

Chester, Massachusetts

Council on Aging

By-Laws

Article 1: Establishment

The name of the organization shall be the Chester Council on Aging, hereinafter referred to as the CCOA, as established November 24, 2025.

Article 2: Mission Statement

To advocate for the needs of the aging population in the town of Chester for those 60 years of age and older, with some programs offered to those 55+, in a professional manner.

Article 3: Purpose

The CCOA is based on the premise that the community shares a collective responsibility for those who are seniors; seniors have a right to participate in determining matters which vitally affect them; and there is an important community resource in the wisdom, experience, skills and abilities which the senior population must share.

To identify programs and services to meet the needs that are appropriate for the senior population in our community. To enlist support and participation to meet these needs; and to advocate for services and/or coordinate existing services to accomplish same.

To advocate for programs and services that support personal dignity, opportunities to encourage independence, participation, and community involvement.

Promotes healthy lifestyles through health promotion, education, physical activities, and other wellness programs.

Be responsive and accessible to the ever-changing needs of seniors, in cooperation with the community, agencies and fellow CCOA members. Advocate for assistance in coping with the challenges of aging by providing information and referrals.

Partner with the Council of Aging Director to advocate for local, state, and federal legislation, and programs for seniors.

Article 4: Location

The office of the Council on Aging Board and the Senior Center shall be 15 Middlefield Rd.
Chester, MA 01011

Article 5: Council Board Members

The duties of the Council on Aging Board Members shall be to represent and advocate for the senior population in the Town of Chester and to support the department and the Director. To implement the statement of purpose in Article 3. The terms “Member” and “membership” refer to voting CCOA Board Members.

The CCOA Board shall consist five (5) voting members over the age of 60 inclusive of the Chair. Only 1 senior over the age of 60 from each household is eligible to have a seat on the Council Board. All Council Board Members shall be residents of the Town of Chester who have skill and knowledge to assist in meeting the goals of the Board and shall serve without compensation.

The Council Board Member shall be appointed for a period of three (3) years, by the Board of Selectmen. **Members may be appointed for an additional three (3) year term renewable by a BOS appointment. After two terms, the Member is expected to take at least 1 year off. After the year off, the former Member shall be eligible to service on the Board for another term.

All members of the CCOA Board shall be sworn in the by the Town Clerk each year. Each shall be responsible for taking the Ethics Test and provide verification that they have read the Open Meeting Law handout. Appointments for the 1st year 2021 shall be staggered for the 3-year, 2-year, and 1 year for the initial start of the Board.

Attendance, Resignations, and Vacancies

Regular attendance is expected of all Board Members. In the event of the unexcused absence of any Member for three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings in a calendar year, except for reason of health or extenuating circumstances as duly reported to the Board Chairman in advance of the meeting, Board Chairman may request the resignation of that Member. If the resignation is not forthcoming from the Member, the Board may ask the Selectmen to terminate the Member’s tenure.

If a member wishes to resign from the Board, she/he shall notify the Director, Selectboard and Town Clerk in writing including a resignation date.

****Board of Selectmen are the appointing authority for the Town of Chester nonelected positions.**

Removal

The CCOA may seek to remove a member is she/he has violated any of the rules and policies of Council or carried out activities without the consent of a vote by the entire Council that have legal or financial ramifications for the Council or the Town of Chester. The CCOA Board and the Director will make recommendations to the Selectboard for removal of the Council Member in accordance with town policies.

Article 6: Voting Rights of Members

All voting rights shall be vested in the Board Members, and each Member shall be entitled to one vote with respect to any questions or matter which may come before a meeting of the Members of the CCOA.

Except as otherwise provided within the By-Laws, the vote of a simple majority of the Board at which a quorum is present shall be necessary and sufficient to decide such a question or matter.

Quorum

At all the meetings of the COA Board, a quorum shall consist of 50% plus 1 of the Board Members for the transaction of any business. A quorum shall consist of 3 members.

Any subcommittee meetings shall also have attendance of more than half of their members to transact business.

Article 7: Meetings and Minutes

All meetings shall be conducted according to a standard parliamentary procedure, such as Roberts Rules of Order. If a consensus cannot be reached in a reasonable period, the Chair of the Board may table the decision until the next meeting or ask that a decision be made by the affirmative majority vote of those present and eligible to vote.

All meetings shall be open to the public. The Council Board will always comply with the open meeting law and meetings shall be posted at least 48 hours in advance of said meeting not including holidays and weekends.

Regular Meetings

Monthly meetings if necessary, shall be held in the Council on Aging room at the Chester Town Hall unless otherwise specified by the CCOA Board Chair. A minimum of 4 meetings a year shall be held.

Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the CCOA Board Chair, based on the request by most of the board with five (5) working days' notice sent to each Member of the CCOA Board and posted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. Meetings shall be held in the Council on Aging room.

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting shall be held at the end of June for the purpose of electing officers. The meeting shall be held in the Council on Aging Room.

Minutes

Meeting minutes will include:

Time, date, and place of meeting

Members attending

The chair shall ask if anyone is recording the meeting and if so, this will also be noted in the minutes.

Summary of each items discussed.

Additional documents discussed at a meeting shall be kept with the minutes or identified within the minutes where the documents may be found.

Decision made on each subject and record votes if taken.

Meeting minutes shall be approved at the next meeting.

Date of the next meeting.

Article 8: Officers

Number, Qualifications, Elections, Vacancies and Terms of Office

The officers of the CCOA Board shall consist of a Chair, a Vice-Chair and Secretary.

Officers of the CCOA Board shall be elected at the annual meeting and shall be selected from the general membership. Officers shall hold their term for 3 years, or until he/she resigned or is removed.

Election of officers to fill vacancies may occur at any regular or special meeting and shall be for the remainder of the unexpired term. The office of the Chair, if vacated shall be filled by the Vice-Chair for the unexpired term of the Chair.

Chair:

The Chair shall preside at all meetings. This person shall appoint standing committees and such special committees as may be needed. She/He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee.

Vice Chair:

The Vice Chair shall, in the absence of the Chair possess all the powers and performs all the duties of that office. In the event the Vice Chair is incapacitated for any reason, the members of the Council on Aging will nominate a member to assume the office until the duties can be resumed by the Chair or the Vice Chair

Secretary:

The Secretary shall oversee the keeping of records of all meetings and correspondence of and to the COA; record proceedings of the CCOA meetings; send notices as required herein; keep attendance at the CCOA meetings and notify the Chair of members who have absences pursuant to the provisions in Article 5; and file copies of all reports as required, and post on the town website under documents in a timely manner.

Article: 9 Representation

No members of the CCOA shall make oral or written representation for the CCOA, unless authorized by the CCOA by vote of policy.

Article: 10 Rules of Order

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the CCOA in all cases in which they are applicable and in which that are consistent with these By-Laws.