

SOUTHERN PLAINS REACH US (SPRUS)



COALITION BYLAWS

I. Name

The name of the organization is the Southern Plains Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health Across the U.S. (REACH US), an American Indian Coalition to address diabetes and cardiovascular health, hereafter also referred to as the SPRUS Coalition. The SPRUS Coalition is not a legal entity.

II. Purpose

A. Vision

Healthy American Indians

B. Mission

Strive to eliminate health disparities in the areas of diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease, and commercial tobacco use by creating healthy communities.

C. Purpose

The purpose of the SPRUS Coalition is to reduce the health disparities among American Indians in Oklahoma and in the Southern Plains Region, which includes Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas. The SPRUS-Coalition represents a collaborative effort between: 1) the Oklahoma State Department of Health; 2) contracted American Indian tribes/nations and one Urban Indian Health Organization; and 3) numerous supportive organizations and individuals that focus on reducing risk factors for cardiovascular disease and diabetes among American Indians. The collaborative effort targets these risk factors through a variety of evidence-based approaches, all of which aim to improve the overall health of American Indian communities.

III. Membership

A. Eligibility

Membership in the SPRUS Coalition may include tribes/nations, non-profit organizations, government agencies, alliances, coalitions, task forces, businesses, consumers, or individuals. All members must support the PURPOSE and ACTIVITIES described in these bylaws. A tribe/nation or organization eligible for membership must be a federally recognized tribe/nation headquartered in Oklahoma, Kansas, or Texas or a non-profit organization that serves American Indians in the Southern Plains region. There shall be no limit on the number of members from any organization that may participate in the SPRUS Coalition.

B. Addition of New Members

Potential members may join the SPRUS Coalition upon the approval of a majority of the members present at any properly scheduled meeting of the SPRUS Coalition.

C. Withdrawal

A member may withdraw from the SPRUS Coalition at any time via e-mail or letter to the current Coalition Chair.

D. Autonomy

No member shall be legally bound to participate in any function of the SPRUS Coalition, or the SPRUS Steering Committee, unless bound by contract.

IV. Organization

A. The SPRUS Coalition

The SPRUS Coalition shall meet at least twice a year and may meet in connection with the Steering Committee.

B. The SPRUS Steering Committee

1. Purpose

The purpose of the SPRUS Steering Committee shall be to provide general leadership and direction to the overall SPRUS Coalition. The Steering Committee is comprised of all contracted partners, including Legacy Projects. Members of the committee come together to share experiences and ideas and to learn about opportunities available to enhance their individual programs. A formal sharing of information leads to a general consensus between both OSDH and the SPRUS Steering Committee regarding the overall direction of the SPRUS Coalition.

2. Voting Members

The voting members of the Steering Committee shall be comprised of the “validly contracted partners” of the SPRUS grant project and the SPRUS Grant Central Coordinating Organization (CCO).

Non-Voting Members

As desired, the voting members of the Steering Committee can add non-voting members to the Steering Committee. Non-voting Steering Committee Seats can be designated for unnamed individuals to represent specific organizations, coalitions, special task forces, etc.

- Legacy grantees will be non-voting members of the Steering Committee for the year of their contract.

3. Voting

Each SPRUS Sub-Contractor Partner and the CCO shall have one vote. A consensus vote of the Steering Committee membership shall consist of a simple majority of the voting membership present at any meeting. If agreed by prior vote of the Steering Committee, voting by proxy via mail, fax, or e-mail can be accepted as a vote.

4. Nominations

Nominations for Chair, Vice Chair, and a Secretary will occur by secret ballot. A non-voting member of the Steering Committee will contact nominees to assure ability to serve as Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.

5. Officers

Officers of the Steering Committee shall be elected by the Steering Committee annually to serve one-year terms of office. Elected officers shall include Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. All officers must represent valid contractor Partner organizations. Elections will occur in September of each year, with the term of office beginning the first day of October.

6. Steering Committee Powers and Responsibilities

The Officers shall have the responsibility to convene, conduct, and maintain records of SPRUS Coalition and SPRUS Steering Committee meetings.

7. Regular Meetings

The SPRUS Steering Committee shall meet at least bi-monthly.

Special Steering Committee Meetings

With five (5) days prior notice, the Chair can call a Steering Committee meeting. In an urgent situation when a vote of the Steering Committee is needed in less than five days, the Steering Committee members may be polled by e-mail, telephone, fax, or other electronic methods.

8. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the voting members of the Steering Committee.

C. Advisory Councils, Committees, Task Forces, and Teams

1. Creation

The SPRUS Coalition and the SPRUS Steering Committee shall have the power to establish advisory groups or work groups including Councils, Committees, Task Forces, and Teams to assist with the development and implementation of plans, policies, and procedures of the SPRUS Coalition and the SPRUS Steering Committee. These groups will sometimes be required to meet outside the normally scheduled meeting times.

2. Composition

Advisory groups may consist of consumers, community representatives, providers, staff, students, tribal members, board members, and other individuals with the commitment and capability to enhance the purpose of the SPRUS Coalition. A member of the SPRUS Steering Committee shall chair each Sub-Committee, Task Force, or workgroup/Team.

3. Powers

All advisory groups shall be limited to the power of making advisory recommendations to the SPRUS Coalition and the SPRUS Steering Committee.

V. Activities, Roles, and Responsibilities

A. The SPRUS Coalition may encourage and facilitate a wide range of collaborative activities including, but not limited to:

1. Advocating on behalf of client and organizational needs to improve the access and delivery of comprehensive health care.
2. Collaborating with other tribal organizations, agencies, and coalitions.
3. Collaborating in the submission of collaborative grants and contract bids.

4. Providing information and technical assistance regarding best practices for modeling and mentoring other tribes promoting environmental and policy changes.
5. Promoting collaborative social marketing programs for health promotion and environmental policy change.
6. Encouraging agreements such as MOAs and MOUs between individuals and organizations within and outside of the SPRUS Coalition that will serve to facilitate the purpose of the SPRUS Coalition.
7. Engaging in other activities that may serve to facilitate the purpose of the SPRUS Coalition.

B. The SPRUS Steering Committee’s roles, responsibilities, and rights include, but are not limited to:

1. Reviewing and approving of SPRUS press releases, data, abstracts, papers, reports, and presentations prior to publication, distribution, or presentation.
2. Evaluating the CCO on project management and subcontractor relations.
3. Reviewing of SPRUS project evaluation plans developed by the CCO.
4. Providing feedback as requested, regarding workplans, evaluation plans, etc.

VI. Policies and Procedures

A. Resolutions, Policies, and Procedures

Resolutions, policies, and procedures may be developed and approved by a simple majority of the SPRUS Coalition or Steering Committee, but will not be legally binding to any member.

B. Bylaw Adoption Process

1. Voting

The initial Bylaws must be approved by a simple majority of members and the CCO, which shall also comprise the membership of the Steering Committee. Each of the SPRUS Partners and the CCO shall have one vote to cast in the Bylaw Adoption Process. All of the eligible organizations must vote in order for the Bylaws to be adopted. Voting by proxy via mail, fax, or e-mail will be accepted.

2. Eligibility

The eight (8) eligible organizations to cast votes in the Bylaw Adoption process are:

- a. Oklahoma State Department of Health, Chronic Disease Service, (CCO)
- b. Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- c. Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma
- d. Chickasaw Nation
- e. Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- f. Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma
- g. Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa, Inc. (Urban Indian Health Organization)
- h. Wichita and Affiliated Tribes

C. Bylaw Amendment Process

With ten (10) days prior notice of a meeting of the SPRUS Steering Committee, the Bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote of the eligible Steering Committee members who are present.

D. Liability

No member of the SPRUS Coalition is liable for the actions or claims against any other member of the SPRUS Coalition.

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