



# CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE BYLAWS

Adopted by AACOG Criminal Justice Advisory Committee

Approved by AACOG Board of Directors

## **1. Authority**

- 1.1. The Board of Directors of the Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) has, through its Executive Director, applied for and received successive grants from the Governor's Office – Criminal Justice Division for the establishment and maintenance of a Regional Criminal Justice Planning Unit, which consists of a Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) and professional staff.
- 1.2. The Bylaws of the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee are revised and amended herein to conform to the Policies and Regulations of the Alamo Area Council of Governments, the Governor's Office – Criminal Justice Division, the Texas Administrative Code, the Texas Open Meetings Act, and pertinent statutes.

## **2. Vision and Purpose**

- 2.1. CJAC aims to support the criminal justice community within the Alamo Area to increase criminal justice services and resources. The purpose of CJAC is to review and rank CJD grant applications, create regional guidelines for CJD grant applicants, reach out to local communities concerning the Regional Strategic Plan, and determine next steps to improve criminal justice gaps in the community.

## **3. AACOG Staff Duties**

- 3.1. AACOG Staff shall implement the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between The Public Safety Office within the Office of the Governor and The Alamo Area Council of Governments, herein known as the ICA.<sup>1</sup>

## **4. Advisory Committee**

- 4.1. The program advisory committee in the area of criminal justice for the Alamo Area Council of Governments shall be known as the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee, herein referred to as CJAC.
- 4.2. CJAC will consist of 37 Primary Members and 37 or more Alternate Members representing all counties in the AACOG region: Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Comal, Frio, Gillespie, Guadalupe, Karnes, Kendall, Kerr, McMullen, Medina and Wilson.
- 4.3. CJAC will elect one Chair and one Vice-Chair to lead and facilitate the CJAC monthly meetings.
- 4.4. Membership of CJAC must follow the determined policies and directives set forth by the CJD and AACOG. CJAC membership must:
  - 4.4.1. Consist of multidisciplinary representation (no more than one-third) from the COG's Region;

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<sup>1</sup> For full AACOG Staff duties as outlined in the ICA, please refer to the most recent ICA.

4.4.2. Include individuals from: non-profit organizations, municipalities, counties, citizens or parents, substance abuse prevention, education, juvenile justice, law enforcement, mental health, prosecution or courts, and victim services; and

4.4.3. Reflect the regional the ethnic balance using the latest demographic statistics as a guide.

## **5. Advisory Committee Duties**

5.1. Advise the Board of Directors on all program and policy matters pertaining to the criminal justice area.

5.2. Serve as a focal point for leadership, guidance, coordination, development, and implementation of AACOG planning programs and activities in the criminal justice area.

5.3. Develop, review, and make recommendations to the Board of Directors on the Criminal Justice Regional Strategic Plan, including the regional priorities for the reduction of crime and the improvement to the criminal justice system.

5.4. Review, evaluate, and make funding recommendations to the Board of Directors on CJD grant applications.

5.5. Review and act on funding changes made by appropriate funding agencies and forward its recommendations to the Board of Directors for action.

5.6. Promote public awareness of the issues, alternatives and goals in the criminal justice area.

## **6. Member Nomination**

6.1. Membership nominations must follow the determined process:

6.1.1. Nominations may be submitted by AACOG member governments, professional organizations, citizen's group, current committee members, and AACOG staff. AACOG staff will present all nominations to the CJAC for a vote.

6.1.2. Nominated members receive the CJAC membership recommendation based on a majority rules vote.

6.1.3. In the event of multiple nominations for the same position, the nominated member with the most votes will win CJAC recommendation.

## **7. Approved Members**

7.1. Approved CJAC Members must designate one or more alternates to use as their proxy if necessary.

7.1.1. All Alternates will have full voting rights only if the Primary is absent.

7.2. CJAC Members serve for a term of two years. Members are eligible to be appointed for more than one term.

7.2.1. Members who are unable to serve for a full term may present their alternative to the CJAC for approval to serve the remainder of their term.

7.3. In the event of a seat becoming vacant due to resignation, removal, disqualification, lack of attendance, death, or otherwise, the open seat may be filled by the previously appointed alternate for the duration of the principal appointees term.

## **8. CJAC Member Responsibilities**

8.1. CJAC Members will attend and participate in CJAC Regular Meetings.

8.2. CJAC Members who do not hold Conflict of Interest will attend and participate in CJAC Scoring and Prioritization Meetings.

8.3. CJAC Members who do not hold Conflict of Interest will review, score, and recommend funding for CJD grant applications.

8.3.1. CJAC Members may only use grant applications provided by the COG for the use of review and scoring. CJAC Members are prohibited to use language, documents, budgets, or additional items related to applications for any use outside of the scoring and prioritization process. Members who violate this trust will be removed from the Committee and reported to CJD by AACOG staff.

## **9. CJAC Officers and Election of Officers**

9.1. The officers of this committee shall be the Chair and Vice-Chair.

9.2. CJAC must elect the Officers from current serving CJAC Members, both Primary and Alternate.

9.3. CJAC Officer Elections occur on or before the last CJAC meeting of each calendar year.

9.4. CJAC Officers serve for a one year period, which begins on the first CJAC meeting of each calendar year and ends on the last CJAC meeting of the calendar year.

9.5. CJAC Officers may be re-elected to serve but may not serve in their position for more than three consecutive years, after which Officers must wait one full year to be eligible for another term.

9.6. In the event of the Chair seat becoming vacant during office due to resignation, removal, disqualification, lack of attendance, promotion, permanent incapacitation, or otherwise, the seat will be filled by the Vice-Chair.

- 9.7. In the event of the Vice-Chair seat becoming vacant during office due to resignation, removal, disqualification, lack of attendance, promotion, permanent incapacitation, or otherwise, CJAC will hold an election at the next Public meeting.

## **10. Duties of Officers**

- 10.1. The CJAC Chair shall perform the following duties:
  - 10.1.1. Preside over all public CJAC meetings.
  - 10.1.2. Conduct CJAC meetings according to the following Parliamentary Procedure:
  - 10.1.3. Contact AACOG Staff if they are unable to attend a Public CJAC Meeting
  - 10.1.4. Other duties may be prescribed by the Board of Directors or the CJAC if necessary.
- 10.2. The Vice-Chair shall act as Chair and perform all of the above duties if the Chair is absent for a Public CJAC Meeting.
- 10.3. In the event that the principle seat holder did not have an alternate or the alternate is unable to fill the vacancy AACOG will coordinate and contact all appropriate entities and request nominations for the CJAC vote.
- 10.4. Upon completion of the former principal appointees term AACOG will coordinate and contact all appropriate entities and request nominations for the CJAC vote.

## **11. Meetings**

- 11.1. Regular CJAC Meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of every month at 1:30pm unless otherwise noted by AACOG staff. Meetings are held either in the AACOG Boardroom, an online platform (i.e. GoToWebinar, GoToMeeting, etc.), or a combination of in-person and digital.
- 11.2. All meetings are open to the public in accordance with Federal and State Law including but not limited to the requirements described in the Texas Government Code, Chapter 551 ([Texas Open Meetings Act](#)).
- 11.3. All meetings will follow the AACOG CJP Parliamentary Procedure as outlined in Appendix A.
- 11.4. Special meetings of the Committee may be convened at the direction of the Chair, at the time and place so directed.
- 11.5. Over fifty percent of members of the CJAC must be in attendance at the meeting to constitute a quorum.
- 11.6. Each Member or their alternate shall have one vote. A simple majority of those present and voting will be sufficient to decide any question before the Committee.

- 11.7. The use of proxy votes is disallowed in accordance with the AACOG Board of Directors bylaws and will not be accepted.
- 11.8. In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair, the senior ACOG staff member present may act as Chair Ex-officio for the sole purpose of designating a member as Chair Pro-Tempore, and the member so designated shall have all the powers of the Chair for that particular meeting.
- 11.9. Members who miss three or more regularly scheduled meetings in a twelve month period without a duly recognized alternate in attendance may be considered by the Chair as having been removed and the vacancy filled in the normal manner.
- 11.10. AACOG Staff shall prepare and distribute to all members the agenda for each meeting at least one week prior to the date thereof. Written requests to place items on the agenda should be submitted to the Chair and AACOG Staff at least 10 working days prior to the next scheduled meeting.
- 11.11. The official minutes of CJAC meetings shall be recorded and maintained by the AACOG staff. The approved minutes will be posted on the AACOG website, and distributed to the members of The CJAC no later than two weeks after the meeting.
- 11.12. CJAC Steering Committee Meetings are created by CJAC during Regular Public Meetings and will follow these guidelines:
  - 11.12.1. All Steering Committees will be facilitated by AACOG staff and do not require elected Officers.
  - 11.12.2. All Steering Committees will fulfill their intended purpose and provide all materials and suggestions to the regular CJAC Meetings for final approval.

## **12. Regional Strategic Plan**

- 12.1. When reviewing grant applications, CJAC will refer to the Criminal Justice Regional Strategic Plan to:
  - 12.1.1. Prevent duplication of local project services;
  - 12.1.2. Promote inter-governmental and interagency cooperation and coordination;
  - 12.1.3. Support planning comprehensiveness for regional services and resources;
  - 12.1.4. Analyze the regional impact of the proposed project or program; and
  - 12.1.5. Confirm grant projects address one or more regional priorities determined in the Criminal Justice Regional Strategic Plan.
- 12.2. AACOG Staff will collect qualitative and quantitative data from stakeholders and other community members to report updated Strategic Plan Goals.

12.3.AACOG Staff will additionally include an executive summary for general public audience.

### **13. Conflict of Interest**

13.1.CJAC and AACOG Board of Directors must abstain from reviewing, voting, commenting, participating<sup>2</sup>, or taking any action on any grant application during the prioritization process if the member or an individual related to the member within the third degree by consanguinity or within the second degree by affinity:

13.1.1. Is employed by the applicant agency<sup>3</sup> and works for the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded;

13.1.2. Serves on any board that oversees the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded;

13.1.3. Owns or controls any interest in a business entity or other non-governmental organization that benefits, directly or indirectly, from activities with the applicant agency;

13.1.4. Receives any funds from the applicant agency as a result of the grant, if awarded;  
or

13.1.5. Uses or receives a substantial amount of tangible goods, services, or funds from the applicant agency.

13.2.CJAC Members with Conflict of Interest will vacate the room, virtual platform, etc. during the conflicted application's scoring, is unable to present their agency's application to CJAC, and may not participate in outside conversations regarding the application with other CJAC members.

13.3.AACOG staff may participate in any grant application submitted by the COG, but may not vote, take action, or comment on COG applications.

13.4.Any applicants, CJAC Members, COG personnel, or other individual has reason to believe that favoritism or inappropriate actions occurred during CJD application scoring and prioritization, identifying Conflict of Interest, Membership nomination, Membership removal, or any other Membership item, AACOG shall ensure that all concerns are shared with CJD.

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<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this section, participation refers to presenting the grant application to CJAC and/or being present during the application's scoring.

<sup>3</sup> For purpose of this section, "agency", when applied to Municipalities or Counties, shall mean any division of said Municipality or County, and "unit or division" shall be a smaller component of that division.

13.5. AACOG Staff will provide CJAC with a detailed list of CJAC Member Conflict of Interest no later than the regular CJAC Meeting prior to the Scoring Meetings or one month prior to the Scoring Meetings, whichever occurs first.

13.5.1. It is the responsibility of CJAC Members to notify AACOG staff concerning any changes with the recorded Conflict of Interest list.

#### **14. CJD Grant Applicant Materials and Requirements**

14.1. CJD Grant Applicants must follow the CJAC Bylaws and Grant Application Guidelines to receive a favorable review.

14.2. CJD Grant Applicants must attend a mandatory Grant Workshop to fulfill regional requirements and receive a favorable review.

14.3. CJD Grant Applicants must submit a Grant Summary Form to receive a favorable review.

14.4. A grant applicant representative must attend the Scoring and Prioritization Meeting and present the agency's grant project to receive a favorable review.

14.5. CJAC and/or AACOG staff reserve the right to request additional information other than what is included in the CJD application, forms or attachments. Failure to comply with this request shall result in the application not being recommended for funding.

#### **15. CJAC Guidelines**

15.1. CJAC may develop and adopt guidelines for regional grant application requirements, funding recommendations, and score tools.

15.2. CJAC will include the following in the Guidelines:

15.2.1. Regional requirements for Favorable Review;

15.2.2. Scoring areas;

15.2.3. Recommended Budget Caps;

15.2.4. Funding Ratios for repeat projects;

15.2.5. Any other topics necessary to conduct a regional review.

15.3. The AACOG Board of Directors must approve all adopted policies and procedures prior to implementation.

#### **16. Application Review**

16.1. CJAC shall participate in the CJD Grant Application Review Process each year to provide regional referrals to the CJD.



16.2. CJAC must vote to give an application that will be recommended for funding a “Favorable Review”. Alternatively, CJAC must vote to give an application that will not be recommended for funding an “Unfavorable Review”.

16.2.1. Grant applicants must meet all requirements set within these bylaws and CJAC Grant Application Guidelines to receive a favorable review.

16.2.2. CJAC may not send forth an application to the AACOG Board of Directors without a recommendation.

16.2.3. CJAC will provide application scores and recommend application budgets to AACOG staff to create the Priority Ranking Sheet.

16.2.4. AACOG Staff will provide the ranks and recommended budgets for each application to CJD.

## **17. CJAC Scoring Requirements**

17.1. AACOG Staff will provide CJAC Members with CJAC Scoring Workshops.

17.1.1. In order to score, CJAC Members must attend a CJAC Scoring Workshop on their first term and every two years thereafter.

17.2. AACOG Staff will provide a Score Tool to CJAC Members that follows CJD requirements and is approved by the CJAC. CJAC Members must use the provided Score Tool to submit application scores.

## **18. Tabulation and Ranking**

18.1. AACOG staff will tabulate the scores rendered by the CJAC and report the priority ranking for the grant applications based on their total score average. AACOG staff will dismiss the highest and lowest scores submitted by CJAC members when formulating the average score.

18.2. AACOG staff shall provide written notification of scores and rankings to all scored grant applicants within 14 days of approval by the AACOG Board of Directors.

18.2.1. No grant applicant will receive verbal, written, or any other type of communication of Board of Directors’ approved scores, ranking, or recommended funding prior to the release of the approved Priority Ranking Sheet.

## **19. Tied Applications**

19.1.1. In the event of two or more grant applications receiving the same scores, the identified grant applications must go through a tie breaker process approved by AACOG. AACOG staff will remove the lowest given score from each tied grant application. Staff will then recalculate and compare the new average scores. This process will continue until the identified grant applications no longer have tied scores.

19.1.2. CJAC will be notified of any updated grant application scores prior to the ranking and prioritization meeting.

## **20. Funding Recommendations**

20.1. CJAC may recommend funds that are equal or less than the funds requested on an application, including exempt programs, for any other reason that it deems necessary and appropriate.

20.2. CJAC may determine which applications to recommend for funding and which applications should not be recommended for funding.

20.3. Funding recommendations on grant applications are based upon:

20.3.1. Any state strategies identified by The Office of The Governor – Criminal Justice Division;

20.3.2. Availability of regional funds for each funding stream;

20.3.3. Criminal justice priorities identified in the most recently completed strategic plan;

20.3.4. The eligibility, reasonableness, and cost effectiveness of the proposed project; and

20.3.5. Current AACOG policies and bylaws.

20.4. The decision to not recommend an application for funding will be reported to CJD.

## **21. Appeal Process**

21.1. CJD Grant Applicants may appeal an Unfavorable Review made by the CJAC.

21.1.1. To appeal an Unfavorable Review, grant applicants must contact AACOG staff of their appeal within five working days of the Unfavorable Review by CJAC.

21.2. AACOG staff will provide written notification of the date and time of the next AACOG Board meeting to the agency who wishes to appeal the decision of CJAC.

21.3. AACOG staff must notify the AACOG Board of any appeals.

21.4. CJD Grant Applicants may not appeal the final scores approved by the AACOG Board of Directors. The decision of the AACOG Board of Directors is final.

21.5. Consistent with the amendments made to the Texas Administrative Code, effective June 21, 2009, there is no appeal process for grant applicants for decisions made by the CJAC and the AACOG Board of Directors and provided to the Executive Director of the CJD. The funding decisions of the Executive Director of the Governor's Office, Criminal Justice Department are final and are not subject to appeal. (TAC Section 3.9)

## **22. Alternative CJAC Meeting Process**

- 22.1. In case of local, state, and/or federal emergencies and/or disasters, the COG will conduct an OOG approved alternative meeting process. This process will be used for all CJAC Meetings which includes but is not limited to:
  - 22.1.1. Regular CJAC Meetings;
  - 22.1.2. Scoring and Prioritization CJAC Meetings; and
  - 22.1.3. CJAC Steering Committee Meetings.
- 22.2. AACOG Staff will provide CJAC Members with all necessary meeting materials prior to the virtual meeting.
- 22.3. The Chair will conduct all duties as appropriate, unless otherwise stated. In the case that the Chair experiences technical difficulties during a virtual meeting, the Vice-Chair will take over as Chair.
- 22.4. Quorum must be established to conduct all CJAC meetings, regardless of the hosted platform. Quorum will be established during Roll Call with CJAC Members being able to identify attendance through:
  - 22.4.1. Verbal confirmation;
  - 22.4.2. Chat confirmation; and/or
  - 22.4.3. Webcam confirmation.
  - 22.4.4. CJAC Members who do not use the above methods to confirm their attendance will be not able to make Quorum, regardless of a Member's name appearing in a virtual participation list.

## **23. Amendments to the Bylaws**

- 23.1. AACOG Staff will review and edit the CJAC Bylaws every July as necessary.
- 23.2. CJAC will review and submit the CJAC Bylaws for approval every September as necessary.
- 23.3. CJAC may amend the CJAC Bylaws by a majority vote.
- 23.4. Any proposed amendment must be submitted to CJAC membership at least ten days prior to the meeting at which they may be acted on.
- 23.5. An amendment to any one section of the said Bylaws does not necessarily invalidate the remainder.

23.6. The AACOG Board of Directors must approve the CJAC Bylaws and any revisions to the Bylaws.

## Appendix A

### *Criminal Justice Planning Standard Operating Procedure: Parliamentary Procedure*

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#### **CJAC Meeting Opening Procedure**

- Includes:
  - Agenda
  - CJAC Chair Signature
- Steps: *CJAC Chair must open each meeting using the following procedure:*
  1. Chair must sign CJAC Chair Signature page
  2. Chair calls for the meeting to begin
  3. Chair states the item of Roll Call on the Agenda
  4. AACOG Staff will then proceed with Roll Call
    - 1.1 Attendance is taken verbally
    - 1.2 CJAC Members must additionally sign in upon coming into the meeting room
  5. AACOG Staff closes Roll Call and passes Meeting back to Chair to commence
- Exceptions: See Alternative Process for virtual meetings.

#### **CJAC Agenda Discussion Procedure**

- Includes:
  - Agenda
- Steps: *CJAC Chair must facilitate the CJAC Meeting by addressing Agenda Items using the following procedure:*
  1. Chair states the item number and item name as listed on the Agenda to open discussion
  2. CJAC Members may review, discuss, suggest, etc. the item on the agenda as appropriate
  3. Items may only move forward once a motion has been made
  4. Chair states the approved motion to close an Agenda item discussion
- Exceptions: The Program Updates on the Agenda does not always need a motion to move forward if the AACOG Staff only provides updates on the program and not items for approval. Additionally, the Public Comments item does not need a motion if there are no public comments.

#### **CJAC Motion and Voting Procedure**

- Includes:
  - Agenda
  - Any handouts for approval

- Steps: CJAC may make a motion on any topics on the Agenda to call for a vote. The CJAC Members will set a vote into motion by using the following process:
  1. Must declare a motion using the following language:
    - 1.1 “I [CJAC Member Name] motion [in favor or against] [topic/issue].”  
Members may suggest necessary edits within their motion, including making a motion to postpone discussing the item until a later date.
  2. For any motion to continue, a different CJAC Member must declare themselves a second by using the following language:
    - 1.1 “I [CJAC Member name] seconds the motion”.
  3. Chair will open the motion for a vote before the CJAC.
    - 1.1 Each CJAC Primary Member has one vote.
    - 1.2 If a CJAC Primary Member is absent, the vote is held by their Alternate.
    - 1.3 If a Primary and Alternate Member are both present, only the Primary Member may vote on a motion.

### **CJAC Meeting Closing Procedure**

- Includes:
  - Agenda
- Steps: *CJAC Chair will close the Meeting using the following procedure:*
  1. Chair will adjourn the meeting by stating the item number and name
  2. Meeting will adjourn

### **Alternative CJAC Meeting Process**

- Includes:
  - Agenda
  - Computer, tablet, phone
  - Virtual Platform
- Steps: *Any alternative steps are listed below*
  1. The CJAC Members will set a vote into motion by using the following process:
    - 1.1 The Chair will call for a motion.
    - 1.2 CJAC Members must identify a motion through verbal, chat, or webcam confirmation by using the following language: “[CJAC Member Name] motion for a vote [in favor or against] [Agenda Item]”. Members may add alternatives to the motion if necessary.
    - 1.3 The ACOG Staff member will read the Chat comments out loud, and/or unmute/mute CJAC Members based on a “raised hand” as capabilities allow.
    - 1.4 The Chair will confirm the CJAC Member’s motion and call for a second.
    - 1.5 CJAC Members must identify a second to the motion through verbal, chat, or webcam confirmation by using the following language: “[CJAC Member Name] motion for a

vote [in favor or against] [Agenda Item]”. Members may add alternatives to the motion if necessary.

1.6 The Chair will call for all those in favor and all those opposed.

- No response on virtual meetings will automatically be identified as in favor to the motion.
- To oppose a motion, a CJAC Member must oppose either verbally, through the chat, or on their webcam (ASL) as capabilities allow.
- Motions will be approved or rejected based on majority rules as identified through all opposed CJAC Members.

1.7 The Chair will then approve or reject the motion.

2. Public comments may be made during the regular agenda portion of the CJAC Meeting by attendees “raising their hand” to speak, verbally identifying themselves, or using the chat feature. ACOG Staff will facilitate the Public Comment section.