



APSC Governance Charter

Mission & Vision

Mission

Since 2003, the Area Planning and Services Committee (APSC) on Aging with Lifelong Disabilities has been dedicated to:

- Identifying service needs and gaps.
- Improving collaboration between aging and lifelong disability service providers.
- Offering cross-training for professionals.
- Raising public awareness.
- Planning for emerging issues in aging with lifelong disabilities.

We are committed to **bridging the gap between disability and aging networks**, ensuring that adults with lifelong disabilities can age with dignity, independence, and access to effective support.

Vision

We envision a future where adults with lifelong disabilities are **fully supported to age well**, with inclusive services, cross-sector collaboration, and equitable opportunities for healthy, meaningful lives. APSC strives to be a **trusted hub for innovation, advocacy, and education**, fostering a community that embraces the dual lens of aging and lifelong disabilities.

Membership

Membership in the coalition is open to all individuals and organizations who share a commitment to advancing our mission. This includes professionals, self-advocates, caregivers, and representatives from agencies or community groups. There is no

cost to join, we aim to create an inclusive space that values diverse perspectives and experiences.

Members are expected to **actively engage** in the coalition's work by regularly attending monthly meetings and participating in at least one workgroup. This ensures that all members contribute to the development, implementation, and sustainability of our shared goals.

The **onboarding process** is designed to foster a welcoming and collaborative environment. New members will receive a welcome email outlining the coalition's mission, structure, and current initiatives. At their first meeting, members will be introduced to the group and invited to share information about their organization, role, or personal connection, as well as their ideas for contributing to the coalition's work. This process helps new members feel connected and immediately engaged in advancing our mission

Leadership Structure

Director

- Provides overall leadership and direction for the coalition.
- Coordinates activities across workgroups to ensure alignment with coalition goals.
- Guides strategy, partnership development, and long-term planning.

Workgroup Leads

- Each focus area (e.g., Conference, Outreach, Webpage) has a Lead.
- Leads set goals, plan initiatives, and facilitate monthly or bi-monthly meetings.
- Serve as the main point of contact between their workgroup and the larger coalition.

Workgroup Support Members

- Actively carry out tasks within their assigned workgroup.
- Assist with planning, logistics, communications, or project implementation.
- Provide subject-matter expertise, creative ideas, and feedback.
- Commit to regular meeting participation and follow-through on assigned action items.

Secretary

- Helps keep the coalition organized and efficient.
- Schedules monthly meetings, prepares and shares agendas, records minutes, and tracks action items.
- Ensures communication and documentation are clear and accessible.

Rotating Facilitators or Co-Chairs (Optional)

- Share responsibility for leading coalition meetings.
- Promote collaborative leadership by ensuring multiple perspectives are represented.
- Provide flexibility so that leadership duties are not carried by one person alone.

Workgroups

Standing Workgroups (Co-Chaired by the Director and a Member Leader)

Each workgroup is co-led to ensure a balance between organizational coordination and member-driven leadership, creating space for shared decision-making and diverse perspectives.

- **Conference Planning**
 - **Lead:** Staci Carr
 - **Supports:** Nicole Destefano, Aisling Clardy, Bert Waters
- **Outreach & Community Engagement**
 - **Lead:** Ashlee Giles
 - **Supports:** Alexis Talmage, Marilyn, Kristie Braaten
- **Webpage & Communications**
 - **Lead:** Aisling Clardy
 - **Supports:** Morgan Carr
- **Lived Experience & Family Voice**
 - **Lead:** Marilyn Janes
 - **Supports:** Nicole Destefano
- **Policy, Resource & Advocacy Sharing**
 - **Lead:** Mike Hamilton
 - **Supports:** Sonya Durham

Meetings & Communication

Monthly Coalition Meetings

- The full coalition meets once a month for updates, coordination, and decision-making.

- Workgroups may use breakout sessions within these monthly meetings to collaborate on their specific projects.

Workgroup Meetings

- Workgroups meet regularly to advance project-based initiatives.
- Meetings may be scheduled independently or held as breakout sessions during the monthly coalition meeting, depending on group needs and availability.

Communication Channels

- Ongoing communication will be supported through email, a shared drive/folder for documents, and if desired a coalition newsletter to keep all members informed and engaged.

Decision-Making

- Key decisions (such as launching major events or new initiatives) will be made through **consensus whenever possible**. If consensus cannot be reached, a **majority vote** will determine the outcome.
- **Input from self-advocates and families will be prioritized** to ensure that lived experience guides coalition priorities and actions.

Amendments

- Any coalition member may suggest changes or updates to this charter.
- Proposed amendments will be reviewed and discussed during a coalition meeting.
- Final adoption of an amendment requires a coalition vote.

Equity & Inclusion Statement

APSC values the **diverse perspectives and lived experiences** of individuals with lifelong disabilities, their families, and caregivers. We are committed to fostering **inclusive spaces where every voice is respected and heard**. To promote equity across all programs and initiatives, we emphasize *accessibility, person-first language, and shared leadership**.

Our work is grounded in the belief that true inclusion requires **dismantling systemic, cultural, and attitudinal barriers**. By addressing these barriers, we aim to advance fairness, respect, and opportunity for every individual we serve.

*While person-first language is often aligned with principles of human and civil rights, some disability communities, such as the Deaf community and the Autistic community, prefer **identity-first language** to reflect pride and cultural identity.

How to Get Involved

There are many ways to actively participate in the coalition, depending on your interests, skills, and availability:

- **Step into leadership** by serving as a Workgroup Lead or Co-Chair.
- **Support coalition projects** as a Workgroup Support Member, contributing time, ideas, or expertise.
- **Take on an organizing role** such as Secretary to help with communication and coordination.
- **Rotate as a meeting facilitator** to gain leadership experience and keep our meetings engaging and inclusive.

Whether you want to lead, support, or simply stay engaged, there is a role for you. **Your involvement ensures the coalition continues to grow and make an impact.**