Ohio Self Determination Association

Advocacy on Policy Issues

Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement:

The Ohio Self Determination Association and its membership is committed to policy advocacy that supports the mission and vision of the organization. OSDA advocates in support of policy, rules, and practices that promote the principles of self-determination and advocates in opposition of policy, rules, and practices that create barriers to self-determination.

Definition of Terms:

Policy Advocacy: Policy advocacy involves efforts to influence public policy. It often includes activities such as lobbying, public education, and grassroots organizing aimed at promoting or opposing specific laws, regulations, or government actions.

Principles of Self-Determination: The following are the principles of self-determination as defined by OSDA:

- Support: Means you get help for what is important to you
- Responsibility: Means you follow rules, laws, advocate for others and use public resources wisely
- Freedom: Means you decide what happens now and in the future – have choice and make decisions about your life
- Authority: Means you decide how to spend your personal money include money that supports services in ISP, to choose providers, are engaged in your ISP process
- Confirmation: Show everyone you can just do it
- Do we want to add relationships, dreams and choice? Maybe include as part of Freedom?

Vision of OSDA: OSDA creates change that empowers people with disabilities and their families to direct their lives.

Procedures: Revise to be more clear and illustrate that is isn't a time consuming process.

1. All board members (and COOL members) should communicate policy issues that might be of interest to both the Executive Director (ED) and the Chair of the Policy Committee. This includes:
    - Representation in stakeholder groups to create change
    - Policy decisions that have been made or are in process

2. The Policy Committee weighs the issue against the criteria that identifies policy issues that are important for OSDA to address.
    - The Chair and ED initially weigh the issue. If the issue meets the criteria, the issue is shared with members of the Board of Trustees for feedback within a specified time/date.
    - If the action is approved by the Board of the Trustees (can be done by email with a majority of responses supporting OSDA advocacy about the issue), the Policy Committee chair brings the issue to the committee to develop a strategy to address the issue.

3. Once approved by the Board of Trustees, the Policy committee will:
    - Establish how to identify the best person to represent the OSDA in stakeholder groups
    - Communicate OSDA position on the issue with policy decision makers through letters, testimony, phone calls, and other ways
    - Evaluate the impact of policy changes to long-term sustainability of the system

4. When a representative is selected to represent OSDA, they will have the following responsibilities:

- Be clear about agreement or disagreement with decisions of stakeholder groups
- Be clear about who you are representing
- Provide progress updates to the ED, Chair of the Policy Committee, and when needed the full board

5. When a decision is made about a policy issue OSDA has advocated for or against, the Policy Committee will follow up by:
    - If favorable decisions are made, send a thank you note.
    - If unfavorable decisions are made, step up actions by getting others involved who are interested in the issue, media involvement, and any other steps/actions that are necessary.
    - Don't quit until the issue is resolved with a decision that OSDA can agree on

Board Approval:
Revised: