



Principles and Guidelines for NASTAD Public Policy Decision Making

1. The Executive Committee is the governing body of the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors and is authorized to make policy decisions on behalf of the Alliance. Other NASTAD work groups and committees are advisory to the Executive Committee.
2. The goal is to reach all decisions by consensus within the NASTAD Executive Committee.
3. Consensus is defined as reaching general agreement, i.e., when all members of a group are willing to accept a decision. This process is based on ensuring that all members feel their point of view has been heard.*
4. Key questions in relation to ensuring consensus has been reached:
 - Does everyone accept this decision?
 - Is there any opposition to this decision?
 - Can everyone support the decision?*
5. Each individual member will have the opportunity to advance the interests of his/her jurisdiction in the deliberative phase of the decision making process.
6. Careful attention should be given to ensuring complete fact-gathering and analysis during the deliberative phase of decision making.
7. It is acknowledged that each NASTAD member has a right to take a position within or on behalf of his/her own jurisdiction that may differ from the national position taken by NASTAD.
8. The Executive Committee may make a decision that it is necessary to shift from a consensus building process to a voting process. In considering such a shift, the Executive Committee will weigh the potential impact of a prolonged discussion attempting to reach consensus, which could result in the development of minority positions and factions. The option of deferring or tabling a decision and the option not to take a position should be considered by the Executive Committee.

9. When the Executive Committee determines that a NASTAD position on an issue is needed and it is clear that consensus cannot be reached, which would be evident in applying the key questions noted in #4 above, a vote will be taken and a two-thirds vote will be required for approval. A quorum must be present in order for a vote to be taken by the Executive Committee.
10. Under certain circumstances, the Executive Committee may decide to include a “minority” position when consensus is not reached and the issue is of particular importance to a number of members. The Executive Committee will weigh requests from jurisdictions wishing to have a minority opinion expressed as part of a NASTAD position and will determine on a case-by-case basis whether to approve such requests.
11. The Executive Committee will decide which issues require participation by the full NASTAD membership in making a final decision. The method by which the full membership will be consulted will be decided by the Executive Committee on a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances.
 - Factors to be considered will include the importance of the issue in terms of the impact on each jurisdiction, and the urgency associated with formalizing a NASTAD position on the issue.
 - It may be desirable to get the sense of the full membership through a survey process or as a discussion agenda item at the NASTAD annual meeting, if the timeframe allows.
 - A survey of the membership could assess how important it is for a decision to be made at all or whether the membership would accept tabling or deferring a decision.
 - The Executive Committee may decide that it is necessary to solicit a vote of the membership by mail or at an annual meeting. This process will include conveying complete information on all points considered by the Executive Committee in the deliberative process to ensure the membership has the benefit of this information when asked to vote on an issue. A two-thirds vote will be required for approval.

Adopted October 1999

*Reference: “Problem Solving Process User’s Manual,” New York State Governor’s Office of Employee Relations