

**I. Recommendations to Ensure Adequate Public Participation in State Task Force Meetings**

- a. **Designate a Task Force point person for public and affected community feedback.**
  - i. Create a recurring agenda item on the Task Force meetings to report on work done related to community engagement.
- b. **Invite public participation at each Task Force meeting:**
  - i. Dedicate time at the end of each Task Force meeting for affected youth participation, public participation, questions, comments, thoughts.
  - ii. Dedicate time at the beginning of each Task Force meeting for the Task Force to respond to the public's questions, comments, and thoughts.
  - iii. Develop an avenue where people can provide verbal/written comments after the meetings have occurred.
  - iv. Design a protocol to respond to the verbal and written comments, either at subsequent meetings or on the Task Force website.
  - v. Develop questions for the Task Force recommendations so individuals from the public have directed areas on which to provide feedback.
  - vi. Coordinate live twitter chats or dedicated time during Task Force meetings to receive feedback and questions from youth and families
- c. **Ensure meetings are open and advertised to the public, including creating and disseminating an agenda and meeting minutes after each meeting.**
  - i. Record the meetings so members of the public can view remotely after the meeting has ended.

**II. Recommendations to Support Meaningful Engagement of Appointed Youth Members**

- a. **Provide compensation: Pay youth Task Force members for their time.** This is a key element for any member of the Task Force. Compensation is essential to any position. Most members appointed on the Task Force are participating as part of their employment for an agency or organization and receive compensation for their time. Youth should also receive compensation for their participation and expertise so that they can allocate sufficient time and attention to this task.
- b. **Ensure youth can attend the meetings and reduce barriers to attendance: Create a participation plan with youth members.** This plan is to ensure youth members always have a plan to attend or actively participate in meetings. This recommendation is important to identify any needs, barriers, or other obligations they may have that could impact participation. This should include recommending meeting times and flexibility to schedule meetings that prioritize youth schedules.
  - i. **Scheduling:** For example, many programs have meetings in the later afternoon after 3 pm to accommodate youth schedules when attendance/participation is not built into their current work.
  - ii. **Transportation** (if in-person meetings ever resume): Provide transportation and other logistical support as needed for youth to participate. (i.e., provide

bus or train passes, Amtrak tickets, ride pools, or pickups.) This should include allowing for remote access for all members and other mechanisms to provide feedback, or comments for each meeting.

- iii. **Childcare:** Provide childcare options if this is a need or barrier for the youth members to actively participate.
- iv. **Technology:** Provide technology to youth members as needed so they can participate virtually (i.e., computers, laptops, or web cameras).
- c. **Ensure Meaningful Participation:**
  - i. **Designate a point person to support and prepare youth both before joining the Task Force and throughout the meetings.** Having a designated person to provide all the supports and coordination recommended herein will ensure that youth members feel comfortable participating in the process. This person can also be a point of contact for youth members for specific questions and concerns.
  - ii. **Dedicate time to prepare youth members and provide them with age-appropriate information.** This is important to allow everyone equal access and equal opportunity to participate to their fullest. For example, consider youth and members who are new to these issues, not using acronyms and explaining information in an easily attainable way will be more efficient and effective for the entire Task Force.
  - iii. **Dedicate time and space for youth to always voice their questions, thoughts and concerns at Task Force meetings.**
  - iv. **Prepare youth to strategically and safely share their stories.** Know why you are asking youth to consider telling their stories. This should happen **ONLY** if youth want to use their stories to help elevate their advocacy efforts. If they do, there should be a clear tie to the policy goals of the Task Force.
  - v. **Educate other Task Force members on best practices and strategies for authentic youth engagement.**

### III. **Recommendations to Ensure Feedback and Participation of Youth Statewide**

- a. **Designate a Task Force point person for affected family and youth engagement and feedback.**
  - i. Create a recurring agenda item on the Task Force meetings to report on work done related to youth and family engagement.
- b. **Hold Virtual Regional Roundtable meetings with youth**
  - i. Hold 2-4 meetings virtually with representatives from each of the four regions (SE, NE, W, and Central).
  - ii. Hold 1-2 meetings during the data collection stage.
  - iii. Hold 1-2 meetings during the subgroup phase when the Task Force discusses discrete issues and develops policy.
  - iv. Work with Task Force Members and other stakeholders to identify partners in the region to assist with regional meetings.
  - v. Create a recurring agenda item on the Task Force meetings to report on work done in the regional meetings.
- c. **Invite other youth groups to request a roundtable with the Task Force.**

- i. Provide a mechanism for groups across the state to request roundtables with the Task Force to provide feedback.

IV. **Recommendations to Support Youth/Community Engagement during COVID-19-**In addition to the above recommendations, we recommend that the Task Force adopt the following features while virtual meetings occur:

- a. **Continue adding to the Task Force website.** The website can be used to disseminate information, hold the livestream, and house important documents.
  - i. Create a listserv where individuals can register to be emailed a copy of the livestream link ahead of the meeting, alerted when meetings are commencing, and updated on changes in the Task Force schedule.
- b. **Configure videoconferencing for youth members to participate remotely.** A Task Force point-person should be appointed to ensure the youth members have the correct technology to participate virtually.
- c. **Record all Task Force/Stakeholder/Regional Meetings so viewers can watch remotely in real-time.**
  - i. Email a link of the recorded meeting to the listserv, or post to the website within 24 hours.
  - ii. Upload PowerPoints and documents to the Task Force website at least 48 hours prior to the meetings. Since all meetings will be virtual, it will be important for the viewers to have access to the documents ahead of time so they can follow along during the meeting.
    1. Ensure that viewers can identify who is speaking by using a videoconferencing platform that displays the name of the individual speaking.
- d. **Use videoconferencing for remote testimony.** To the extent that individuals are providing public testimony, those individuals should be able to do so remotely.
  1. For youth who are providing testimony, a point person should be designated to ensure that the youth have sufficient technology to appear remotely. If youth do not have the technology to do so, the Task Force/PEW should make other arrangements for youth to participate remotely.