

## **Older Vermonters Nutrition Coalition (OVNC) Membership and Voting Policy**

Last Updated: March 13, 2019

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**OVNC Vision:** To contribute towards a Vermont that is healthy, vibrant, and just with connected, diverse, and sustainable communities, the Older Vermonters Nutrition Coalition works collectively to ensure that all older Vermonters have access to what they need to be well nourished.

### **OVNC Mission:**

All older Vermonters have access to what they need to be well-nourished.

### **Types of Membership:**

The Older Vermonters Nutrition Coalition admits members in three categories: (1) Active Members, (2) Corresponding Members, and (3) Associate Members. Each coalition member selects the level of membership that is appropriate for themselves upon admittance to the Coalition. Coalition members may enroll on behalf of an organization or group, or as an individual not representing any organization. If the member chooses the latter, they will be recognized as a citizen member. New members will attend at least one meeting before making a decision regarding their membership type.

### **Responsibilities, Benefits and Rights of All Members**

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Support the Coalition's mission, goals and priorities
- Be informed – acquaint yourself with the accomplishments as well as the goals of the Coalition.
- Make every attempt to follow the rules of fairness and objectivity in all activities concerning the coalition
- Be sensitive to potential conflicts of interest
- Use every member's expertise
- Support events, programs, and projects of the Coalition (Note: support need not be financial). The OVNC is a service organization for the community both local and statewide
- Voice your opinion, for your opinion is valued and may give a line of thinking and reasoning overlooked
- Respond when necessary and appropriate to any questionnaire or correspondence authorized by the Coalition
- Serve on the Coalition – with honesty when asked, in roles you are qualified to fulfill, or in the use of talents you possess
- Be familiar with the Coalition's mission and the objectives of the Coalition and the bylaws that govern us all
- Coalition members are expected to keep the Coalition up-to-date with their current contact information, including regular mail address, telephone, fax and e-mail addresses.

**Benefits:**

- Enhance access to collaboration with community partners and key players in the goal to ensure all older Vermonters have access to what they need to be well nourished
- Eligibility for marketing and posting features on the Coalition's website as approved by the Coalition's members
- Eligibility for shared use of the Coalition for related purposes, when available and when appropriate
- When possible, assistance with fund-raising activity for the Coalition's designated program areas
- Inclusion in information correspondence regarding Coalition events
- Eligibility to participate in events sponsored by the Coalition
- Inclusion in the Coalition's information loop including information regarding funding opportunities from federal and nonfederal sources.

**Rights**

- You have the right to question what we do, how we do it and why, as well as the authority for doing what we do
- You have the right to disagree in accordance with decision making protocols as set by the Coalition
- You have the right to be heard during discussion at meeting and in committees
- You have the right to represent the Coalition at gatherings as you deem appropriate and necessary to benefit or add to the awareness and progress of the Coalition
- You have the right to share the privilege of membership with others

**Membership Categories****Active Membership:**

Active members commit to support OVNC as much as possible. An Active member will strive to attend 100% of the meetings. 50% attendance and participation is required to stay in good standing as an Active member. Business obligations and illnesses are excused absences, and should be expressed before the meeting, when possible. The coalition cancellation procedure is to inform the facilitator before 12:00 PM on the day before the meeting, at the latest. Active members reserve the right to vote on all matters of the OVNC.

**Additional Responsibilities of Active Members:**

- Attend meetings, be punctual, be considerate of other's points of views and be prepared to take an active role.
- Analyze issues and act proactively.
- Vote, as necessary, on decisions within the coalition as outlined in the coalition's decision-making protocol. Decisions to vote will be proposed at the meeting prior to when the vote will take place. Votes will be counted for those represented in person.

- Seek other qualified executives to propose for membership. If you do not feel comfortable in explaining the goals and purposes of the coalition and you may request a more knowledgeable member to assist you.
- Participate in events and meetings whenever possible.

**Additional Membership Rights:**

- You have the Right to decide — on issues, on projects, on expenditures;
- You have the Right to vote — on projects or programs as deemed necessary;
- You have the Right to lead — through coalition facilitation

**Corresponding Membership:**

Corresponding members are qualified for active membership but cannot meet attendance obligations because of geographic location or time commitment purposes. Corresponding members agree to stay informed and participate electronically, or via conference call when available. Corresponding members reserve the right to vote on all matters of the OVNC.

**Additional Responsibilities and Rights of Corresponding Members.**

Corresponding members have same additional responsibilities, benefits and rights of Active Members with the exception of attendance.

**Associate Membership:**

Associate members are members who support the work of the OVNC but cannot commit to the time commitments or attendance requirements of Active or Corresponding members. Associate members may choose to attend meetings, stay informed, but are not required. Associate members maintain all benefits, responsibilities and rights of all members of the OVNC but do not maintain the eligibility to vote on matters of the OVNC.

**Meeting Dates and Times of the OVNC:**

The location of Coalition meetings is determined by the facilitator(s) with input from the coalition. The Coalition regularly meets at the McFarland Building in Barre, VT, on the 4th Wednesday from 9:30-11:30 every month. Meeting attendance is important and meetings are scheduled in advance to accommodate members' schedules. Despite our best efforts to find a date and time convenient for everyone, it is sometimes impossible. In this case, it is often possible to arrange for a Coalition member to participate in the meeting via conference call.

## **Voting Protocol:**

The Older Vermonter Nutrition Coalition operates under a consensus decision-making model. For a vote to be valid, a quorum of 30% of active and corresponding member participation must be reached.

There are three ways to vote:

- (1) Yes: In support of the idea and able to offer help
- (2) Neutral: In support of the idea but unable to offer help from self/organization
- (3) No: This idea does not serve a purpose for my agency/self and is not aligned with the mission of the Coalition

Consensus means that all votes are either (1) or (2).

Any member may call a vote, but for a vote to be called, it must be on an issue, project, or program that affects more than one member organization. The vote will occur at the following meeting, and voting members (active and corresponding) must have an opportunity to vote electronically or over the phone.

**Please indicate your level of membership by completing the  
Older Vermonters Nutrition Coalition Membership Form by clicking here.**