

DATE: January 12, 2015
TO: The Honorable Surgeon General United States Public Health Service
FROM: Chief Professional Officer, Environmental Health Officer Category
SUBJECT: ACTION ISSUE - Proposed revision of the EHOPAC Charter

DISCUSSION:

The Environmental Health Officer Professional Advisory Committee (EHOPAC) provides advice and consultation to the Surgeon General on issues related to the professional practice and activities of Commissioned Corps Environmental Health Officers. The 2014 voting membership of the EHOPAC has revised the February 2, 2010 version of the EHOPAC Charter in order to remove dated terms and words and improve clarity and meaning of several sections. No major changes were made that would impact main functions or responsibilities of the EHOPAC.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that you approve the EHOPAC Charter (enclosed) as reviewed and revised.



CAPT Alan G. Parham, MPH, REHS
Chief Professional Officer, Environmental Health

DECISION:

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Date _____

UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE (USPHS)

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EHOPAC) CHARTER

September 2014

Contents

I. MISSION	1
II. RELATIONSHIP OF THE EHOPAC TO THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE (USPHS)	1
III. OBJECTIVES.....	1
IV. FUNCTIONS	1
V. MEMBERSHIP	3
VI. NOMINATION PROCESS	4
VII. TERM OF APPOINTMENT	4
VII. CHAIRPERSON	4
IX. CHIEF PROFESSIONAL OFFICER (CPO).....	5
X. OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES	5

I. MISSION

The Environmental Health Officer Professional Advisory Committee (EHOPAC) advises and serves the Surgeon General (SG) and United States Public Health Service (USPHS) through the Chief Professional Officer (CPO) on environmental health issues relating to the professional practice and the personnel activities of Commissioned Corps (CC) officers and Civil Service (CS) employees. Working through the CPO, the EHOPAC provides similar advisory assistance, upon request, to the Operating Divisions (OPDIVs) or Staffing Divisions (STAFFDIVs), and to other organizations to which CC officers may be assigned.

II. RELATIONSHIP OF THE EHOPAC TO THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE (USPHS)

In carrying out its responsibilities, the EHOPAC operates in a resource and advisory capacity. It does not substitute for line management or in any way exercise the prerogatives of the respective operating programs. Thus, the EHOPAC advises the CPO, who in turn advises the SG. While EHOPAC members are chosen from the respective Public Health Service's (PHS) OPDIVs, they neither represent OPDIV management nor speak for the OPDIV. They are knowledgeable professionals who represent a cross section of the interests, concerns, and responsibilities of the professionals in OPDIVs and organizations staffed by CC officers.

III. OBJECTIVES

The EHOPAC serves in a resource and advisory capacity to assist in the development, coordination, and evaluation of activities related to the environmental health discipline. The objectives of the EHOPAC include:

1. Identifying and facilitating resolution of issues of concern, as they relate to the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) category;
2. Assessing CC needs and assisting in meeting these needs through activities in recruitment, training, and recognition of officers in the EHO category and related CS professional disciplines;
3. Developing position papers, statistical reports, and guidelines where appropriate, in order to advise and comment on matters relating to the personnel issues and professional practice of the EHO category and related CS professional disciplines;
4. Promoting the development and utilization of the environmental health profession by government programs and agencies;
5. Promoting cooperation and communication among EHO and CS professionals;
6. Providing liaison, advice, and consultation upon request;
7. Advocating for best practices within the environmental health profession; and,
8. Facilitating relationships with professional organizations and academia to promote the linkage between public health and the professions and disciplines of the EHO category.

IV. FUNCTIONS

In carrying out its broad mission and objectives, the functions of the EHOPAC shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Provide general professional advice and recommendations;

- a. Review and comment on issues referred to the EHOPAC through the CPO.
 - b. Deliberate issues, develop findings, and present recommendations through the CPO to the SG.
 - c. Provide advice on the professional aspects of the EHO category, e.g., new technologies, regulations, curricula, roles, etc.
 - d. Provide advice on ethical and professional standards.
 - e. Review and provide recommendations concerning proposed or needed changes to appointment standards and professional requirements, e.g., certification required to maintain high quality staff.
2. Act as primary resource for career development;
 - a. Advise on CC and CS practices concerning career development.
 - b. Advise on operating practices concerning the appropriate/optimum use of personnel designed to best meet USPHS needs and the needs of the individual.
 - c. Advise on issues related to CC promotion practices for the EHO category.
 - d. Formulate criteria for the selection of EHO candidates for training and/or other career development options.
 - e. Identify both continuing and long-term intramural/extramural education needs of the EHO category, and identify and recommend training and/or experience opportunities designed to meet these needs.
3. Provide advice and assistance on staffing issues;
 - a. Assess and project need for the EHO category staffing levels, both CC and CS, throughout the PHS.
 - b. Provide advice on the goals, objectives, and procedures designed to meet the USPHS staffing needs and assist in category retention initiatives.
 - c. Provide guidance for recruitment to the short-term student affiliation programs (e.g., JRCOSTEP).
 - d. Develop and/or review EHO category-specific USPHS recruitment materials, procedures, and programs.
 - e. Help establish networks of current, as well as former, CC officers who can assist and facilitate recruitment activities.
 - f. Provide guidance to approved USPHS programs concerning the recruitment of qualified candidates to the EHO category.
 - g. Assist in the development of orientation materials for new EHOs and provide advice/recommendation concerning orientation programs.
4. Communicate and encourage appropriate use of awards and recognition systems;
 - a. Identify, establish, and help administer professional EHO category awards.
 - b. Maintain cognizance of the existing CS and CC award programs and opportunities, and encourage the nomination of qualified individuals for such awards.
5. Serve as a communication gateway for the category;
 - a. Communicate to the EHO category important information concerning professional, ethical, and technical issues.
 - b. Encourage individual membership in and involvement with professional organizations and societies in order to promote open communication with

- external colleagues.
- c. Ensure the distribution of minutes and/or other EHOPAC-developed materials to the extent possible and appropriate to CC and CS staff.
 - d. Ensure the availability of EHOPAC minutes to other Professional Advisory Committees and the OSG through the EHOPAC website.

This list of functions is not all-inclusive. The EHOPAC has the responsibility to identify and add functions as necessary to carry out its objectives. Such functions shall be in accordance with the overall mission of the EHOPAC.

V. MEMBERSHIP

1. **Basic Eligibility Requirements:** Members must be CC officers or CS personnel at the time they are nominated and appointed to the EHOPAC, and meet the eligibility requirements for initial appointment to the EHO category. In addition, all CC Officers must meet the basic readiness standards at the time they are nominated and appointed to the EHOPAC, and throughout their term of service on the EHOPAC.
2. Staff from the Office of the Secretary (OS) and the OSG may serve on the EHOPAC providing that they excuse themselves from voting on issues and decisions that may have the appearance of a conflict of interest with respect to their duty assignments.
3. **Size of the PAC:** The EHOPAC shall have no fewer than 7 and no more than 24 voting members. The membership size is a function of the category with consideration given to organizational, geographic, gender and minority, and other factors that exemplify the needs of the EHO category. The operational size of the voting membership is stated in the EHOPAC Bylaws.
4. **Organizational Representation:** In order to provide the range of experiences and perspectives necessary for addressing issues before the EHOPAC, every effort must be made to have the broadest representation possible among all agencies that are routinely staffed by CC officers of the EHO category.
5. **Geographic Considerations:** The EHOPAC will have, as voting members, at least two individuals whose regular duty station is geographically removed by the distance of 75 or more miles from the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area.
6. **Gender and Minority Representation:** The EHOPAC will make a concerted effort to include both men and women and racial and ethnic minorities in the composition of its membership.
7. **Personnel System Representation:** The EHOPAC will make a concerted effort to include CS personnel in the composition of its membership.
8. **Professional Seniority Representation:** At least one voting member of the EHOPAC will have less than 5 years of professional experience (at the time of appointment to the EHOPAC).
9. **Professional Discipline Composition:** To the extent possible, the EHOPAC should attempt to select members who possess the requisite credentials representing the various disciplines of the environmental health profession.
10. **Ex-Officio Members (non-voting):** The CPO, JOAG Representative, and the immediate former chair are the standing ex-officio members of the EHOPAC. The EHOPAC may

identify other individuals and request that they serve as ex-officio members.

11. ***Liaison Members (non-voting)***: The EHOPAC may identify individuals to serve in a liaison capacity to provide information or assist with activities, e.g., staff from the OSG.

VI. NOMINATION PROCESS

1. Annually, the EHOPAC will solicit nominations for voting membership from EHOs and CS personnel (who are practicing an environmental health discipline). Self-nominations are acceptable. The names will be transmitted by the CPO to the nominee's respective OPDIV Head who may endorse the nominee(s) or provide alternate or additional nominations meeting the general representation requirements demonstrated by the original nominees. The OPDIV Head's response will be reviewed by the EHOPAC and CPO who will identify, by name, those highly qualified to fill anticipated vacancies. A final list of nominees will be sent by the CPO to the SG for approval and appointment.
2. This nomination process shall be conducted so that the final nomination package is available for the SG's consideration no less than 60 calendar days prior to the expiration of the regular term of the member.
3. Should the need arise to fill an unexpired term of a voting member, the vacancy shall be filled through the annual nomination process. The designated alternate can be used in the interim until the vacancy is filled.

VII. TERM OF APPOINTMENT

1. EHOPAC members are selected to serve 3 year terms. Terms will be staggered to ensure rotational balance. EHOPAC members may serve up to 2 terms. Once a member has accumulated a career total of six years of service on the EHOPAC, they are not eligible for reappointment as a voting member. Terms of office may be served consecutively at the discretion of the EHOPAC Chair and CPO.
2. ***Alternates***: Cognizant of the demands of the members' primary work responsibilities and the EHOPAC's need to conduct business, the EHOPAC has the option of establishing procedures to allow each voting member to appoint, and inform the EHOPAC chairperson of, a single individual who can serve as his/her alternate. Such alternates shall have voting privileges when serving in the place of the primary member. It is the responsibility of the primary EHOPAC member to keep the alternate fully informed and knowledgeable of the EHOPAC's activities. Any OPDIV clearance or approval requirements for travel/per diem will have to be handled within the OPDIV by the primary EHOPAC member. All alternates must be practicing in the environmental health discipline, and if applicable meet basic readiness standards.
3. ***Attendance***: Any member of the EHOPAC who frequently misses meetings without just cause can, at the discretion of the EHOPAC chairperson, in consultation with the CPO, be asked to voluntarily resign from the EHOPAC, or the EHOPAC chairperson in consultation with the CPO can initiate a request to the SG to terminate said membership and so inform the OPDIV Head.

VIII. CHAIRPERSON

1. The chairperson will be elected by the voting membership of the EHOPAC.

2. **Term of the Chairperson:** The chairperson will serve a 1-year term and may be re-elected for one additional year. The EHOPAC may choose to elect the chairperson for one 2-year term with no opportunity for re-election to that position. Additionally, the EHOPAC may choose to have a Chair-Elect post so that after one year in this capacity the Chair-Elect automatically becomes the Chair for the following year. The Chair is also expected to serve in a Past Chair role after completing their term as Chair.
3. **Term of Appointment:** If the term of the chairperson coincides with the expiration of that individual's membership on the EHOPAC, the former Chairperson may serve one additional year as an ex-officio member of the EHOPAC provided the OPDIV Head is informed and concurs with the extension, unless reappointed as a regular member per the provisions of Section VI.

IX. CHIEF PROFESSIONAL OFFICER (CPO)

1. **EHOPAC Membership:** The EHO CPO shall be a non-voting ex-officio member of the EHOPAC.
2. **Relationship with the EHOPAC:** All official output of the EHOPAC (e.g., correspondence, reports, minutes of its proceedings, etc.) must be transmitted through the CPO who, as he/she may deem appropriate, may provide concurring or non-concurring comments but may not stop or unduly delay such transmittals.

X. OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES

1. The EHOPAC shall develop its own internal operations and procedures (i.e., bylaws). These shall include, at the minimum, provisions covering the following:
 - a. **Operational year:** Determine and report to the OSG the day and month chosen as the beginning of its operational year.
 - b. **Frequency of meeting:** Meetings will be held once per quarter at a minimum.
 - c. **Agenda:** A meeting agenda and appropriate background material is to be made available to the members.
2. Records and Reporting
 - a. Written minutes of each EHOPAC meeting will be approved by the EHOPAC members.
 - b. Minutes and reports of the EHOPAC will be distributed in accord with Item IV (5) (C) FUNCTIONS.
 - c. The EHOPAC must establish a system to maintain a permanent file of the official minutes and reports of the EHOPAC.
3. **Executive Leadership:** Daily operations of the EHOPAC are managed by the EHOPAC Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. All four leadership positions are elected annually from the voting membership of the EHOPAC.
4. **Quorum:** A Quorum consists of at least 50 percent of the EHOPAC voting membership. An alternate attending in lieu of the member shall be counted in determining the quorum requirement.
5. **Voting:** Where voting is required or appropriate, e.g., election of Chairperson, action will be determined by the simple majority of those voting members present.
6. **Committees:** Where the EHOPAC elects to establish standing or ad-hoc subcommittees

or workgroups, said membership may include representatives external to the EHOPAC, provided that the chairman of the subcommittee or workgroup is a voting member of the EHOPAC.

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