community-based programs is to be aware of what is being provided. The Advisory Council continues to work on creating awareness of its functions and ability to provide support to organizations. During quarterly meetings, the Advisory Council seeks presentations on best practice approaches and innovative programs, and recognizes organizations for their efforts to strengthen children and families in Florida. This is done to spur ideas in other areas of the state and to develop additional local connections to support activities. Council members serve as regional points of contact for organizations throughout Florida and can assist in facilitating connections to agency staff to build upon the activities.

**2017**

A dedicated office with sufficient staffing is needed to support the development and inventory of programs and initiatives in order to have greater coordination of efforts. The office could then have the capacity to do the work and provide training, technical assistance and facilitate connections. It is important for each appointment authority to fill open seats with individuals who have multiple talents, networks and are strategically positioned throughout the state so there is representation in at least each judicial circuit of Florida. Activities must be developed locally and as they demonstrate achievement of performance outcomes and return on investment, they should progress to the regional level and eventually the state level if warranted.

**2018**

Dedicated staffing is needed to support the development and inventory of programs and initiatives in order to have greater coordination of efforts. It can also support efforts to provide training, technical assistance and facilitate connections. It is important for each appointment authority to fill open seats with individuals who have multiple talents, networks and are strategically positioned throughout the state, so there is representation in at least each judicial circuit of Florida who can share what programs and initiatives are taking place. Activities must be developed locally, and as they demonstrate achievement of performance outcomes and return on investment, they should progress to the regional level and eventually the state level if warranted.

**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.**

**2016**

The Advisory Council encourages elected officials and state agencies to establish review criteria that includes assessment of faith-based and community-based initiatives when determining state policy. Officials and agencies are encouraged to utilize the Advisory Council as a mechanism to disseminate information on proposed changes, community meetings, etc. that can illicit comment and feedback on state policy decisions from faith-based and community-based organizations.

**2017**

It is important for faith based and other community based organizations to engage their local elected officials to express their desire to support or oppose policies that may not or may limit their ability to be included. The state should consider expressing its support of faith and other community organizations' involvement to achieve state priorities- this messaging can encourage these organizations to be more willing to assist the state. It is encouraged for the state to build on existing examples where faith-based and other community organizations are putting forth efforts that align to and achieve state priorities.

2018

It is important for faith-based and other community-based organizations to engage their local elected officials in expressing their desire to support or oppose policies that may not or may limit their ability to be included. This could be done by holding in-person listening sessions or by using a public facing survey to request feedback from citizens. The state should consider expressing its support of faith and other community organizations' involvement to achieve state priorities- this messaging can encourage these organizations to be more willing to assist the state. It is encouraged for the state to build on existing examples where faith-based and other community organizations are putting forth efforts that align to and achieve state priorities.

**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.**

2016

Each year, the Advisory Council, in collaboration with DCF and DJJ, disseminates information to faith-based and community-based organizations to encourage submission of presentations for the annual Faith Symposium on best practice approaches to improve outcomes. Additionally, once activities are identified, members either facilitate connections directly to state agency contacts or works with the Governor's Office of Adoption and Child Protection for guidance on who best to connect with.

2017

Assess existing mechanisms (e.g., conferences, regional gatherings, etc.) that seek to provide best practice and service presentations to attendees that enhance delivery of services in their own areas. Encouraging decision makers at the local, regional and state levels to visit/tour programs and observe services being delivered can increase awareness and support for initiatives.

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**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.**

2016

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.

2017

Faith based and other community organizations should utilize all traditional media sources (i.e., TV, radio, newspaper, billboards, etc.) and expand their use of social media to create interest and awareness of their initiatives. Organizations should also consider hosting public events and performances that enable their target populations to engage with the community and showcase what they have learned through the initiative. The state should consider incorporating unique funding strategies (e.g., public-private partnerships, pay for success models, incentives for achieving benchmarks and goals) and assist with marketing to the impact of the state's investment.

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

2016

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.

2017

The state should consider offering additional tax incentives/benefits to individuals and organizations who contribute towards initiatives that have demonstrated their ability to achieve performance based outcomes. Similar to #5, organizations should utilize all traditional media and social media avenues, public events and performances to create awareness of the positive impact on the target populations being served.

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**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.**

2016

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. Council members may also work directly with their local legislative delegation to create awareness of concerns, ideas and policy options. Additionally, the Advisory Council will continue to seek comment and input from faith-based and community-based organizations to assess and consider including as part of their recommendations to the Governor and Legislature.

2017

Identify staff within the Governor's Office and Legislature to serve as a local and/or regional point of contact for citizens throughout Florida to bring concerns, ideas and policy options to the table for review and consideration. Each branch should establish procedures for how information can be forwarded through various levels to reach the appropriate staff who can take action. Citizens may also engage directly with their elected officials to present concerns, ideas and policy options for review and consideration. Building awareness through traditional and social media platforms can further efforts to gain the attention of key leaders.

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

2016

The workgroups established by the Advisory Council are designed to coordinate and facilitate connections that can strengthen communities and families. Additionally, the Advisory Council will continue to work 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 continue to support the efforts of the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet and other state associations and groups to develop and implement strategic initiatives.

2017

The state, in collaboration with city and county governments, should establish a taskforce (to include faith-based and other community organizations) to develop general expectations for the institutions of families and communities. An assessment of current family and community norms should be compared to the general expectations. Upon identifying differences, a collaborative marketing and education strategy should be implemented to reinforce the general expectations in order to begin changing thinking to change behavior. Each state and local agency should integrate the general expectations into its operations and provide training and technical assistance to reinforce the expectations with a focus on utilizing the same or similar terminology and definitions. This consistency and continuity can advance efforts to create positive change in thinking and behaviors over time.

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

2016

The Advisory Council will continue to highlight innovation organizations and civic initiatives at quarterly meetings, local events, state conferences, through the Champion of Hope Award provided at the annual Faith Symposium, and encourage submission of nominations for the Champions of Service Award provided by Volunteer Florida.

**2017** Encourage organizations to present at forums and conferences. Identify opportunities to highlight key initiatives at public events- utilize traditional and social media platforms. Engage with state and local agencies to nominate organizations- publicly recognize efforts that are making a positive difference in families and communities.

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**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.**

**2016** The Advisory Council will continue to seek comment and input from 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 work with state agency contacts and elected officials to eliminate barriers that may impede efforts to strengthen communities and families.

**2017** Legislative intent should be clearly stated and efforts should occur to monitor implementation to ensure it is done as intended. If collaboration with faith organizations is desired, then it should focus on all religions, not just one. Improve technology systems that can enable each agency or organization to see the “prescription” for services and support that are provided by each agency or organization to assess if the “prescription” is working and to prevent unnecessary duplication of efforts and services. Take additional steps to make the public aware of rule changes or changes in services so public input can be heard and assessed. Increase civic engagement and provide education and experiences for youth throughout their development and transition to adulthood.

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

**2016** 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.

**2017** The state should consider adding monitoring to any requirement that is put in place so organizations do not find “work arounds” or are not compliant with the requirement because no one is watching. Conduct site visits and client/customer reviews to get real perspectives. Have other organizations share their experiences and how they are able to implement/embed the requirements into their daily practice.

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

**2016** 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.

**2017** The state should consider developing criteria that is clear and concise to remove perceived “grey areas” as best as possible. Have organizations define their accountability methods as part of plans or proposals submitted. Identify reliable and trusted data sources to minimize manipulation of data and results. Provide ongoing training and technical assistance to organizations on how to establish objectives and use data to improve.

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