

§ 108A-15.8. Regional board of social services.

(a) A regional social services department shall be governed by a regional board of social services. A regional board of social services shall have the same powers and duties as a county social services board, including the appointment of the regional director of social services, with respect to those services or programs that have been assigned to the regional social services department.

(b) A regional board of social services shall be composed of 12 members. However, a regional board of social services may be increased up to a maximum number of 18 members by agreement of the boards of county commissioners in all counties that comprise the region. The agreement shall be evidenced by concurrent resolutions adopted by the affected boards of county commissioners.

(c) The county board of commissioners of each county in the region shall appoint two members to the regional board of social services, one of whom may be a county commissioner. If more than eight counties join the regional social services department, the board of county commissioners of each county in the region shall appoint one member to the regional board of social services who may be a county commissioner. The Social Services Commission shall appoint two members. The members of the regional social services board shall appoint members to fill any remaining vacancies. The composition of the board shall reasonably reflect the population makeup of the entire region and provide equitable region-wide representation. All members shall be residents of the region.

(d) Except as provided in this subsection, members of a regional board of social services shall serve terms of three years. Two of the original members shall serve terms of one year, and two of the original members shall serve terms of two years. No member shall serve more than three consecutive three-year terms. County commissioner members shall serve only as long as the member is a county commissioner.

(e) Whenever a county shall join or withdraw from an existing regional social services department, the regional board of social services shall be dissolved and a new board shall be appointed as provided in subsection (c) of this section.

(f) Vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority for any unexpired portion of a term.

(g) A chairperson shall be elected annually by a regional board of social services. The regional social services director shall serve as secretary to the board.

(h) A majority of the actual membership, excluding vacancies, shall constitute a quorum.

(i) Upon being given written notice and an opportunity to respond, a member may be removed from office by the regional board of social services for any of the following:

- (1) Commission of a felony or other crime involving moral turpitude.
- (2) Violation of a State law governing conflict of interest.
- (3) Violation of a written policy adopted by the county board of commissioners of each county in the region.
- (4) Habitual failure to attend meetings.
- (5) Conduct that tends to bring the office into disrepute.

(j) A member may receive a per diem in an amount established by the county commissioner members of the regional board of social services. Reimbursement for subsistence and travel shall be in accordance with a policy set by the county commissioner members of the regional board of social services.

(k) The board shall meet at least quarterly. The chairperson or three of the members may call a special meeting.

(l) A regional board of social services is authorized to provide liability insurance for the members of the board and the employees of the regional social services department. A

regional board of social services is also authorized to contract for the services of an attorney to represent the board, the regional social services department, and its employees, as appropriate. The purchase of liability insurance pursuant to this subsection waives both the regional board of social services' and the regional social services department's governmental immunity, to the extent of insurance coverage, for any act or omission occurring in the exercise of a governmental function. By entering into a liability insurance contract with the regional board of social services, an insurer waives any defense based upon the governmental immunity of the regional board of social services or the regional social services department. (2017-41, s. 4.1.)