

**BY-LAWS:
ATASACOSA COUNTY
CHILD WELFARE BOARD
ADOPTED APRIL 23, 2018**

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this Child Welfare Board shall be the Atascosa County Child Welfare Board.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

(a) The Atascosa County Child Welfare Board (hereinafter “the Board”) is established through Texas Family Code §264.005. It is an entity of the Department of Family and Public Services for the purposes of providing coordinated state and local public welfare services for children and their families and for the coordinated use of federal, state, and local funds for these services. TX Fam. Code Ann. § 264.005(d).

(b) The Board is a governmental unit for the purposes of Chapter 101, Texas Civil Practices and Remedies Code.

(c) Board members serve without compensation. No part of the net earnings of the Board, if any, shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members or other private persons except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article III.

ARTICLE III

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(a) Mission Statement: The Atascosa County Child Welfare Board's mission is to: educate our community about child abuse and neglect; create awareness about the need for foster and adoptive homes in our county to recruit and develop a support system for these homes; provide tangible and financial support to meet the needs of children in the care of TDFPS; and support and act as a liaison between Atascosa County Child Protective Services workers and the public by increasing our community's awareness of child welfare program policies and needs.

(b) The Board shall have the following responsibilities to the following Government Bodies, Agencies, and Organizations:

(1) To the Atascosa County Commissioners Court.

(A) The Board will present a quarterly report to the Commissioners Court regarding its accomplishments in the preceding quarter, and needs for future projects.

(2) To Local Child Welfare Units.

- (A) Assist in recruiting foster parents;
- (B) Participate in projects for foster children and foster parents Develop alternatives to foster care;
- (C) Assist CPS and HHS in acquiring clothing

- (D) Inform DFPS staff of community needs and perceptions, if requested.
- (E) Advise Child Welfare staff on written policy, if requested; and
- (F) Review the progress of long-range plans for placement of children to ensure permanent adoptions as soon as possible;

(3) To Other Local Child Welfare Groups and Organizations.

- (A) Coordinate children's services in the community;
- (B) Act as liaison with school boards, hospitals, mental health and mental retardation clinics, and other agencies;
- (C) Encourage groups to be concerned with children's needs;
- (D) Help coordinate juvenile probation activities with child welfare program;
- (E) Work with judicial officials to assure case reviews for children in the court system;
- (F) Develop and maintain a positive relationship with the local Foster Parents Association;
- (G) Stimulate law enforcement officials to develop their skills in dealing with children; and
- (H) Encourage participation by local board members in the Regional Council of Child Welfare Boards.

(4) To the Community at Large of Atascosa County.

- (A) Encourage community and individual involvement in child welfare Study child welfare issues in the community;
- (B) Identify gaps in children's services and find the resources to fill them;
- (C) Monitor services to children in the community Stimulate reporting of child abuse and neglect;
- (D) Work for the prevention of child abuse and neglect;
- (E) Improve community understanding of the welfare client, the abusive parent, and the foster child;
- (F) Inform the community and special interest groups about pending child welfare legislation; and
- (G) Advocate for the needs of all children in the community through schools, children's programs, and other children's activities.

ARTICLE IV
MEMBERSHIP

(a) The Board shall be composed of between seven (7) and fifteen (15) members, all of whom are appointed by the Atascosa County Commissioners Court. The members serve at the pleasure of the Atascosa County Commissioners Court. TX Fam. Code Ann. § 264.005(a)

(b) The members shall be residents of Atascosa County, Texas, and there shall be a representative of each of the County's four precincts. A Board Member who moves from Atascosa County shall be

terminated from the Board immediately upon moving outside of Atascosa County.

(c) The County Judge, the County Attorney, and the District Judges of the 81st Judicial District shall each be ex-officio members of the Board.

(d) Background Checks. Board Members must meet the standards for DFPS volunteers who have direct client contact. As such, all members must submit to and successfully pass a background check investigation conducted by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

(e) Term. Two (2) years shall be considered a regular term for a Board Member.

(f) Confidentiality Agreement. Each Board Member shall be required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement at the beginning of each Board year. Violation of the Confidentiality Agreement will be brought before the Board and may be referred to the Commissioners Court with a recommendation that the member violating the Confidentiality Agreement be immediately removed from the Board.

(g) Open Government Training. Within 90 (ninety) days of becoming a member of the Board, each member must complete Open Meetings Act training provided by the Texas Attorney General's Office.

(h) Attendance. Attendance at meetings is compulsory. Regular attendance by Board Officers is crucial to the successful fulfillment of the Board

(i) Leaves of Absence. The Board President may recommend, and the Commissioner's Court may approve a leave of absence for a member of the Board. The request for a leave of absence must be submitted in writing, which includes electronic mail, prior to the requested leave, and a leave of absence may not exceed a period of six (6) months. Only one (1) leave of absence may be granted during the member's **two-year** term of membership.

(j) Vacancies. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of said Commissioners' Court as they occur, and shall last for the remainder of unexpired terms.

(k) Removal from the Board.

(1) A Board Member who misses three (3) meetings in a Board year is subject to removal by the Commissioner's Court. A member who is unable to attend a Board Meeting shall contact one of the Executive Officers prior to the meeting.

(2) A Board Member who is convicted of a felony, any crime against a child, or has a finding of "reason to believe" in a Child Protective Services investigation shall be immediately terminated from the Board.

(3) The Atascosa County Commissioners Court may remove any board member for just cause.

(l) Compensation. All members of the Board shall serve without compensation.

(m) Each board member will be furnished with a copy of these by-laws at the time they become a member of the board.

ARTICLE V
OFFICERS

(a) Officers enumerated in this Article shall perform the duties prescribed in the Bylaws and by the Parliamentary Authority adopted by the Board. The Board shall consist of the following Executive Officers:

(1) President. The president oversees the Board and ensures the effectiveness of the Board in completing its responsibilities. Those duties include:

(A) Develop meeting agendas and comply with the Open Meetings Act on the posted agendas.

(B) Preside over all Board Meetings.

(C) Appoint Committee Chairs (when appropriate) shall preside at all meetings and take the initiative in presenting for consideration of the Board such policies, actions, and procedures as is deemed necessary. The President shall also be an ex-officio member of each committee of the board.

(2) Vice-President. The Vice President shall, in the event of the absence of the President, perform the duties of the President. In addition, the Vice President shall perform such other duties pertaining to said office as are delegated by the Board.

(3) Secretary. The Secretary shall be the recording officer of the board, responsible for keeping minutes of each meetings. and in addition thereto shall conduct such correspondence and perform such other duties pertaining to said office as are delegated by the board.

(4) Treasurer. The Treasurer shall receive all funds for the board, depositing such funds in a depository selected by the board. The Treasurer shall disburse all funds directed by the board or the Executive Committee, disbursing such funds by check to be signed by the Treasurer or by the President in the Treasurer's absence. In addition, the Treasurer shall perform such other duties pertaining to said office as are delegated by the Board.

(5) Presiding Officer. The Members of the Board shall further select a presiding officer whose duties shall be to ensure that all meetings are conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

(b) Election. Officers enumerated in this Article shall be elected for a period of two (2) years. The election shall be by majority vote of the members present, and shall take place on a paper ballot.

(c) Terms. The term of an elected officer shall be one (1) year. Members may serve up to three (3) consecutive terms.

ARTICLE VI
MEETINGS

- (a) Open Government. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, section 551 of the Texas Government Code.
- (b) Monthly Meetings. The board shall have regular monthly meetings. Meetings shall follow Robert's Rules of Order.
- (c) Specially Called Meetings. The board may have such special meetings as may be called by the President, or any three (3) members of the board as the need may arise.
- (d) Closed Meetings. The Board may conduct a closed meeting under section 551.101, Government Code, to discuss, consider, or act on a matter that is confidential under Section 40.005, Human Resources Code, or Section 261.201.
- (e) Quorum. One half of the Board shall constitute a quorum provided two members of the executive committee are present. Roberts' Rule of Order shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and By-Laws.
- (f) Voting. Board members each get one vote, and must be present to vote. The Secretary shall keep a roster listing the names of members entitled to vote and shall keep a written tally of votes in favor of, against, or abstaining. If votes are taken after a member leaves a meeting, the Secretary shall announce the change in number of voting members present. Voting may occur orally, by a show of hands, or by paper ballot, all of which shall be recorded. However, voting for elections must take place by paper ballot.

ARTICLE VII
COMMITTEES

- (a) General. Committees shall be appointed by the President of the Board. The chairman of each committee shall be a member of the board. The committees may each have one or more committee members who are not board members. In addition to the committees provided for herein, the President may appoint such additional committees as said President deems is necessary.
- (b) Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is composed of the Board's five officers. It is the only committee required by the Texas Family Code. It's role is to act on the Board's behalf in the event of necessity or emergency. The Board should be promptly notified of any Executive Committee action made in their name.
- (c) Publicity Committee. The Publicity Committee is charged with the responsibility of organizing the publicity of the Boardg ityitteedand special meetings, and It shall also be responsible for composing the Board't monthly reports, and presenting information to the Atascosa County Commissioners Court. It shall also be responsible for general promotion and educating the public about the Board. A Publicity Committee is not required by the Texas Family Code.

(d) Services and Special Projects Committee. The Services and Special Projects Committee's function shall be to enlist the aid of volunteers, secure medical services, clothing, and other services for children as the need arises. These services are to be secured in cooperation with individuals, churches, fraternal organizations, services clubs, and other societies or groups. A Services and Special Projects Committee is not required by the Texas Family Code.

ARTICLE VIII FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

- (a) The fiscal year of the Board shall be the same as followed by the County of Atascosa.
- (b) At the close of each fiscal year an audit of the financial affairs of the board will be had and completed by the Atascosa County Auditor's Office with the results of such audit to be reported to the board as soon as practicable.

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS

- (a) Any Board Member may submit proposed amendments to the Bylaws in writing, **including electronic mail**, at any regular Board meeting. A proposed amendment to the Bylaws may be written and submitted in advance or during the meeting.
- (b) The Executive Officers (acting as a Bylaws Committee), shall have the option of submitting amendments to the Bylaws for vote either at a regular meeting of the Board, or by a binding referendum to the general membership, under the procedures provided herein.
- (c) These Bylaws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board members present at any regular meeting, provided, notice of such proposed amendment shall have been given at the preceding regular meeting of the Board or such proposed amendment mailed to the general membership and postmarked at least ten (10) days prior to the next regular meeting of the Board **or sent via electronic mail at least ten (10) days prior to the next regular meeting of the Board**.
- (d) These Bylaws may be amended by a binding referendum mailed **or sent via electronic mail** to the general membership, and upon two-thirds (2/3) of the ballots cast on the proposition submitted. The Executive Committee shall determine procedures governing the referendum.
- (e) In the event of necessity or emergency, the Bylaws may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board members present. Such temporary suspension must be instance-specific.
- (f) Officers serving at the time of adoption of these Bylaws shall continue to serve until the next regularly scheduled election of officers.

ARTICLE X
INDEMNIFICATION

(a) The Board shall indemnify any person who is or was a member of the Board for amounts incurred by such person in connection with an action, suit, or proceeding to which such person may be a party by reason of such person's position with the Board or service on behalf of the Board, when and to the fullest extent permitted in accordance with applicable laws under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act or other relevant law.

(b) The foregoing bylaws were adopted by a majority vote at a duly convened regular meeting of the Atascosa County Child Welfare Board, to witness which we, the undersigned, certify below.