



DC FOOD POLICY COUNCIL BYLAWS

Section I: Purpose

- A. *Establishment*: The DC Food Policy Council (FPC) was established by the [DC Food Policy Council and Director Establishment Act of 2014](#) (the Act) to promote food access, food sustainability, and the local food economy, including non-mainstream producers, in the District; identify regulatory burdens on the local food economy, including barriers to the operations of farmers markets, existing food assets in the local food economy, and job creation potential in the local food economy; collect and analyze data on the food economy and food access; monitor national best practices in food policy, including public health policy for dietary-related illness, and determine how they could be implemented in the District; and use its expertise to advise the Food Policy Director.
- B. *Vision Statement (created in 2016)*: Create a just, healthy, equitable and sustainable food system for *all* by engaging, empowering, and informing DC residents and effecting positive policy change.
- C. *Racial Equity Statement (created in 2021)*: We acknowledge that the inequities in our current food system and broader communities stem from past and persistent structural racism in public policy and budget decisions. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) residents are more likely to be food insecure than white residents; majority-Black communities in the District have fewer grocery stores and healthy food options; and BIPOC residents, immigrants, and low-income residents are more likely to be employed in low-wage positions in the food economy – all of which are the products of structural racism and disinvestment. Racism is real, persistent, and experienced, and we believe that the responsibility of dismantling inequities in the food system belongs to all of us.
- D. *Annual reporting*: The Act requires the Food Policy Council to submit an annual report on the state of the local food economy and food access across the District to the DC Council.

Section II: Membership

- A. *Food Policy Director*: The Act requires that the Food Policy Director be appointed by the Mayor and approved by the DC Council and shall oversee the business of the Council, preside at meetings or delegate to other members to preside, and exercise such other powers and duties as required by the Act. The Food Policy Director shall serve on the FPC as long as they remain the Food Policy Director. The Food Policy Director is a voting member of the FPC.
- B. *Public Members*: The Act requires that twelve (12) additional public members be appointed by the Mayor and approved by the DC Council. Public members shall serve terms of three (3) years. Members may be reappointed but may serve no more than two (2) consecutive full three-year terms.



- a. The Act requires that public members represent public, nonprofit, and for-profit entities and organizations involved in the local food economy or food access in the District.
 - b. The Act requires that, when a vacancy develops on the FPC, the Mayor shall appoint a successor to fill the unexpired portion of the term within 90 days of the vacancy.
 - c. The Act requires that all FPC public members shall serve without compensation.
 - d. The Food Policy Director will work with MOTA to ensure that the public members represent all 8 Wards and are diverse across race, gender, and age. FPC members will assist by sharing open position descriptions and applications with their networks to recruit diverse members.
- C. *Ex Officio Members*: The Act requires that twelve (12) ex officio members shall be selected by the Directors of the following agencies:
- a. Department of Human Services;
 - b. Department of Health;
 - c. Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection;
 - d. Department of Parks and Recreation;
 - e. Office of the State Superintendent of Education;
 - f. Office of Planning;
 - g. District Department of Transportation;
 - h. Department of Energy and the Environment;
 - i. Department of General Services;
 - j. D.C. Public Schools;
 - k. Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development; and
 - l. Department of Small and Local Business Development.
- D. Ex officio members from other District agencies may serve on the FPC if designated by the agency's Director.
- E. Ex officio members shall serve without compensation above their normal salary and benefits.
- F. *Chairperson*: The Act requires that the Chairperson of the FPC shall be elected by the FPC members from the current pool of voting members pursuant to the voting procedures set forth in Section IV.
- a. The Chairperson shall serve a term of two (2) years with a two-term limit, within their maximum term of service on the FPC.
- G. *Equity and Inclusivity*: The FPC acknowledges that systemic racism and sexism create barriers for some members to voice their opinions in discussions and decision-making processes. FPC meetings and trainings will start with values setting and create a safe and welcoming environment for open dialogue and will not tolerate comments meant to minimize or insult others' identities or lived experiences.
- a. The Food Policy Director will provide diverse methods of information gathering options from members, including anonymous surveys, one-on-one meetings with the Food Policy Director, small group meetings, polling, and other methods to provide safe spaces for input.



Section III: Meetings and Events

- A. *Public Meetings:* FPC full meetings and working group meetings shall be open to the public in accordance with the open meeting provisions of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 831; D.C. Official Code Section 1-207.42).
 - 1. The Act requires that full FPC meetings occur at least once every other month.
 - 2. Working groups meet as needed to conduct their business.
- B. *Notice:* The Food Policy Director shall provide notice of all six (6) FPC meetings each year to members and the public at least ten (10) business days before each meeting takes place.
- C. *Agenda Setting:* The Food Policy Director will set the agenda for each meeting. FPC members may propose agenda items to the Food Policy Director at least five (5) business days prior to meetings. The Food Policy Director will share the meeting agenda with FPC members and the public no less than 24 hours before the meeting start time.
- D. *Attendance:* The Act states that attendance at full meetings is required for voting members. Ex officio members are required to attend at least four (4) full meetings during each calendar year.
 - 1. One (1) excused absence from full FPC meetings is permitted each calendar year for voting members, so long as the member notifies the Food Policy Director at least 24 hours prior to the start of the meeting, excepting emergencies.
 - 2. Roll call for FPC members, including public and ex officio members, will be taken at the beginning of each full meeting and will be reported to the DC Council during annual oversight hearings.
- E. *Retreat:* FPC members are required to attend the annual FPC retreat, unless they provide notice and good cause for not attending at least two (2) business days before the retreat, excepting emergencies. The FPC retreat is closed to the public.
- F. *Trainings:* Trainings for FPC members can be closed to the public so long as no official resolution, act, regulation, or other official action is taken during such trainings. Unless otherwise specified, trainings are optional for members.
- G. *Other Public Events:* FPC members may organize public events on behalf of the FPC.
 - 1. The Food Policy Director must approve all events organized on behalf of the FPC and the use of the FPC logo on any event materials.
- H. *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity:* All FPC meetings and events will create a safe and welcoming environment for open dialogue and will not tolerate comments meant to minimize or insult others' identities or lived experiences.
 - 1. Public meetings will spotlight speakers and projects led by diverse voices across race, ethnicity, gender, age, and geography.
 - 2. The FPC will use its platform to highlight projects led by BIPOC individuals and communities and to educate the public on historical and current impacts of systemic racism in the food system.



Section IV: Voting

- A. Each member of the FPC holds one vote.
- B. The FPC shall approve by vote at an official public meeting any plan, report, or action, including but not limited to:
 - 1. Any plan, report, or action required by the Act or other D.C. law;
 - 2. Any amendment to these bylaws;
 - 3. Election of the FPC Chairperson;
 - 4. Establishment of new working groups;
 - 5. Annual FPC priorities; and
 - 6. Any document or report that names the FPC as the primary author.
 - a. This does not include documents authored by the Food Policy Division at the DC Office of Planning.
- C. The FPC shall vote in accordance with the following:
 - 1. A quorum present at the time the vote is taken, through in-person, phone, or video attendance.
 - 2. A matter is approved when a majority of the members present and voting vote in the affirmative.
 - 3. In the event of a tie, the Food Policy Director or their designee may postpone the vote until a later time or break the tie.
 - 4. Before a vote may be taken, the Food Policy Director or their designee shall provide a clear description of the matter to be decided in the agenda for the meeting. Any document related to the matter to be voted on must be transmitted to members at least two (2) business days prior to the vote.
 - 5. Voting shall be in the form of “yes,” “no,” or “present.”
 - 6. Unless otherwise specified, all votes shall be by voice with the results determined by the Food Policy Director or designee.
 - 7. Members who cannot appear in person are permitted to vote by phone or video.
 - 8. No FPC member shall participate in or influence discussions or resulting decisions concerning the award of a grant or other financial benefit to an organization, other than the FPC, that the member represents or with which the member is affiliated. FPC members must comply with all relevant District government conflict of interest requirements for Boards and Commissions and District government employees.

Section V: Working Groups

- A. The Act requires the FPC to establish and maintain working groups and suggests the following topic areas:
 - a. Entrepreneurship and Food Jobs;
 - b. Food Equity and Access;
 - c. Nutrition and Health;
 - d. Sustainable Supply Chain;
 - e. Urban Agriculture; and



- f. Climate and Resiliency.
- B. The current FPC Working Groups include:
 - a. Food Access & Equity
 - b. Nutrition & Health
 - c. Entrepreneurship & Food Jobs
 - d. Urban Agriculture
 - e. Sustainable Supply Chain
 - f. In 2022, the FPC has also created several ad hoc advisory groups: Internal Racial Equity, Resident Engagement, and Annual Report Advisors
- C. All FPC working groups shall be chaired or co-chaired by at least one (1) FPC member, including public or ex officio members.
- D. Working group chairs shall create agendas for meetings, invite speakers, and determine the priorities and projects for the working group.
- E. Working group chairs shall report to the Food Policy Director and Chairperson at least twice annually on the progress of the working group towards its priorities.

Section VI: Work Products

- A. *Annual FPC Priorities:* FPC members determine the overarching priorities of the FPC.
 - a. FPC working group chairs identify specific projects to meet each priority.
 - b. These projects are included in a public survey and suggestions from the survey are considered by FPC members.
 - c. FPC members must vote to approve the annual priorities at a public meeting.
- B. *Written Work Products:* The Food Policy Council and/or FPC members may develop written work products to be published by the FPC.
 - a. For any written work products that list the FPC as an author, FPC members must have an opportunity of at least five (5) business days to review and provide feedback on these work products before they are published.
 - b. The Food Policy Director must approve these work products before they are published.
 - c. The Food Policy Director must approve use of the FPC logo on any work products.
- C. *Media and Public Speaking:* The Food Policy Director shall serve as the official point of contact for media requests unless they delegate this role to specific FPC members. FPC members should not give official statements on behalf of the FPC, unless delegated by the Food Policy Director to do so, and must make clear they are speaking in their individual capacity in interviews, at events, or at any formal/on-the-record setting, including DC Council hearings.
- D. *DC Council Hearings:* The Food Policy Director must provide FPC members with a copy of their draft testimony for any DC Council hearings where they are speaking on behalf



of the FPC no less than five (5) business days before the hearing. FPC members may provide feedback and suggestions to the Food Policy Director at least three (3) business days prior to the hearing. The Food Policy Director must respond to FPC members providing feedback and indicate if feedback will be incorporated into the testimony.

- E. *Staff, Interns, Fellows, and Class Projects:* The Food Policy Director will interview and select all staff, interns, and fellows that work for the FPC. FPC members may suggest and recommend individuals for these positions as they arise.
 - a. The FPC will only offer and accept compensated opportunities to interns and fellows. Compensation can include either a stipend or course credit. The FPC will not offer uncompensated internships because they perpetuate inequitable access to professional opportunities.
 - b. FPC members may partner with academic institutions, including professors and students, for specific projects for the FPC. The Food Policy Director must approve the scope, timeline, and expected deliverables for such a project before it begins.
 - c. The Food Policy Director must approve any data/information sharing by FPC members that includes data/information that is not otherwise publicly available or was shared exclusively with FPC members.

Section VI: Removal

- A. The Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments may remove a voting member if the member has not met the requirements set forth in these bylaws.
- B. If an ex officio member does not meet the requirements set forth in these bylaws, the Food Policy Director or the Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments may ask their agency director to find a suitable replacement.

Section VII: Revision and Amendments

- A. The FPC shall review these bylaws annually at the start of the District's Fiscal Year and revise as necessary.
- B. All revisions must be approved by at least 2/3s of voting members.