



Public Policy Guidelines & Procedures

I. Organizational Purpose, Roles, and Key Activities

The National Human Services Assembly (National Assembly) is a leading voice in the human service sector and promotes collaboration among engaged organizations to advance the collective power, knowledge, strategy, and systems that build well-being within individuals and our communities. Advocacy and public policy is one facet of the organization's work in which the National Assembly can affect and shape systems change in our communities. Additionally, as a sector catalyst and member developer, the National Assembly provides members with thought leadership, networking and convening, educational resources, and strategic collaboration to mobilize them around sector-wide issues and strengthen their ability to achieve their missions.

II. Guiding Principles

The National Assembly aims to advance policies that will increase the capacity of the human service sector to deliver a life-long system of supports that gives everyone the opportunity to reach their full potential and allows our nation to thrive. The National Assembly focuses its advocacy efforts on the following issues:

- **Children & Young Adults**—ensuring that all children and young adults reach their human potential and become contributing members of our country.
- **Families**—ensuring that all families receive the social, emotional, and economic support they need to thrive.
- **Persons with Disabilities**—ensuring that all persons with disabilities have the opportunity to reach their potential and to play a meaningful role in their communities.
- **Older Adults**—ensuring that all older adults enjoy access to resources that enable them to remain active members of their communities and age with dignity.
- **Social Equity**—ensuring that nonprofit human service organizations are empowered to build more equitable communities.
- **Budget & Spending**—protecting and cultivating robust funding for human services.
- **Federal Tax Policy**—protecting and expanding federal tax incentives to contribute to nonprofit human service organizations; promoting civic advocacy while preserving the nonpartisan nature of nonprofit human service organizations in the federal tax code.

The National Assembly supports policies across these issues areas that create, support, and enhance human service systems that are: (1) easily accessed by the community; (2) rooted in evidence-based research and expertise; (3) multi-faceted, integrated, and equitable; (4) focused on utilizing public, private, and philanthropic resources efficiently; and (5) incorporate the perspectives of constituents in the communities being served.

III. Policy & Procedures

When a public policy issue reflects the **Guiding Principles**, the National Assembly may take the following actions consistent with those principles by applying these procedures:

A. Sharing Statements from Members, Non-members, and Other Coalitions:

Without taking a position of its own, the National Assembly may share, including through social media, a policy statement, issue brief, call to action, or other policy position of a **member** organization if:

1. Sharing the statement will fulfill the National Assembly's role as a sector catalyst or member developer; and

2. The National Assembly is not aware of any significant opposition to the statement by member organizations, and does not commit any member to adopt the position without that member's explicit consent.

The National Assembly may share a statement from a **non-member** organization or **coalition** if the Assembly has already adopted a substantially similar policy position, **or** if (A)(1)–(2), above, and:

3. Approved by the President & CEO.

B. Sign-on Letters, Joint Statements, Action Campaigns, and Coalition Participation

The National Assembly may take an official policy position by joining a sign-on letter, joint statement, action campaign, coalition, or other action if:

1. Analysis of the prevailing research about the issue indicates that the specific policy position will further the National Assembly's organizational goals. This research may include reports by other organizations, academic research, government reports, media publications, or other sources;
2. Taking the position will fulfill the National Assembly's role as a sector catalyst or member developer;
3. The National Assembly evaluates the extent to which the piece applies the *Building Well-Being Narrative*; and
4. Approved by the President & CEO.

C. Policy Statements, Issue Briefs, and Advocacy Campaigns

The National Assembly may issue a policy statement, publish a policy brief, lead an advocacy campaign, or engage in any other advocacy action if:

1. Analysis of the prevailing research about the issue indicates that the specific policy position will further the National Assembly's organizational goals. This research may include reports by other organizations, academic research, government reports, media publications, or other sources;
2. The statement or action will fulfill the National Assembly's role as a sector catalyst or member developer;
3. Internal review by the President & CEO and Chief Program and Strategy Officer confirms that a specific position is consistent with the Guiding Principles, furthers the organizations goals, and fulfills the organization's roles; and
4. Approved by the President & CEO.

D. Executive Committee Advisory Panel

The Executive Committee of the National Assembly's Board of Directors may, from time to time, serve as an advisory committee to the President & CEO to:

1. Provide advice in an expedited time frame, if called upon, about the best course of action concerning specific policy issues; and
2. Receive periodic reports from the President & CEO and contribute to the strategic public policy direction of the National Assembly.

All current public policy positions will be available to the members through the National Assembly website, and members will be notified of new policy positions through *The NHSA Exchange* newsletter or other electronic communications.