

County Extension Advisory Council Development

Strategies and Instructions

The Advisory Council Handbook was developed for use by County Extension Directors by a committee of experienced Advisory Council members. These volunteers utilized samples and, based on their experiences at the county, district and state levels, created a template for use in support of County Advisory Councils.

The Handbook includes a Table of Contents to help guide you in preparing the materials for your members. Note that many of the Sections offer you space to include county documents or items of local importance and relevance. Provided below is an overview of the Contents with notes about locating components that are not included in the downloadable document.

The committee members who collaborated to create the template encourage you to use a three-ring binder so pages can be continuously added during the terms of service. Additionally, consider providing section dividers.

Handbook Instructions and Suggestions

Cover Page

The cover page is provided as an option for your use. Feel free to use your own design if you choose. If you opt to use this design, please localize it with your county name and with the name of the member.

Handbook Contents Page

This page does not include page numbers, merely section numbers and titles. You are encouraged to include tabs for your handbooks to help members organize materials into sections for easy reference.

If you have additional topics and would like to add sections, please personalize this page to suit the needs of your council.

Section 1: County Advisory Council Meeting Materials

This section is completely at the discretion of the county. This is where your members will insert agendas, minutes, handouts or information from meetings. It is also a good place to include an event calendar – or you may want to print an event calendar and insert it into the interior pocket in the front of the binder.

Section 2: County Extension Directories

This section is space for you to provide a list of your county staff members with contact information as well as a list of your county advisory council members and their contact information. Members may need to connect between meetings. It is also a good idea to

include a directory for any program or specialized committees in your county for use by the council members.

Please also include contact information for your county's representative to the State Advisory Council and/or the Strategic Planning Council so your members can communicate directly with these representatives if desired.

Section 3: County Guidance Documents

This section includes the template for a role description for your County Advisory Council members. Note that you should review this role description carefully to make any needed adjustments prior to including it in the handbook.

The county operations procedure document is included here for your convenience. Note that you will need to insert your county name, and you should strategically involve a small number of volunteers and/or staff members in reviewing the document to ensure that any needed local changes can be made within the document. Also, it is helpful to record the date that this document is adopted by the council and to create a list of dates of amendments to ensure that you have the latest version of this document as you work with the CAC.

This section also includes your county plan of work and environmental scan or other county specific documents that guide priority and programming decisions.

Section 4: NC State Extension Advisory Leadership System

A general overview of the state Advisory Leadership System is provided in this section for your use. It should be useable directly from the site.

Section 5: Organization Charts

This section is for any county government and Extension office organization charts in addition to NC State Extension Organization Chart and NCSU College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Organization Chart. The state documents are included only as a link so when you download the document, be sure to go back to the links provided on the ALS website (als.ces.ncsu.edu) and print the documents directly from the sites where they are hosted so you have the most current versions as these documents are updated and changed frequently.

Section 6: Miscellaneous Resource

Included in this section are several downloadable pages to provide resources and fact sheets for your members. Feel free to supplement the Common Acronyms, Website Resources and Fact Sheets included here with additional resources you want your members to have on hand. Fact Sheets may be accessed from the ALS website.

Planning Agenda for First or Formational County Advisory Council Meeting

1. The County Extension Faculty member responsible for the committee introduces him/herself as the temporary chair, distributes copies of the agenda and appoints a temporary secretary.
2. Other faculty/staff members present are introduced and committee members are introduced. Use a “get acquainted activity” to help committee members and staff members get comfortable with one another while learning more about how others became interested and involved with Extension.
3. Discuss the purpose of the committee and how it supports the mission of Extension in the County.
4. Share the role description and review the duties of council members. Be realistic about expectations and encourage members to be honest in their assessments about committing to the organization.
5. Briefly describe the operating structure of the committee and the organization. Share documents to provide additional details on these topics.
6. Review the mission, vision, goals, and/or objectives of Extension. Share appropriate annual reports, strategic plans, environmental scans or other supporting documents.
7. Identify major areas the committee will be addressing in the coming meetings.
8. Establish dates, times, places and assign roles/responsibilities for upcoming meetings. Decide when officers will be elected. Note that a more extensive orientation will be included at the next meeting once membership is finalized.
9. Meeting adjourns.

*** Sample Agenda for distribution to members is included on next page. Would be a good idea to insert the name of the staff member or advisory council member handling each topic and to consider a time frame that would keep the meeting on track to conclude at the established time. Always good to include your State Advisory Council representative if s/he is available to help with the initial meeting and to attend future meetings as well. Nice to have volunteers assisting with presentations if appropriate.

DATE

Meeting Agenda

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|---------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 7:30 AM | Call to Order |
| | Welcome |
| 7:35 AM | Introductions |
| 7:50 AM | Overview of County Advisory Council Purpose |
| | Review Role Description of Council Members |
| 8:00 AM | Overview of NC Cooperative Advisory Leadership System |
| 8:15 AM | “Tour” of County Advisory Council Member manual |
| 8:30 AM | Setting meeting date(s) and agenda for next meeting |
| | Discuss election of officers |
| 8:50 AM | Adjourn |