

HAC Policies and Procedures for HAC Members and OHRP Staff

Member Information

What are the Federal Requirements for the HAC Composition?

Per federal rules and regulations, the HAC must be composed of the following:

- Have at least five members
- All members cannot be of the same profession
- All members cannot be of the same sex
- One member must be a non-affiliated member (not affiliated with the institutions served)
- One member must be a non-scientific member

What are the Responsibilities of an HAC Member?

The primary responsibility of the HAC member is to protect the rights and welfare of human research subjects. This obligation is maintained when the proposed research protocol is reviewed in compliance with applicable federal regulations, state and local laws and the interest of the local research community.

Are HAC Members Required to Attend Scheduled Training and Education Sessions?

Yes, all HAC members are required to attend scheduled training and education sessions. Please see the section on HAC Member Education and Training.

What are the Types of Members that Serve the HAC?

The members are full voting members, alternates for the full voting members (when applicable), the HAC Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

How are Affiliated Members Selected from MCG and MCGHI?

Affiliated members are selected from various departments as the need for expertise in a specific area presents itself. The HAC Chairperson, or the OHRP Assistant Director at the request of the HAC Chairperson, contacts the individual and the departmental chairperson to determine if an individual can serve.

How are Affiliated Members Selected from the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center?

For Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center members, the Medical Center Director selects and appoints members to the HAC. These members are then appointed by the MCG President. The HAC includes three Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center members as voting members and no votes are taken on protocols that involve the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center unless at least one of these members is present. These individuals must be physicians according to VHA regulations.

How Are Non-Affiliated Members Selected from the Community?

Non-affiliated members are selected from the community by word-of-mouth or by contacting the HAC Administrative Office.

Who Appoints the HAC Members?

The President of MCG appoints the HAC members based upon the written recommendation of the HAC Chairperson. Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center members are appointed by the Medical Center Director and are confirmed by the President of MCG at least every three years.

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Who Prepares the Documentation to Appoint or Reappoint a Member or Alternate?

The OHRP Assistant Director is responsible for preparing the necessary documentation to appoint or reappoint a member or alternate. The OHRP Director serves as back-up for this action.

How are HAC Members Evaluated?

HAC members are evaluated every three years by the President with input from the HAC Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Full Member, Vice President for Research, and the OHRP Director and Assistant Director. Several criteria are used in the evaluation process such as meeting attendance over the term, preparedness, interest and availability to continue.

How Often do HAC Members Provide an Updated CV or Résumés to the HAC Administrative Office?

The dated and preferably signed CVs or résumés for HAC members and alternates are submitted at the time of initial appointment and then at each re-appointment for all members and alternates including the representatives from the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center. These are available for review from the OHRP Assistant Director or designee.

What are the Terms of Service for an HAC Member?

Terms of service are three years although a term may be less depending on the situation. These are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Is There a Term Limit for an HAC Member?

No. There is no limit on the numbers of term that a member may serve.

Can an HAC Member's Service be Terminated?

A member may be terminated from service if the member requests termination, if the three-year term expires or if a confirmed issue of non-compliance involves the member.

Alternate Members

Why are Alternate Members Needed?

Alternate members may be added to the Committee to serve in the absence of a regular member.

How are Alternate Members Selected?

Alternate members are selected with the expectation that they have equivalent expertise to the regular member.

How are Alternate Members Evaluated?

Alternate members are evaluated every three years by the President with input from the HAC Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Full Member, Vice President for Research, and the OHRP Director and Assistant Director. Several criteria are used in the evaluation process such as meeting attendance throughout their term, preparedness, interest and availability to continue.

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The OHRP Assistant Director is responsible for preparing the necessary documentation to appoint or reappoint a member or alternate. The OHRP Director serves as back-up for this action.

Who Is Responsible for Notifying the HAC Administrative Office That an Alternate Member Will Attend for a Regular Member?

If an alternate member is to serve in the absence of a regular member at the meeting, the regular member should notify the HAC Administrative Office staff via email or phone call of the change.

Is the Alternate Member Expected to Fulfill all Responsibilities of the Regular Member?

Yes. The alternate member is expected to fulfill all responsibilities of the regular member.

Can the Alternate Member and the Regular Member Attend the Same Meeting?

Yes.

If Both the Alternate and the Regular Member Attend, Does this Have an Impact on the Quorum?

No. Only the regular member will count towards the quorum and is the only one authorized to vote.

Can the Alternate Member and the Regular Member Both Vote on a Protocol?

No. The alternate may only serve in a specified individual's absence and only one vote will be counted.

Vice Chairperson Appointment, Evaluation and Feedback

Who Appoints the HAC Vice-Chairperson?

The President of the Medical College of Georgia (MCG) appoints the HAC Vice-Chairperson.

Who Prepares the Documentation to Appoint or Reappoint the Vice-Chairperson?

The OHRP Assistant Director is responsible for preparing the necessary documentation to appoint or reappoint the Vice-Chairperson. The OHRP Director serves as back-up for this action.

Is There a Term Limit for the HAC Vice-Chairperson?

There is no limit on the number of terms that the HAC Vice-Chairperson may serve.

How is the Vice-Chairperson Evaluated?

The Vice-Chairperson is evaluated every three years by the President with input from the HAC Chairperson, Vice President for Research, and the OHRP Director and Assistant Director. Several criteria are used in the evaluation process such as meeting attendance throughout their term, preparedness, interest and availability to continue in this role, leadership and management ability.

Can the HAC Vice-Chairperson Approve Research Protocols If They Qualify for Exempt From Full Review or Expedited Review?

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Yes. The HAC Vice-Chairperson may approve research protocols if the protocol qualifies for exempt from full or expedited review.

Can the HAC Vice-Chairperson Disapprove a Protocol Regardless of Level of Review?

No. The HAC Vice-Chairperson may not disapprove a protocol. All disapprovals, regardless of level of review, must be determined by the full committee.

Does the HAC Vice-Chairperson Assume the Duties of the HAC Chairperson in their Absence?

Yes. The Vice-Chairperson assumes the duties of the Chairperson during the absence of the Chairperson.

Chairperson Appointment, Evaluation and Feedback

Who Appoints the HAC Chairperson?

The President of the Medical College of Georgia (MCG) appoints the HAC Chairperson on a three year basis.

Who Prepares the Documentation to Appoint or Reappoint the Chairperson?

The OHRP Assistant Director is responsible for preparing the necessary documentation to appoint or reappoint the Chairperson. The OHRP Director serves as back-up for this action.

Is There a Term Limit for the HAC Chairperson?

There is no limit on the number of terms that the HAC Chairperson can serve.

How is the Chairperson Evaluated?

The Chairperson is evaluated every three years by the President with input from the Vice President for Research and the ORHP Director and Assistant Director. Several criteria are used in the evaluation process such as meeting attendance throughout their term, preparedness, interest and availability to continue in this role, leadership and management ability as well as staying abreast of current regulations, guidelines and national thought leaders.