

Researchers' Requests for Letters of Support

This policy applies to local organizations and to individual researchers who request letters of support from the HCPC for grant applications or proposals for funding of research studies.

The HCPC Co-Chairs shall sign a letter of support for a research proposal on behalf of the HCPC if

1. the Steering Committee votes in favor of writing such a letter, based on whether the researcher's institution agrees to fulfill the requirements listed below (the letter of support shall state that it is conditional upon fulfillment of these requirements), and
2. the researcher's institution has followed the procedure described here for requesting such a letter.

The Council may provide letters of support for multiple proposals from competing institutions based on the following philosophy: The HCPC supports all the proposed research activities and expects that the organizations awarded funds will coordinate their projects to avoid duplication of work. This concern will be explained in the letters of support.

In order to receive a letter of support from the HCPC, a researcher must agree to complete the following activities to disseminate his or her findings within six (6) months after the conclusion of data analysis. If a researcher who receive a letter of support from the HCPC does not fulfill these requirements within six (6) months after finishing data analysis, the HCPC will write him or her a letter of concern stating that and indicating that the researcher's failure to fulfill the requirements will be considered should he or she request a letter of support in the future. Researchers must

- Convene at least one community-engagement meeting that allows a diversity of viewpoints regarding the study and its results to be shared. The meeting shall be appropriately publicized and advertised (e.g., if the study subjects are MSM, an advertisement should be placed in local gay publications, such as the Bay Area Reporter).
- Disseminate a final written report to the community and all appropriate stakeholders (e.g., if the subjects are clients at a particular agency, the agency, as well as any other agencies that might find the results relevant to their work, should receive copies of the report) and anyone requesting a report should receive one.
- Request to present study results to a full Council meeting.
- Post the results on the Internet and inform community members about the site where the results have been posted.

Agencies requesting letters of support for research grant proposals or other activities must submit a letter to the HCPC Co-Chairs via the health department no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the date by which they need the letter (e.g., for grant proposals, the proposal-submission deadline). The letter of request must identify the funding agency; briefly summarize the proposal; and indicate how the results will be disseminated at the conclusion of the research. The HCPC Co-Chairs will bring the letter of request to the Steering Committee for review at its next regularly scheduled meeting and inform the researcher (or the organization) that it will be considered at that meeting. The Co-Chairs, the

researcher, or a representative of the organization will present the request to the Steering Committee. After the presentation, Steering Committee members may ask questions about the proposed project(s) and then will vote on whether to write a letter or letters of support. The health department will prepare the letter(s), ensure that the Co-Chairs sign it or them, and send it or them to the proper recipient(s). The Co-Chairs Report will inform the HCPC at its next regularly scheduled meeting regarding any letters of support provided. If the request is submitted on time but the Steering Committee does not meet before a letter of support is needed, the Co-Chairs may approve the letter of support.