



Legislative Policy and Procedure Public Health Association of Nebraska

Policy Development

The Public Health Association of Nebraska (PHAN) Board encourages members to submit policies to be considered for adoption by the Board. These policies, if approved by the Board will become official policy of PHAN. This document establishes protocols and procedures for the development and passage of official PHAN policy.

The Legislative and Policy committee is the appropriate conduit for individuals and organizations seeking PHAN endorsement, support, or opposition for proposed resolutions, programs, and initiatives.

Procedure for Proposing and Adopting Policy Resolutions

A policy is a concise statement of the Association's stance on a particular issue affecting the health of the public. Policies have a specific focus and contain a call for defined action.

Policies serve as the basis for establishing the Association's advocacy positions, priorities, and actions. All policy resolutions are considered and approved by a majority vote of the PHAN Board.

1. **The Legislative and Policy Committee** shall manage the procedure.
2. **Announcement:** A specific call to the membership for submission of proposed resolutions will be periodically issued.
3. **Origination:** Any PHAN member is eligible to submit a proposed policy for consideration. Drafts of proposed policies may be submitted to the Legislative and Policy Committee at any time.
4. **Policy Format:** The requirements and procedure for submitting resolutions shall be on the website. Draft policies must:
 - a. Be consistent with the mission, vision and the strategic plan of the Association;
 - b. Fill gaps in the Association's existing policies;
 - c. Be drafted as concisely as possible and facilitate clear and succinct expression;
 - d. Incorporate the best possible data-supported evidence; and
 - e. Call for a series of actions to address the specific public health policy issue.
5. **Policy Submission:** Drafts of proposed public policy statements should be submitted electronically to the Chair of the Legislative and Policies Committee. Receipt of each proposed public policy statement will be acknowledged to the person identified as the submitting author.
6. **Initial Assessment Report:** After its first review, the Legislative and Policy Committee will inform the submitting author/contact within two months' time of the status of their review of the policy.



- a. A **positive assessment**, i.e., the Legislative and Policy Committee is favorably inclined to approve the proposal essentially as submitted, and recommends it to the Board for approval.
- b. A **conditional assessment**, i.e., the Legislative and Policy Committee suggests revisions of the proposed policy and may reconsider the proposal later, when it is revised as suggested, expecting eventually to refer it to the Board for consideration.

Resolutions that are not in the approved format will receive a conditional assessment and will be returned to the submitting author for correction. Further, the Legislative and Policy Committee may request authors of separate (but related) proposals, and others to work cooperatively together in the development of a single, succinct, jointly developed proposal. A conditional assessment report is accompanied by specific Legislative and Policy Committee suggestions for revision. OR,

- c. A **negative assessment**, i.e., the Legislative and Policy Committee suggests withdrawal of the proposal, being inclined to disapprove the proposal, calling for its rejection if considered by the Board. A negative assessment report is accompanied by specific reasons for Legislative and Policy Committee disapproval. Proposals voluntarily withdrawn by sponsors proceed no further in the process.
7. **Board Consideration:** After review by the Legislative and Policy Committee, all resolutions will be forwarded to the Board for consideration.

For each resolution, the Board can vote to “**endorse**”, “**not endorse**” or “**take no action**”. If a majority of the Board votes to endorse the policy then it becomes official PHAN policy and it will be posted on the PHAN website. If a majority of the Board votes not to endorse or to take no action, the author(s) of the policy may rewrite the policy and start the process again or the author(s) may withdraw their policy.

8. **Publication: Policies** adopted by the Board will be published annually on the PHAN Web site. A compendium of PHAN resolutions as determined by the Board will be maintained, with date of Board approval at the top of the document.

Procedure for Responding to Requests for PHAN Endorsement*

PHAN may have the opportunity to or be requested to send letters to policy makers advocating for or against specific legislation and regulations that have public health implications. By sustaining a noticeable presence throughout the policy-making process, PHAN can help to ensure that vital public health programs and services are protected and supported, both fiscally and politically.

1. Assumptions:

- a. PHAN should only take an official stand on those policy issues that are central to its mission, vision and strategic plan of the organization.
- b. PHAN should authorize the Executive Director or designee to publicly support or not support proposed legislation that is central to mission and vision of the organization.
- c. Endorsement shall mean an arrangement in which PHAN name and/or logo are attached to a policy, document, or event, and refers to an act of support only, that does not incur any financial obligations by PHAN.



2. Procedure:

- a. The requestor shall submit an endorsement request by email to the PHAN executive director.
- b. The Legislative and Policy Committee shall manage the procedure. PHAN will not support or discuss new initiatives that have not come to them through this committee.
- c. The endorsement request will be forwarded to the PHAN Legislative and Policy Committee. The Legislative and Policy Committee shall review the endorsement request and apply the following criteria in making its determination:
 - i. Public health has a legitimate, defensible interest in the issue;
 - ii. The endorsement request is consistent with PHAN's mission, goals and strategic plan;
 - iii. PHAN has established policy (e.g., a resolution) related to the issue outlined in the endorsement request;
 - iv. The issue outlined in the endorsement request is endorsed by APHA or other credible public health-related organizations;
- d. To be considered, the endorsement request must meet criteria (i) and (ii). The Endorsement requests that meet criteria (i), (ii), and (iii) will be processed directly by the Legislative and Policy Committee without further consideration by the Board. All other endorsement requests must be considered by the Board in order to be approved.
- e. If the Legislative and Policy Committee agrees to recommend the request for endorsement by the PHAN Board, the chairperson of the committee will contact the PHAN President; inform him/her of the request and the decision of the committee.
- f. The President will either schedule the vote request at a regularly scheduled meeting agenda or conduct an email vote of the Board, depending on the expediency needed with the request. The endorsement request must receive a two-thirds vote by a quorum in order to be approved.
- g. The President will document the Board vote and forward that documentation to the Legislative and Policy Committee chairperson and will inform the Board of its decision.
- h. The Chair or co-chair of the Legislation and Policy Committee will communicate the decision of the PHAN Board to the requestor.
- i. If any significant doubt exists as to whether the approval of the endorsement request will contribute to the best interests of PHAN, permission shall be withheld.

* These procedures apply to PHAN endorsements that are not already being addressed by the Legislative and Policy Committee.