

SSAN Bylaws



Bylaws

Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN)

A self-advocacy group supported by the State Council on
Developmental Disabilities

Article 1: Name, Purpose, and Description

Section 1 – Network Name

Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN)

Section 2 – Network Purpose

The Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) promotes leadership and builds bridges that strengthen advocacy among disability communities by focusing on policy change.

Section 3 – Description

SSAN is a statewide cross-disability network of self-advocates in California that was established in 2012.

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SSAN works to do the following:

- Develop the knowledge and skills to make a difference in our region and state.
- Speak up for all people with disabilities.
- Learn about and advocate for issues important to all people with disabilities.
- Lead regional and statewide advocacy groups and networks.
- Train advocates in their communities in order to grow the Self-Advocacy movement in California.
- Share information about programs and supports for people with disabilities.

Article 2 - Membership

As a cross-disability training network, SSAN members are Californians with disabilities represent regions, organizations, and affiliates in the state that are interested in promoting systems change. As a group supported by the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities, at least 51% of SSAN members will identify as someone with an intellectual and developmental disability (I/DD).

Section 1. Makeup:

SSAN membership is made up of Regional Representatives, who represent the SCDD Regional Offices, and Agency Representatives. All members of SSAN are voting members of SSAN. Each member has one vote.

Section 1a - Regional Representative:

Each regional office of the SCDD will have one regional representative on SSAN who has been identified as a leader or emerging leader from their local I/DD community. If that the number of regional offices changes, the SSAN officers may discuss options on how to proceed with regards to the SSAN membership.

Section 1b - Regional Offices of SCDD:

The Regional Offices (RO) of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) include:

- North Coast
- North State
- Sacramento
- North Bay
- Bay Area
- North Valley Hills

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- Central Coast
- Sequoia
- Los Angeles
- Orange County
- San Bernardino
- San Diego/Imperial

Section 1c - Agency Representatives:

Agency Representatives include:

- Association of Regional Centers Agencies (ARCA)
- Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
- University Centers of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs)
- Disability Rights California (DRC)
- Youth Organizing (YO!) Disabled and Proud
- California Foundation on Independent Living Centers (CFILC)

Additional organizations may be included as the network expands and grows throughout California.

Section 1d – Member Responsibilities:

SSAN members are leaders at the local and state level. Choosing to be a member of SSAN means that you commit to the following responsibilities:

- Share and exchange information with other SSAN members
- Provide information and outreach in the community
- Be a resource for local advocacy groups
- Promote legislative and policy change
- Provide support and training to local self-advocacy groups
- Participate in SSAN workgroup and project meetings
- Communicate regularly with SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator and relevant SCDD staff

Section 1e – SSAN Mentor/ Ambassador:

If a member of SSAN decides to step down from being a full member of SSAN, the member can decide to be a SSAN Mentor and Ambassador. The SSAN Mentor/ Ambassador is a former member of SSAN who would like to continue being involved with SSAN after they are no longer a member of SSAN. A SSAN Mentor/Ambassador would help to mentor the

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new SSAN Representatives over Zoom or local meetups and help SSAN with presentations and outreach. SSAN Mentors and Ambassadors are encouraged to work with SSAN members to identify training and outreach needs.

Section 2. Orientation:

New members will participate in an orientation on SSAN and SCDD with the Chair of SSAN and the SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator. New members will receive copies of the SSAN Bylaws and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the SSAN and SCDD.

Section 3. Attendance:

Members are expected to attend all meetings and inform the SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator or Chair of the SSAN if they must miss a meeting. The regional office or sponsoring agency, that the SSAN member represents will be notified by the Chair of the SSAN if their member misses more than two consecutive meetings unexcused.

Section 3a. Extended Absences:

In the event a member needs to miss more than two FULL SSAN Quarterly meeting due to medical and/or personal matters, members are expected to submit a notice of leave of

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absence to both the Chair of SSAN and the Self-Advocacy Coordinator in an email. All notices of leave should include the timeframe the member expects to be away from their SSAN responsibilities. The Self-Advocacy Coordinator and the Chair of SSAN will communicate with the Regional Office/Agency the member represents to decide if either a temporary replacement or a new member is needed. See Temporary Member section for more details.

Section 3b – Temporary Replacement Member:

If a member needs to go on temporary leave, because of personal or medical reasons, the Regional Office or Agency may ask the appointment of a temporary replacement member. It is up to the Regional Office or the Agency to decide on the responsibilities and expectations of the temporary member's responsibilities.

Section 4. Member Terms:

Members appointed by Regional Offices will serve a four-year term. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms that a member can serve, as long as their decision to continue their service is supported by their regional office, agency or organization. While SSAN and SCDD cannot direct an organization or department on who their representative to SSAN will be, the SSAN officers may provide input to the organization or department if there are any concerns about attendance and participation.

Process for Terms is the following:

- The SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator will monitor and review the SSAN Roster and keep SSAN leadership aware of terms that will expire.
- The SSAN Chair and SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator will review annually and discuss with any member whose term will expire.
- While there is no limit to the number of terms that a member can serve on SSAN, SSAN members have the right to decide if they can continue to serve on SSAN for another term depending on their situation and guidance from the region/agency they represent.

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- If a member chooses to continue for another term, the SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator will update the roster.
- If the member chooses not to continue for another term, a plan will be developed to find a replacement. This could include assistance from the regional office, self-advocacy group and the SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator.

In the event that a regional representative is unable to complete their current term, the SSAN Officers will use the SSAN Membership Process to fill the vacant position. The SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator will contact and inform the regional office manager of the vacancy and the strategy to fill the position. The new member will start a new term upon selection.

In the event of an agency member being unable to complete their current term, the SSAN Officers will request the SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator to contact the agency to request a new representative. The new member will start a new term upon selection.

Article 3 – Meetings

Section 1. Number of Meetings:

The SSAN will meet no more than four times a year (quarterly) in-person and/or virtually depending on hotel, technology, funding, or staffing availability. Members may meet in between quarterly meetings to work on projects and as a participant of a workgroup. The SSAN may have regional or special meetings to discuss important issues or presentations, if there is room in the SSAN budget and SCDD approves the request. Meetings will be noticed and conducted according to the Bagley-Keene Act and Roberts Rules of Order.

Section 2. Quorum and Voting:

Section 2a – Quorum

A quorum for SSAN requires a simple majority (50% plus 1) of the membership. A quorum is needed for the group to take action on SSAN business.

Section 2b – Voting

Each member has one (1) vote and has the authority to vote on issues presented at SSAN meetings. All voting will be by roll call.

Section 3. Travel

Travel for SSAN quarterly in-person meetings is booked through the SCDD travel Coordinator and hotel accommodations are to be requested through the SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator.

Requests for travel and lodging for SSAN meetings must be submitted at least 1 month before the meeting. For more information about SSAN travel, please reference the SCDD Travel Policy Training.

Section 3a – Temporary Member Travel

Temporary SSAN Members are expected to follow the same process for requesting help for travel to in-person SSAN meetings.

Section 4. Workgroups:

SSAN may create workgroups to focus on issues and projects in between SSAN meetings. Workgroups may meet monthly by webcam, telephone, or in-person. Workgroups can be created or dissolved at any time at the direction of the SSAN membership.

Section 4a. Leadership Team

The SSAN Leadership Team is a standing workgroup made up of the SSAN Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Workgroup Chairs/Project Leads as needed. This group works with SCDD staff to set the agenda and address any business that may arise between regularly scheduled SSAN meetings.

Section 4b. Workgroup Chairs/Project Leads

In addition to participating in the Operations Workgroup meetings, Workgroup Chairs/Project Leads work with SCDD staff to set the agendas and timeline for the projects they are overseeing.

Section 4c. Ad Hoc

A member can make a motion to create a temporary workgroup if they feel one is needed. An ad hoc workgroup will have a Chair, who is appointed by the SSAN Chair. Ad hoc workgroup terms and duties are determined by SSAN.

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Article 4 – Officers and Elections

SSAN officers will be Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary.

Section 1. Eligibility:

SSAN Chair Eligibility: To be able to run for the position of SSAN Chair, a member must identify as a person with an I/DD and have been a member of SSAN for at least one (1) year.

Other SSAN Leader Eligibility: All SSAN members may run for the position of Vice-Chair or Secretary.

Section 2. Terms:

A SSAN Officer's term will be two years. An officer stays in their position until they term out, they are elected to a new office, or they resign. An officer is limited to serving one (1) term per officer position, but may run again for that officer position after sitting out for one term. Members are free to run for any other officer position during that two-year waiting period.

Section 3. Vacancies

The Chair can fill any officer or workgroup chair/project lead vacancies on a temporary basis until a permanent replacement is chosen.

Section 3a. Officer Vacancies

If a SSAN Officer is appointed by the SSAN Chair, they will serve in the position until the next full meeting, when an election will be held to fill the remainder of the term. A member who was elected to serve out a partial term due to a vacancy will be allowed to run for that same position for a full term at the next officer election.

Section 3b. Workgroup Chair/Project Lead Vacancies

A SSAN Workgroup Chair/Project Lead appointed by the SSAN Chair to fill a Workgroup Chair/Project Lead vacancy will serve as the workgroup chair/project lead until the next scheduled workgroup/project meeting. At the next scheduled workgroup/project meeting, members will choose the new Chair for the workgroup.

Section 4. Duties of Officers:

Section 4a – Duties of the Chair

- Work with the Vice Chair, Secretary, Workgroup Chairs/project leads, SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator, and other support staff to prepare meeting agendas.
- Represent SSAN in the community.
- Work with SSAN members to follow up on issues brought up at meetings.
- Work with SSAN support staff in between meetings.
- Communicate as needed with SSAN members in between meetings while following the Bagley-Keene Act.
- Know and implement the SSAN bylaws.

Section 4b – Duties of the Vice-Chair:

- Work with the Chair, Secretary, Workgroup Chairs/project leads, SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator, and other support staff to prepare meeting agendas.
- Perform all duties of Chair in absence of Chair.
- Have ongoing communication with the Chair before each meeting while following the Bagley-Keene Act.
- Assist Chair to follow up on issues brought up at meetings.
- Act as timekeeper

Section 4c – Duties of Secretary

- Work with the Chair, Vice Chair, Workgroup Chairs/project leads, SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator, and other support staff to prepare meeting agendas.
- Perform all duties of Vice Chair in their absence.
- Perform all duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair.
- Take roll call to establish quorum.
- Works with support staff to prepare and distribute minutes of meetings.
- Keep track of motions, votes and actions at meetings.
- Act as parliamentarian.

Section 4d – Duties of Workgroup Chairs/Project Leads

- Work with the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator, and other support staff to prepare meeting agendas.
- Keep Operations Team informed about workgroup projects and activities
- Work with staff to lead Workgroup breakouts during full SSAN meetings.
- Report workgroup discussions to full SSAN during full meetings.

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Section 4e – Expectations of Officers

- Attend all SSAN meetings
- Attend SSAN officer meetings
- Serve as a mentor for new members
- Know SSAN bylaws and meeting procedures
- Help support workgroups/projects

Section 5. Election of Officers

The SSAN will nominate and vote for their officers. Elections will be held at the first SSAN meeting following October 1. The new officers will take office immediately after the election is complete.

Section 5a – Nominations

- Nominations will be made on Day 1 of the meeting.
- Members cannot nominate themselves. Another member must nominate them, and that nomination must be seconded.
- The nominee has the right to accept or refuse the nomination.

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Section 5b – Speeches

- Speeches will be done on Day 2 of the meeting.
- Each candidate will have five (5) minutes to give a speech.
- If there are 10 or more candidates for all offices combined the SSAN members may vote to reduce the time limit.

Section 5c – Voting

- Voting will be by roll call.
- All members get one (1) vote, including the Chair.
- If there is a tie, there will be a run-off election, without speeches, between the top two candidates.
- The Chair will not vote in a run-off election. If the run-off election results in a tie, the Chair will break the tie.
- The candidates receiving the most votes will hold that officer position for a term of two (2) years.

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Article 5 – MOU between SSAN and SCDD

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SSAN and SCDD was signed in January of 2017 outlining the relationship between the SSAN and SCDD. The MOU explains the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of both groups in order to facilitate a working relationship that benefits both parties. The MOU will be reviewed every three (3) years from the date last signed by both SCDD and SSAN. The MOU between SSAN and SCDD provides more details of processes and procedures for SSAN than the SSAN Bylaws. The two documents are meant to work together. For a copy of the MOU, contact the Self-Advocacy Coordinator at SCDD Headquarters in Sacramento.

Article 6 – Finances

Section 1. Fiscal Year:

As a project of SCDD, SSAN will follow the federal fiscal year for the purpose of the budget. The federal fiscal year begins on October 1 through September 30.

Section 2. Funds:

The funds for SSAN will be maintained by the SCDD in accordance with the MOU. The Self-Advocacy Coordinator will monitor and track SSAN-related expenses. SSAN will receive

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regular financial updates at the March and September meetings to keep them informed of the SSAN budget.

Article 7 – Amendments

Amendments to these Bylaws require a 2/3 vote of the full SSAN.

Adopted 9/11/2013
Amended 3/9/2017
Amended 3/26/2019
Amended 9/7/2023