

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Role & Functions of EPA Advisory Committees



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An Overview of the Federal Advisory Committee Act for New Members





Welcome on Board!

Federal Advisory Committees are an important tool EPA utilizes to obtain group advice, ideas, points of view, and expert recommendations from diverse customers, partners, and stakeholders.

We are excited to welcome you to the EPA family! As a member, you should be aware of the requirements mandated by the Federal Advisory Committee Act, which establishes procedures for the management of the committee you have agreed to serve on.



Federal Advisory Committee Act

- The Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 governs the establishment, operation, and termination of federal advisory committees
- FACA may apply when EPA utilizes or convenes committees to obtain group advice



FACA Requirements: Charter

Committees must have an active charter filed with Congress.

The committee charter must include:

- 1.) Committee objectives and description of duties
- 2.) Period of time for committee to complete work
- 3.) Official to whom the committee reports
- 4.) Estimated number of meetings and costs

Charters generally expire every two years.

The committee charter may be renewed.





FACA Requirements: Membership

- At EPA, members serve at the discretion of the Administrator
- Committee must be fairly balanced:
 - Points of view represented
 - Functions to be performed



FACA Requirements: Membership

- EPA appoints members depending on whether the member is being asked to represent the point of view of a group (Representative members) or provide the Agency with their best independent judgment and expertise (Special Government Employees)



FACA Requirements: Public Access



- FACA requires openness and transparency
- Meeting notices are published in the Federal Register
- Opportunities are provided for public comment and access to meetings



Openness and Transparency

- Detailed meeting minutes and committee documents are available to the public
- Minutes are certified by the chair
- Requirements apply to ALL meetings including face to face; teleconferences; videoconferences; or any electronic medium



FACA Requirements: DFOs

- EPA must designate a federal employee to be a Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for each committee
- The DFO manages the daily operations of the committee
- The DFO must attend every meeting, approve the agenda, call the meeting to order, and adjourn if determined to be in the public interest



What about me?

Member Roles and Responsibilities

- Participate. Non attendance impacts the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire group
- Study and review materials in advance
- Engage in a candid exchange of views and perspectives



Roles and Responsibilities

- Represent your interest group or organization
- Work towards consensus (when appropriate)
- Provide feedback to your Chair. The Chair provides leadership to the committee and works with the DFO to develop committee agendas, schedule committee activities, coordinate work, and obtain consensus



Roles and Responsibilities

- Collaborate to accomplish the Committee's Charge
- Serve your appointed term. If you develop a conflict or cannot serve, discuss this with your DFO immediately
- Close Communication with your DFO





Travel and Ethics Considerations

- EPA may pay travel & per diem for members on official travel
- Refrain from any language or activities that would compromise the civility of the committee. Maintain an environment that promotes the participation of individuals regardless of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or sexual orientation
- Members **may not lobby** Congress in their capacity as advisory committee members
- EPA employees may not direct or encourage members to contact Congress with concerns of pending legislation



Committee Limitations

- Committees provide advice and/or recommendations directly to EPA, Congress, or the President
- With EPA approval, committees may form subcommittees to gather facts and draft documents to assist the parent committee
- Subcommittees **MUST** report their findings directly to the parent committee for full deliberation, approval and discussion



Committee Limitations

- At EPA, our subcommittees follow all FACA requirements including guidelines for openness, transparency and membership
- Committees may also form working groups to conduct research, perform studies, or gather facts. Working groups are small, informal meetings
- Working groups are not subject to FACA. However, EPA strongly encourages working groups hold open meetings and make documents available





Additional Resources

- your DFO or your point of contact

Oscar Carrillo, 202-564-0347; carrillo.oscar @epa.gov

- Federal Advisory Committee Act

<http://www2.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-federal-advisory-committee-act>

- Information on EPA's Federal Advisory Committee Program

<http://www2.epa.gov/faca>

- Office of Diversity, Advisory Committee Management & Outreach, 202-564-2294





We appreciate your service. The knowledge and experience you bring are important to us. Thank you for graciously accepting our invitation to serve as a Federal Advisory Committee Member at EPA.

