




PROCEDURE NUMBER 15-180

Subject: Community Advisory Board for Shelter Facilities	Applicable To: All DHS Directly Operated or Provider Facilities/Programs Serving Homeless Individuals and Families, Elected Officials, and Community Boards	Effective Date: April 17, 2015
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Administered By: DHS Communications and External Affairs	Approved By:  Gilbert Taylor, Commissioner
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PURPOSE

The Department of Homeless Services’ Community Advisory Board (CAB) for Directly Operated or Provider Facilities/ Programs Serving Homeless Individuals and Families, Elected Officials and Community Boards was developed to build relationships with elected officials, the community boards, and other key community stakeholders (clergy leaders, leaders of local community based organizations, etc.) as well as to facilitate and increase engagement with surrounding neighbors. The CAB is an important vehicle for breaking down barriers and for creating a healthy, loving and compassionate environment with the Facilities/ Programs Provider and clients and its surrounding neighbors. Each party—DHS, the Provider, and the larger Community—plays an important role in expressing the needs and concerns of their respective group and working collaboratively with the CAB in a way that leads to improved relations and a better community for all.

In hosting regular CABs, DHS and its Providers seek to increase transparency and community trust, as well as to better meet the community’s expectations on government and civil society engagement. Furthermore, members will begin to “own” the solutions, challenges and decision-making process, empowering the community to play an integral role in welcoming our clients and offering support to their fellow New Yorkers.

PROCESS

- A. Frequency of Meetings:** CABs are to be held at a minimum every three (3) months. However, if pressing issues arise that affect our clients and the community, DHS can arrange a meeting to address time sensitive action items, and CAB meetings can occur more frequently.
- B. Meeting Locations:** CAB meetings take place at the Directly Operated or Provider Facility/Program, because as a group we are discussing individuals and families we serve and the space in which they live. Acceptable alternative locations could be at a community board office and must be pre-approved by DHS' Communications and External Affairs division.
- C. Attendance:** CAB members are recommended to DHS' Communications and External Affairs division by elected officials, but DHS' Communications and External Affairs division appoints members. Under no circumstance is press allowed to attend CAB meetings. In these meetings, where community members may bring up sensitive client information, we want to protect the confidentiality of our families and individuals. We want to be certain that their information is protected and respected at all times. Additionally, clients sometimes attend these meetings, and we want them to feel comfortable.
- D. Agenda:** The CAB's agenda is set through a collaborative process between all meeting attendees. At least a week before your scheduled CAB, please email any suggested agenda items to your CAB's point of contact from Communications and External Affairs for compiling the agenda.
- E. Issues:** The CAB is a forum to discuss any issue relating to the health and safety of our clients and their surrounding neighbors. For example, topics can include questions about the social service programs available to shelter residents or how the shelter conducts security patrols, or facility maintenance and repairs. Please note that issues relating to matters that have already been adjudicated, such as the shelter's permissibility at a respective location, are not agenda items that aid neighborly relations and also become distractors that derail CAB meetings from their purpose and function. We ask that such issues not be the subject of CAB meetings, and instead be taken up with the appropriate party(ies) in the appropriate venues.
- F. Meeting length:** A maximum of an hour and a half (1.5).
- G. Addressing Action items:** Within one (1) week of the meeting, the Chair should email a quick summary of the meeting notes (not necessarily minutes) and action items to all CAB members. This email should detail the outstanding action items along with who is responsible for addressing each item. As items are addressed, CAB members will be notified DHS' Communications and External Affairs' point of contact. This creates accountability between members.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD PARTICIPANTS

Attendees are appointed by DHS' Communications and External Affairs, and recommended by the Provider, Elected Officials, and Community Boards. CAB members consist of:

- DHS Representatives
 - Communications and External Affairs
 - Program Administrator
 - Executive Staff (upon request)
- Community Board Representatives
 - District Manager
 - Housing Committee or Social Services Chairperson
- Elected Officials or Representatives
 - NYC Council Member
 - NYC Borough President
 - NYS Assembly Member
 - NYS State Senator
 - Congressional Representative
- Social Services Provider
 - Shelter Director
- Other City Agencies, upon request
 - Department of Education (DOE) liaison
 - Department of Sanitation (DSNY)
 - New York Police Department (NYPD)
 - NYC Comptroller's Office
- Community Members
 - Local residents
 - Business owners
 - School principals
 - Clergy leaders
 - Heads of community-based organizations