Prevention Network

2026

Coalition Infrastructure Toolkit

Vision & Mission, Roles, Structure, Bylaws, Policies

How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to support coalitions at all stages of development in building strong, sustainable infrastructure. It provides practical tools and guidance to strengthen governance, clarify roles, and align coalition efforts around shared goals.

Coalitions may be in different phases of development—whether just forming, growing, or refining their work. This toolkit is intended to meet coalitions where they are and provide support along the way.

A Flexible Approach

The components in this toolkit are all essential to a strong coalition. Coalitions may begin with any section based on their current needs, capacity, and priorities. Over time, all areas should be addressed to ensure a well-rounded and sustainable infrastructure.

Shared Responsibility

Strong coalitions rely on shared leadership and active participation from members across sectors. Responsibilities should be distributed across coalition members, committees, and partners to build ownership, strengthen engagement, and support long-term success. This work is not intended to be completed by one individual.

Toolkit Overview *(See page 6)*

This toolkit is organized into key areas of coalition infrastructure. Each area plays a critical role in building and sustaining an effective coalition:

- **Vision & Mission** - Establishes a shared purpose and direction to guide coalition efforts.
- **Roles & Leadership -** Clarifies responsibilities, supports leadership development, and promotes shared ownership.
- **Bylaws & Structure -** Defines governance, membership, and decision-making processes for long-term sustainability.
- **Policies -** Ensures ethical practices, financial accountability, and consistent operations.

Putting It Into Practice

Coalitions are encouraged to use these tools in a way that is practical and relevant to their work. Documents should be reviewed regularly, adapted as needed, and integrated into daily operations.

Need Additional Support?

Prevention Network offers technical assistance and can connect coalitions with additional resources. https://www.preventionnetwork.org/ta/

This guidance aligns with the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) and CADCA coalition best practices for continuous improvement

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A guide for coalition leaders, coordinators, and workgroups to build strong, sustainable coalition infrastructure

VISION AND MISSION

DEFINE OR REFINE ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTION AND PURPOSE

Align your coalition around a shared vision and mission

Use these tools to:

- Facilitate group discussions.
- Develop or refine your vision and mission statement.
- Set shared goals and strategies.

READY TO USE **VISION & MISSION** TOOLS BELOW:

Coalition Vision, Mission, Goals Components Guide

Developing a Vision and Mission Statement - (Activity Guide)

Example Coalition Vision & Mission Statement

Review: Every 3–5 years.

Update: If community needs shift or strategic priorities change.

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ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES & LEADERSHIP

CLARIFY EXPECTATIONS FOR COALITION LEADERS, MEMBERS, AND STAFF

A strong coalition needs clear leadership and fully informed members.

Use these tools to:

- Clarify staff and volunteer roles.
- Define expectations for officers, coordinators, committees, and members.
- Support leadership development and succession planning.

READY TO USE **ROLES & LEADERSHIP** TOOLS BELOW:

Coalition Roles and Job Descriptions

Sample of Roles and Responsibilities

Sample Board Member Contract - (if not used in bylaws & structure)

Review: Annually or during onboarding of new members or leaders.

Update: When leadership or staffing roles shift, committee or member engagement changes, roles are unclear, or responsibilities are not being fulfilled.

A guide for coalition leaders, coordinators, and workgroups to build strong, sustainable coalition infrastructure

BYLAWS & STRUCTURE

ESTABLISH AND UPDATE COALITION STRUCTURE AND DECISION-MAKING

Move into defining your coalition's structure, membership criteria, officers, committees, and processes.

Use these tools to:

- Update or create bylaws.
- Ensure your coalition is structured for sustainability.
- Prepare for further formalization if desired (e.g., 501(c)(3) status).

READY TO USE **BYLAWS & STRUCTURE** TOOLS BELOW:

Coalition Bylaw Content Guide
Checklist for Bylaws
Bylaws Template
Checklist to Establish a 501(c)(3)
Checklist for Developing a Board of Directors
Sample Board Member Contract

Review: Every 1–2 years.

Update: When membership structure, leadership roles, or governance changes; voting or decision-making procedures change; or coalition is formalizing (e.g., 501(c)(3)).

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POLICIES

ENSURE ETHICAL, FINANCIAL, AND STRUCTURAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Begin by reviewing your coalition's foundational policies to ensure ethical, transparent, and effective operations.

Use these tools to:

- Identify gaps in existing policies.
- Adapt foundational documents to fit your coalition.
- Establish consistent procedures for decision-making and financial management.

READY TO USE **POLICY** TOOLS BELOW:

- Conflict of Interest Policy Template
- Sample Financial Management Policy & Road Map
- Coalition Member Rights & Responsibilities

Review: Annually.
Update: When funding requirements change, financial processes are updated, compliance issues arise, or policies no longer reflect current practices or requirements.

REVIEW AS A TEAM AND IMPLEMENT

PUTTING YOUR COALITION'S INFRASTRUCTURE INTO PRACTICE

Once you've completed the toolkit, use this guide to move from planning to action.

Bring your coalition together to:

- Review newly developed or updated documents.
- Formally approve or adopt changes.
- Identify training, onboarding, or capacity-building needs.
- Integrate finalized documents into onboarding materials, websites, and coalition systems.

This toolkit does more than produce documents—it strengthens the systems your coalition relies on every day.

TOOLKIT OVERVIEW: TOOLS AND THEIR PURPOSE

TOPIC AREA	TOOL TYPE	PURPOSE
VISION & MISSION	Guide + Activity Roadmap	Define or refine organizational direction and purpose
ROLES & JOB DESCRIPTIONS	Guide	Clarify expectations for coalition leaders, members, and staff
BYLAWS & GOVERNANCE	Templates, Checklists, Guides	Establish and update coalition structure and decision-making
POLICIES	Templates, Checklists, Guides	Ensure ethical, financial, and structural accountability

NOTES

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PREVENTION NETWORK

Prevention Network is a statewide not-for-profit that aims to build healthy communities across Michigan through prevention resources, technical assistance, and support. Prevention Network has provided support to individuals, grassroots groups, coalitions, and larger agencies across all 83 Michigan counties on substance misuse prevention since 1984. We strive to bridge the gap between research and practice for enhanced effectiveness of local prevention efforts.

PN FREE RESOURCE LIBRARY HUB

You must create a **free** account to access toolkit resources:
preventionnetwork.org/resource-library/

Search this library for prevention resources that can be used within your work. Use the roadmap section if you are unsure of where to begin. All resources are consolidated into the hub for quick, centralized access.

Search by Keyword
Filter by Topic (e.g., advocacy, cannabis, data, prevention, and more)
Filter by Program (e.g., Coalition Program, MYCN, MCRUD, and more)
Filter by Content Type (e.g., checklist, template, roadmap, worksheet, and more)

Need Additional Support?

Prevention Network offers technical assistance and can connect coalitions with additional resources to support you in your work. https://www.preventionnetwork.org/ta/

This toolkit helps coalitions build a strong, sustainable infrastructure by offering practical, customizable tools to strengthen governance, clarify roles, support ethical and financial accountability, and define a clear mission and vision. Developed by Prevention Network and aligned with the MDHHS PFS–SPF workplan, these resources provide coalitions with the structure and guidance needed to operate effectively and deliver strong prevention outcomes.

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