

Birth Justice Community Advisory Board

Committee Summary

Origin

Hennepin County Board Resolution 24-0527, adopted December 12, 2024.

Background

Hennepin County launched the birth justice project in 2022 with the goal of advancing maternal health and birth justice for and alongside Black and American Indian communities. Hennepin County partnered with the Birth Justice Collaborative (BJC), a coalition of six Black and American Indian led organizations that focus on maternal health. The BJC was charged with developing and implementing a birth justice strategic plan that centers community wisdom and community voice. In October 2023, the BJC began leading implementation of the five key strategies identified in the birth justice plan.

Mission

The mission of the Birth Justice Community Advisory Board is to provide advice and recommendations to the county board on maternal health equity and birth justice matters affecting the county.

Composition

The Birth Justice Community Advisory Board shall have at least 13 members and no more than 19. The Birth Justice Collaborative shall have the ability to recommend individuals to participate on the advisory board. Seats on the advisory board may include at least two and up to six BJC members (individuals who are members of the Birth Justice Collaborative). The remaining seats shall be filled using the county's open appointment process; preference will be given to Hennepin County residents. The advisory board shall seek diverse membership through representation of Black and American Indian communities most impacted by maternal health disparities in Minnesota, geographic distribution from across the county, and various stakeholder groups, including professional birthing providers and community-based birth and cultural providers.

Members should have:

- Connection with local Black and/or American Indian communities;
- experience/expertise in maternal health and birth justice;

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- a commitment to racial and health equity;
- the ability to work collaboratively with people of diverse perspectives and experiences; and
- the ability to represent the geographic and demographic diversity of Hennepin County.

Duties/Responsibilities

The Birth Justice Community Advisory Board shall have a broad mandate to provide advice and recommendations on maternal health equity matters affecting Hennepin County, including:

- Identify and uplift priority strategies for advancing maternal health and birth justice;
- Implement and test collaborative strategies for improved outcomes, experiences, and systems change;
- Collectively review and share data and stories across sectors and culture to advance, expand and replicate the work;
- Advocate for and advance culturally centered models of care as it pertains to birthing and postpartum care;
- Report out progress and outcomes for pilot programs and initiatives within the Black and American Indian communities; and
- Work closely with county departments and agencies to provide input and recommendations on maternal health equity policies and initiatives. County departments and agencies may include Disparity Reduction, Health and Human Services line of business, Child Wellbeing, and key county programs serving pregnant individuals.

The advisory board will bring recommendations to the Hennepin County Public Health (HCPH) department, and HCPH will bring forward recommendations to the Board of Commissioners and/or other county departments.

Term

The term of each member shall be for two years.

Terms run from March 1 through the end of February.

Meetings

The advisory board shall meet every other month and at other times and locations, as determined by Hennepin County staff in consultation with the advisory board, with hybrid meeting options. Meetings are open to the public; however, voting is restricted to membership.



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Eligibility Requirements

At large: Preference is given to Hennepin County residents and people with lived experience. Black and American Indian maternal health community members, professional birthing providers and community-based birth and cultural providers are encouraged to apply.

Compensation

Members are eligible for stipends for each meeting they attend, for up to two meetings monthly. Per county board resolution 22-0334, members may be paid \$50 for each calendar meeting of the committee up to two meetings per calendar month, and a mileage allowance.

Reimbursement

Members are eligible for mileage reimbursement.

Other Information

Birth Justice Community Advisory Board applications are accepted during the Hennepin County open appointment process. Applicants will be provided an opportunity to pre-record interview statements, which are played for the County Commissioners at a regularly scheduled meeting. Applicants are encouraged to make a brief statement (no more than 3 minutes) regarding their qualifications and interest in the advisory board. County Commissioners will make appointments at a subsequent board meeting. Applicants will be notified to acknowledge receipt of application. All applicants will receive notification informing them of the outcome of their application and any necessary follow up steps. New members will be contacted by a representative and will be invited to an orientation prior to their first meeting.

For assistance with an application or to request an accommodation, contact Ashley Johnson.

Contact Information

Department Liaison	Committee Contact
Ashley Johnson	Jenny Krocak

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