

Oregon Alliance to Prevent Suicide
Executive Subcommittee Meeting Agenda
Minutes

May 9, 2025 * 8:30 AM – 9:00 AM

Voting Members in Attendance: Chair Charlette Lumby, Co-Chair Don Erickson, Aaron Townsend, Gordon Clay, John Seeley, Karen Cellarius, Kelie McWilliams, Mary Massey

Members not in Attendance: Angela Perry, Craig Leets, Jill Baker, Kirk Wolfe, Laura Rose Misaras, Liz Schwarz, Maryanne Mueller, Siche Green-Mitchell

Staff: Jenn Fraga, Kris Bifulco

Guests: Deb Darmata, Justin Potts, Pam Pearce

Subcommittee Decision Making: Quorum in the Executive Subcommittee is defined as 50% plus 1 of Executive Subcommittee members, and must include an Executive Subcommittee Chair or Vice-chair. Decisions will be made by majority vote of Executive Subcommittee. Any member may submit motions for vote to the Executive Subcommittee.

As of May 2025, Quorum is 10 members.

Quick recap

The meeting covered discussions on a recent audit report of Oregon's behavioral health crisis, focusing on data issues and access to mental health services in rural areas. The group debated the need for data on suicide rates in rural Oregon and how to present this information effectively. They also reviewed and approved a letter addressing these concerns, deciding to send it to various government officials and representatives.

Next steps

- Jenn to update the age range in the letter from 10-24 to 5-24.
- Jenn to send the updated letter to the Governor's office, Representative Graber, and Representative Elmer.
- Jenn to send the updated letter to local representatives for them to review and potentially support.
- Kris to add her signature to the letter once it is converted to a PDF and send it back to Jenn.

Summary

Oregon Behavioral Health Crisis Audit Report

The group discusses a recently released audit report on Oregon's behavioral health crisis from the Secretary of State's office. Justin provides a brief overview of the report, highlighting its focus on data issues and access to mental health services in rural areas. Jenn notes that the Transitions of Care subcommittee will review the report in June and provide feedback to OHA. The group also discusses the timeline for submitting testimony related to the report, with Monday being the deadline for their letter.

Rural Oregon Suicide Rate Data

The group discusses the need for data on suicide rates in rural Oregon, particularly among youth up to age 24. Gordon expresses concern about higher suicide rates in rural areas compared to the rest of the state. Justin and Karen explain that low population numbers in some counties can make reporting challenging due to privacy concerns. Debra suggests aggregating data over time and comparing urban versus rural counties to get a clearer picture. Kelie offers her list of county groupings by region to help address privacy issues while still providing meaningful data. Gordon emphasizes the importance of this information, noting that his rural county of 23,000 people ranks fifth in the state for suicide rates despite being only the 27th largest county.

Funding Concerns

Gordon raises concerns about the wording in the third paragraph, suggesting it might give legislators a reason to cut funding. Kelie and Karen agree, proposing alternative phrasing that emphasizes the importance of the funding for protecting school children.

Letter Vote and Recipients Discussion

The group discusses how to proceed with a vote on a letter, as they are one person short of a quorum. They decide to wait for another member to join. Once Aaron joins, Kelie moves to accept the letter with the edits as submitted, and John seconds the motion. The letter is passed by acclamation. The group agrees to send the letter to additional recipients, including Representatives Graber and Elmer, the Secretary of State's Office, and the Governor's Office. They also clarify that the age range mentioned in the letter should be 10 to 24, based on the data, although the Alliance's mission covers ages 5 to 24.

Jenn to Send Updated Letter

Jenn confirms that she will make the agreed-upon changes to the letter and send it to the Governor's office, Gray Bar, Elmer, and Jill, as well as local representatives.