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2 **BY LAWS**

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4 **CHILDREN’S SERVICES COUNCIL**

5
6 **OF HIGHLANDS COUNTY**

7
8 *Updated January 2012*

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10 The Children’s Services Council is a **standing advisory committee** appointed by
11 the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners for the purpose of meeting the
12 needs of children in Highlands County.

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14 Its rules of procedure follow the Board of County Commissioners’ Policy on
15 Appointments to Boards and Committees, as amended from time to time. These include
16 compliance with the Florida Government in the Sunshine Law, the Public Meetings
17 Procedures and the Public Records Law.

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19 Certain specific By-Laws have been adopted by the Council as listed below.

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21 **I Belief Statement**

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23 The Children’s Services Council believes that all children in Highlands County
24 deserve:

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26 • to have **Character**
27 • to be **Healthy**
28 • to be **Educated**
29 • to be **Emotionally stable & respected**
30 • to be **Responsible**

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32 **II Mission**

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34 The mission of the Children’s Services Council of Highlands County is to enhance
35 the lives of the children in Highlands County and to enable them to attain their full potential
36 by providing a diverse community-wide platform for children’s issues through
37 private/public partnerships.

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39 **III Purpose**

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41 The purpose of the Children’s Services Council is to identify children in need,
42 recognize gaps in services, and design ways to improve coordination and communication
43 among children’s programs and residents throughout Highlands County.

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46 **IV Goals**
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1. To promote the social, psychological and physical growth of all children and families in Highlands County.
 2. To advocate on behalf of children and their families to address public policy issues which impact children.
 3. To identify and access resources to support comprehensive, coordinated and accountable system of programs and services to meet the needs of children in Highlands County fully and efficiently.
 4. To facilitate the sharing of information between agencies to ensure that appropriate services are provided to reduce duplication of effort.
 5. To serve as a coordinating agent for the service community attending to children in Highlands County.
 6. To establish community standards for assessing the viability of proposed and existing children's programs.
 7. To coordinate training opportunities for those working in the various agencies that serve children and families.

70 **V Appointments to the Council**

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72 A. Membership

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74 The Children's Services Council will consist of

75 (a) eleven (11) citizens appointed by the Board of County Commissioners.
76 Appointees will be representative of all geographic areas, of various
77 groups of citizens, and of varied services available to children and youth;
78 these members will be the only members vested with voting power;

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80 (b) one (1) full time county staff member designated as Executive Director
81 of the Children's Services Council of Highlands County;

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83 (c) six (6) public officials (non-voting), including a member of the School
84 Board of Highlands County, a member of the Highlands County Board
85 of County Commissioners, the Superintendent of Schools, Highlands
86 County Sheriff, and representatives of the County Health Department
87 and Department of Children and Families; and

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89 (d) any honorary members the Board of County Commissioners chooses to
90 name; and

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92 (e) a representative from the Champion for Children Foundation may serve
93 as an ex-officio member of the Children's Services Council.

94 Non-voting members will be encouraged to attend all Council meetings, participate
95 fully in the discussions and assist the Council in fulfilling its Mission.
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B. Attendance

When a voting member's attendance drops below 50%, or three consecutive absences accrue without explanation, the Executive Director [V, A, (b)] shall submit a report to the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners to consider removing that member from the Council.

C. Nominations

To identify citizens interested in serving on the Council, an ongoing nominations sub-committee will seek and contact potential appointees. When a vacancy occurs, this sub-committee will recommend nominees' names and credentials to the Children's Services Council for approval and submission to the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners, pursuant to the Board of County Commissioners' Policy on Appointments to Boards and Committees.

D. Terms

Voting Member appointments will be made for a term of four (4) years. A member may succeed himself/herself only if he/she fills an incomplete term for a member who dies or resigns. Then he/she may serve an additional four-year-term. After an interval of two years, a former member may be appointed to a second term.

E. Officers

Officers will include a Chairman and a Vice Chairman. If allowed by the Board of County Commissioners, county staff will provide secretarial services and financial information and will maintain public records.

The officers will be selected by the Council during each year's fourth (4th) quarter meeting and will assume the duties of their offices in January. The term as an officer will be for one (1) year, but officers may succeed themselves.

F. Standing Committees

Standing committees of the Children's Services Council include:

- Community Needs & Data
- Partner Program Review & Support
- New Initiatives and Service Gaps
- Nominating Committee
- Champion for Children Advocacy Center Advisory Committee
- Healthy Families Advisory Committee

146 **VI Meetings**

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The Council will meet at least quarterly. A quorum will be established when more than 50% of the voting members of the Council are present. No official action shall take place in the absence of a quorum. All actions of the Council shall be by majority vote of the voting members present.

The official year of the Council will extend from January 1 to December 31.

All meetings of the Council and its committees shall be publicly noticed and minutes promptly recorded and open to public inspection pursuant to Section 286.011, Florida Statutes.

Adopted by the Children’s Services Council on this 18th day of January, 2012.

Adopted by the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners on this 14th day of February, 2012.