

BYLAWS  
OF  
REGION THREE  
MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, AND ADDICTIVE DISEASES  
REGIONAL PLANNING BOARD

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**ARTICLE I-NAME**

1.1 Name. In accordance with O.C.G.A. section 37-2-4.1(b), there is created a separate regional mental health, developmental disabilities, and addictive diseases planning board for each regional office. The planning board for the Region 3 Regional office shall be known as the Region 3, Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Addictive Diseases Regional Planning Board, herein after called Region 3 R.P.B and/or Board.

1.2 Principal Office of the Board. The current office of the Region 3 R.P.B is located at 100 Crescent Centre Parkway, Suite 900, Tucker, GA 30084; provided however that the board may conduct official business anywhere within the region of the Board, or the State of Georgia, in accordance with the State’s Open Meeting Act.

1.3 Geographical Area. Region 3 is a clearly defined geographical area including the following six counties: Clayton, DeKalb, Fulton, Gwinnett, Newton, and Rockdale.

**ARTICLE II –PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Region 3 R.P.B. shall be to provide and facilitate coordinated and comprehensive planning for Region 3 in conformity with standards and procedures established by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) hereafter called the Department. “Disability” means mental or emotional illness, developmental disability, or addictive disease. “Disability Services” means services to the disabled or services which are designed to prevent or ameliorate the effect of a disability. “Mentally ill” means having a “mental illness” and “Mental Illness” means a disorder of thought or mood which significantly impairs judgment, behavior, capacity to recognize reality, or ability to cope with the ordinary demands of life. “Developmental disability” means a severe, chronic disability of an individual that:

- Is attributable to a significant intellectual disability, or any combination of a significant intellectual disability and physical impairments;
- Is manifested before the individual attains the age of 22;
- Is likely to continue indefinitely;

Results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of major life activities;

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- Self-Care;
- Receptive and expressive language;
- Learning;
- Mobility;
- Self-direction; and
- Capacity for independent living; and
- Reflects the person’s need for a combination and sequence of special interdisciplinary, or generic services, individual supports, or other forms of assistance which are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated.

“Addictive Diseases” means a chronic, often relapsing, brain disease that causes compulsive alcohol or drug seeking and use despite harmful consequences to the individual who is addicted and to those around him or her.

Article III-DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD

3.1 The Region 3 R.P.B. shall assist the Region 3 Regional Office in preparing, in consultation with consumers and families, community programs, hospitals, other public and private providers, and appropriate advisory and advocacy groups, an annual plan for the provision of all disability services in the Region.

3.2 The Region 3 R.P.B. shall, in consultation with consumers and families, community programs, hospitals, other public and private providers, and appropriate advisory and advocacy groups, assess local needs, identify gaps in services, recommend priorities of services, and garner support with local officials for needed services. The Region 3 R.P.B. shall provide an official voice for consumers and their families in the planning of disability services in the Region.

3.3 The Region 3 R.P.B. shall encourage the development, in cooperation with the Department, of private and public providers of programs and disability services which respond to the needs of consumers and families of consumer within the Region.

3.4 The Region 3 R.P.B. may receive complaints and grievances and will forward the complaints and grievances to the Regional Office for resolution in accordance with the Policy and Procedures of the Regional Office. The Regional Office Staff shall inform the Board of the resolution(s) provided for and complaint(s)/grievances forwarded to the Regional Office by the Region 3 R.P.B.

3.5 The Region 3 R.P.B. shall assure the highest achievable level of public awareness and understanding of both available and needed disability services by:

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- Promoting public awareness of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Addictive Diseases disorder issues.
- Speaking out on behalf of consumers and their needs.
- Promoting needed services.
- Helping the public better understand consumers and their needs for services.

3.6 The Region 3 R.P.B. may visit disability service facilities and programs for educational and learning purposes to enhance the planning process.

**ARTICLE IV- POWER AND AUTHORITY OF THE BOARD**

4.1 The Region 3 R.P.B shall have the power and authority to provide and facilitate coordinated and comprehensive planning for its Region in conformity with minimum standards and procedures established by the Department.

4.2 The Region 3 R.P.B. shall have the authority in its planning process to participate with other Regional Boards, the Department, local, state, or federal government agencies, education institutions, and public and private organizations in the coordination of planning, research, service development and evaluation activities.

4.3 The Region 3 R.P.B. shall have the authority in its planning process to work cooperatively with all units of county and local government, including the county boards of health within the Region.

4.4 The Region 3 R.P.B. shall have the authority in its planning process to establish goals and objectives consistent with those established by the Department.

**ARTICLE V-MEMBERSHIP**

5.1 General. The Board shall be composed of members appointed by the governing authority of each county within the Region. Appointments shall be in accordance with the population requirements and other guidelines established as follows:

- Each county with a population of 50,000 or less according to the most current United States decennial census shall appoint one member to the Board;

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- Each county with a population of more than 50,000, according to the most current United States decennial census, shall appoint one member for each population increment of 50,000 or any portion thereof;

5.2 Appointment The county governing authority shall appoint a consumer of disability services, a family member of a consumer, an advocate for disability services, or a local leader or business person with an interest in behavioral health and developmental disabilities. For counties with more than one appointment, the county governing authority shall seek to ensure that such appointments represent various groups and disability services (Counties with more than one appointment shall ensure that appointments to the Board do not represent the same disability service).

5.2.1 The county governing authority may appoint the school superintendent, a member of the Board of Health, a member of the Board of Education, or any other elected or appointed official to serve on the Region 3 Regional Planning Board, provided that such person meets the qualifications of 5.2 above and such person does not serve on the Community Service Board.

5.2.2 A person shall not be eligible to be appointed to or serve on a Regional Planning Board if he or she is prohibited by the following:

- A member of a Community Service Board, The Department of Human resources or The Department of Community Health which serves that Region which serves that region; or
- An employee or board member of a private or public entity which contracts with the department, through the division, to provide mental health, developmental disabilities, or addictive diseases services within the “ Region;” or
- An employee of such regional office employee or board member of any private or public group, organization, or service provider which contracts with or receives funds from such regional office.
- An employee or board member of the Department, department of Human Resources, or the Department of community Health.

5.3 A person shall not be eligible to be appointed to or serve on a regional planning board if such person’s spouse, parent, child, or sibling is a member of that Regional Planning Board or a member, employee, or board member specified in paragraph 5.2.2. No person who has served a

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full term or more on a regional board or Regional Planning Board may be appointed to a community service board until a period of at least two years has passed since the time such person served on the regional board or Regional Planning Board.

5.4 The various county governing authorities shall ensure that appointments are reflective of the cultural and social characteristics, including gender, race, ethnicity, and age characteristics, of the regional and county populations.

5.5 A majority of the appointments to the Region 3 R.P.B. shall be consumers of disability services and family members of consumers.

5.6 The initial term of a new member of the Regional Planning Board shall be determined by the Commissioner in order to establish staggered terms on the board. At such time as the terms of the members of the board are equally staggered, the term of the members of the Regional Planning Board shall be for a period of three years and until the member's successor is appointed and qualified. A member may serve no more than two consecutive terms.

Any Board member who serves an initial term of less than three years may be eligible to be reappointed for two full consecutive three-year terms. The chairperson and vice chairperson of the Regional Planning Board shall be elected from among the members of the Board to serve a term of one year with the option of reelection for an additional one-year term.

5.7 Resignation, Removal, and Vacancies:

- The term of a regional board member shall terminate upon resignation, death, or inability to serve due to medical infirmity or other incapacity. A Board member may resign by giving written notice to the respective appointing county governing authority, with a copy of the Chairperson of the Board. In the event of resignation, death, or inability to serve of any Board member, the respective county governing authority shall fill the vacancy, as soon as possible, by an appointment for the balance of the vacancy term.
- The unexcused absence of any Board member from three (3) consecutive meetings of the Board, or a majority of the meetings of the Board during any calendar year, shall result in the Board considering his/her seat vacated. An excused absence is one caused by unavoidable prior commitment, illness, or personal emergency. The Executive committee shall make a final decision on excused absences. The Region 3 Regional Planning Board Chairperson shall send

notification to the delinquent Board member (and Chairperson of his/her county governing authority for appropriate action.

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- The Region 3 R.P.B. Chairperson shall notify the county governing authority of any vacancy in Board membership or the expiration of any term of a Board member (90 days prior to the expiration date). Notice shall include the specific appointment needs as they relate to the composition (consumers, family member, disability group, ethnic representation) of the Board. Vacancies on the Board shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

**5.8 Consumers, Family and Disability Group Representation:**

- Each Board member shall be required to declare his/her status as a consumer, family member advocate or other interested citizen. The member will also be asked to declare which area of disability services that he/she considers as their primary interest(s). However, a member may support more than one disability. A list shall be maintained by the Region 3 R.P.B. of all Board members, as well as their declared status and/or disability interest(s).

**5.9 Reimbursement of Expenses:**

- Each member of the Region 3 R.P.B. may, upon approval by the Regional Coordinator, receive reimbursement for actual expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of such office in conformance with rates and allowances set for state employees by the Office of Planning and Budget and the same mileage allowance for use of a personal car as that received by all other state officials and employees, or a travel allowance of actual transportation cost if traveling by public carrier.

5.10 Members of the Region 3 R.P.B. will abide by the “Code of Ethics for Members of Boards, Commissions, and Authorities” and the “Conflict of Interest” statutes.

**ARTICLE VI- QUORUM**

6.1 Thirty percent of the appointed Region 3 R.P.B. shall constitute a quorum except to amend the bylaws (Article XI, Section 11.2). The action of a majority of those present at any meeting shall constitute the action of the Board, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

6.2 A quorum of any committee of the Board shall be a simple majority of the members thereof. A majority vote of those members who are present and voting shall be required for

approval any proposal, except as otherwise provided herein.

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**ARTICLE VII-OFFICERS**

Officers of the Region 3 R.P.B. shall consist of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary. The executive Committee's duties shall consist of: tracking attendance, final decision maker on excused absences, and assist the Chairperson in committee creation and/or membership.

7.1 The Chairperson shall be the principal officer of the Region 3 R.P.B. The Chairperson shall preside over all meetings of the Board, call special meetings as needed, appoint committees, and generally supervise and direct all action of the Region 3 R.P.B. consistent with pertinent existing legislation. The Chairperson shall be elected from among the members of the Board, to serve a term of one year, with the option of re-election for an additional one-year term.

7.2 The Vice-Chairperson shall be elected from among the members of the Board to serve a term of one year, with the option of re-election for an additional one-year term. The Vice-chairperson shall generally lend positive assistance to the Chairperson in the conduct of the business of the Board, and shall, in the absence or inability of the Chairperson, perform all duties of the Chairperson.

7.3 The Secretary to the Board shall keep or cause to be kept and preserve the Minutes and records of all meetings of the Board and Executive Committee, shall notify members or cause notification of the board in writing of all meetings and perform such other duties as may be delegated to him/her by the Chairperson. The Secretary shall be elected by the members of the Board and shall serve for term of one year with the option to be reelected for an additional one year term.

7.4 The members of the Board elected to the Leadership Council shall serve as the Board's liaison maintaining contact with other Boards and/or MHDDAD associations, council, and governmental planning units. The Leadership Council representative shall be elected by the members of the Board and shall serve a term of one (1) year, with the option of reelection for additional one (1) year terms.

7.5 The election of officers of the Region 3 R.P.B. shall be held at the June meeting of the board. The Region 3 R.P.B shall appoint a nominating committee sixty days prior to the election. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of officers to the board at the May meeting. Board members may make further nominations and vote at the June meeting. The new

officers shall take office on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Board members may make further nominations from the floor.

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7.6 Officers of the Region 3 R.P.B. may be removed from such office at any time by vote of a majority (or 2/3) of the membership of the Board; provided however, that notice of such intended action shall be given in writing to each member of the board at least five (5) days prior to any meeting at which such vote is to be taken. Upon removal of an officer, the board shall elect a successor to serve the remainder of the unexpired term(s).

7.7 Should the office of the Chairperson or Vice-chairperson become vacant other than by removal, an election to fill the unexpired term shall be held at the next regular meeting of the board. Any Board member may make nominations and any Board member may place his/her own name for nomination.

**ARTICLE VIII-MEETINGS**

8.1 The Region 3 R.P.B shall meet not less than once every two months, beginning on July 1 and continuing through the next June 30, the fiscal year for the board. The Board will meet every other month on a date voted on by the Board prior to the beginning of each fiscal year.

Meetings shall be publicly announced by the Board, in conformance with the provisions of the "Open Meetings Act".

8.2 Special meetings of the Region 3 R.P.B may be called for any purpose by the Chairperson, or the Vice-chairperson, in the event of the Chairperson's inability; upon the written request of one-third of the members of the board; or upon written request of any agency, organization or individual whose request is deemed appropriate by the Chairperson of the Board. The Secretary shall notify all members of the Board of the date, time and place of such special meeting at least 10 days prior to such meeting, in the event of Secretary's inability then the Chairperson or the Vice-chairperson. Public notice shall be provided in accordance with the "Open Meetings Act".

8.3 When it is determined necessary by the board to reschedule, relocate, or cancel a meeting, such action shall be in conformance with pertinent provisions of the "Open Meetings Act".

8.4 A record shall be made and maintained of all meetings of the board, standing and special committees of the Board. Copies of the record of meetings shall be distributed to the members of

the board and to the county governing authority. Such record shall conform to the requirements of the “Open Records Act”.

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**ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES**

9.1 The Region 3 R.P.B shall have an Executive Committee, membership of which shall be the elected officers of the Region 3 R.P.B.

9.2 The Region 3 R.P.B. shall have such standing committees as may from time to time be established. The Chairperson of the Board shall establish all committees and appoint the chairperson for each committee.

9.3 Each committee Chairperson shall select the members for that committee. Committee members need not be members of the Board.

9.4 The Board Chairperson serves as an ex-officio member of all committees. The Regional Coordinator may appoint staff to assist committees.

9.5 Committee meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Georgia Open Meetings Act and notice of such meetings will be provided in accordance with Georgia law.

9.6 The Chairpersons of all committees shall report to the Board at each regular meeting.

9.7 Minutes shall be kept by all Region 3 R.P.B. committees and distributed to board members at the next regular meeting following the committee meeting.

9.8 Quorum. At all meeting of the Executive Committee, the presence of three (3) members shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

9.9 The Nominating Committee (5 members) representing different counties shall be elected by the Region 3 R.P.B. at the regular scheduled February meeting for the purpose of nominating officers for the new year.

9.10 Standing, Special, or Ad Hoc Committees may be appointed by the Region 3 R.P.B Chairperson (except Nominating Committee) for the proper conduct of the Region 3 R.P.B. business and such committees shall report directly to the Region 3 R.P.B.

9.11 All actions of the committees shall be advisory in nature unless otherwise provided by

resolution or motion of the Board.

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**ARTICLE X-~~PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE~~**

10.1 *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, shall govern the board in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are consistent with the Constitution or laws of Georgia, these Bylaws and any special rule which the Board may adapt. The Board may appoint a parliamentarian for the Board.

**ARTICLE XI-~~AMENDMENTS~~**

11.1 The Region 3 R.P.B. shall submit its proposed Bylaws to MHDDAD for review and approval prior to their adoption by the Board. Written approval of the Commissioner of MHDDAD must be obtained prior to the adoption of bylaws.

11.2 The Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the appointed membership of the Region 3 R.P.B, provided that the proposed amendment was submitted in writing to the entire membership at least ten (10) days prior to such meeting, and written approval of the amendment was obtained by the Commissioner.

11.3 Amendments shall be effective immediately upon their adoption unless a specific effective date is included in the motion to adopt.