PROCESS FOR ADOPTION OF POLICY

I) Purpose

The goal of this JCPA Process for Adoption of Policy is to facilitate an open, representative, inclusive, and consensus-driven process through which member agencies may identify issues, articulate positions, develop strategies, programs and approaches to advance the public affairs goals and objectives of the organized Jewish community. This Process applies to the adoption or modification of Policy by the annual JCPA Plenum and, to the extent feasible, to adoption of policy by the Board between Plenums.

II) Definitions

A) The Policy Compendium contains all current JCPA policy positions. As policies are adopted, they are incorporated into the Policy Compendium. However, Case Statements and Background are not incorporated into the Policy Compendium.

B) A Resolution is a motion adopted by the JCPA through this Process to articulate policy and make changes to the Policy Compendium (as amendments, additions, or deletions).

C) A Case Statement is a required introduction to a draft Resolution, but is not part of the Resolution. It succinctly summarizes the draft Resolution and identifies those policy declarations that the draft Resolution contains that would be additions to or modifications of the Policy Compendium. It also identifies whether a resolution has been submitted in accordance with this Process and the Timeline for Adoption of Policy.

D) Background includes those sections of a Resolution that provide preamble, context, and history (such as those phrases that could be preceded by “whereas”), and that do not express a policy position, strategic recommendation, or call to action (such as those phrases that could be preceded by “therefore resolved”)

E) Limited Debate is a status that the Resolutions Committee may assign to a Resolution that it deems is consistent with existing policy or about which no substantive debate is anticipated.

F) An Amendment is a proposed change to a draft Resolution offered by a member agency or a Task Force, including a complete substitute for a proposed resolution.
The Resolutions Committee shall consist of the Co-Chairs of the Resolutions Committee, the Co-Chairs of the Task Forces, the Co-Chairs of the Strategy Committees, the Chair of JCPA, the Executive Director of JCPA, two representatives from the national agencies appointed by the JCPA Chair, and two JCRC Directors appointed by the JCPA Chair.

The Timeline for Adoption of Policy is a calendar and other guidance adopted and published annually by the Resolutions Committee that contain the relevant deadlines for policy development related to the JCPA Plenum.

III Summary of the Process

Member Agencies and Task Force members are asked to identify issues about which they believe JCPA needs to develop new policy or to change its existing policy at the Fall Task Force Meetings. A Member Agency or a Task Force may draft a proposed Resolution regarding one of these topics and submit it to the President of JCPA. JCPA distributes these draft Resolutions to Member Agencies, inviting them to submit proposed Amendments and comments.

All proposed Amendments and comments received regarding a Resolution are provided to the Resolution’s sponsors, who are free to either accept a proposed Amendment, in which case the Amendment is incorporated into the draft Resolution, or to reject the proposed Amendment. After the sponsors have completed their consideration of proposed Amendments, the Resolutions Committee holds a teleconference for the purpose of scheduling debate on draft Resolutions and on those Amendments rejected by Resolution sponsors. The Resolutions Committee only schedules debate on resolutions it deems to be substantive (i.e., not editorial). Those Resolutions and Amendments which are scheduled for debate are then sent to the Member Agencies, to allow them time to decide whether they support or oppose each of the Resolutions and Amendments scheduled for debate. Dates by which all of the actions discussed above are to be completed are set forth in the Timeline for Adoption of Policy. The Process allows a supermajority, in exigent circumstances, to adopt policy outside the Timeline.

Absent need to adopt policy on an expedited basis, or a request by the Plenum body that the Board consider a revised policy between Plenary Sessions, Resolutions are to be considered and adopted by the Plenum.

III Consideration

A) Submission:

Draft Resolutions must be submitted to the JCPA President from a Member Agency, which shall serve as Primary Sponsor. Draft Resolutions submitted by Member Agencies shall be directed to the appropriate Task Force leadership for consideration and review.

B) Content and Length:
Resolutions shall be stated succinctly, including a background statement, policy declaration, call to action/strategic recommendations. They must contain a proposed Case Statement drafted by the Sponsor. It is strongly recommended that background components of a resolution not be any longer than the cumulative length of the policy declarations, call to action/strategic recommendations. In no event, shall a resolution contain background components which are more than twice as long as the cumulative length of the policy declarations, strategic recommendations and calls to action. [For example, if the policy declarations, strategic recommendations and calls to action in a resolution total 250 words, the background section of the resolution ideally should be no more than 250 words and in no event may be longer than 500 words.]

C) Sponsorship:

1) To be considered for adoption by the Plenum or the Board of Directors, a draft Resolution must be introduced by a Task Force or by at least five member agencies, two of which shall be national agencies and two of which shall be community agencies, one of which shall be designated as the Primary Sponsor.

2) Task force leadership, consisting of a majority of the co-chairs and vice-chairs of a task force and its strategy committee, may decide, on behalf of the task force, to have the task force sponsor a Resolution, in which case it is not necessary to obtain additional co-sponsors;

D) Distribution:

1) The Resolutions Committee shall distribute draft resolutions to Member Agencies for review if timely submitted, consistent with the Process and Timeline for Adoption of Policy, and the draft Resolution has at least three sponsors at the time it is submitted (at least one of which must be a national agency and one of which must be a community agency) or it is sponsored by a Task Force. However, no Resolution shall be considered for adoption at the Plenum unless it is sponsored by a Task Force or it has obtained the necessary five agency sponsors at least four weeks prior to the opening date of the Plenum.

2) The Resolutions Committee shall determine whether to distribute draft Resolutions submitted past deadlines due to extenuating circumstances.

E) Member Agencies Comments.

Absent exigent circumstances, Member Agencies shall have the opportunity to review draft Resolutions and to propose Amendments to draft Resolutions prior to consideration of the Resolution by either the Plenum or the Board. Comments on the Case Statement and other Background components of the Resolution shall be taken under advisement by the sponsors, but shall not generally be considered amendments subject to debate if not accepted by the sponsor (it shall require a vote by two-thirds majority at the plenum for comments on the background to be taken up as amendments). Comments on policy declarations, strategic recommendations and calls to action shall be considered amendments subject to debate if not accepted by the Principal Sponsor, unless deemed editorial by the Resolutions Committee (it shall require a vote by two-thirds
majority at the plenum for an amendment deemed editorial by the Resolutions Committee to be debated and voted upon).

F) Scheduling for Debate

3) The Resolutions Committee shall schedule all items for debate, full or limited, including Draft Resolutions, and member agency Amendments that the Sponsors have not incorporated into the Revised Draft Resolution.

4) If a Resolution or Amendment is not scheduled for debate, the Sponsors may appeal to have the item placed on the agenda of the Plenum or Board of Directors. Appeals from the Resolutions Committee may be taken to the Plenum or Board of Directors, which may by a 2/3 vote, place the item on its agenda.

V) Notice to Member Agencies

A) Resolutions for consideration by the JCPA Board must be sent to the Board at least 4 weeks prior to the board meeting at which they will be moved for passage. Where exigent circumstances exist and less than 4 weeks’ notice is necessary, a 2/3 vote by the Board shall be required to schedule an item for debate.

B) Absent exigent circumstances, Draft Resolutions for consideration at the JCPA Plenum shall be sent to agencies at least 8 weeks prior to the Plenum with responses due no less than 5 weeks later. The Resolutions and Amendments which have been scheduled for debate by the Resolutions Committee shall be sent to the field no later than 10 days prior to the Plenum.

VI) Debate and Adoption of Resolutions

A) A delegate designated by the Primary Sponsor of a Resolution shall make a brief introductory statement.

B) Delegates at a Plenum or Directors at a Board meeting may propose amendments to matters up for debate from the floor.

C) In all cases of proposed amendments, those proposing the change should:

1) Discuss the proposed change with the sponsors of the original Resolution in an attempt to agree upon language acceptable to the sponsors and those suggesting change; and

2) Submit the language of the amendment, either as agreed to after consultation with the sponsors or as requested by those seeking the change, to JCPA staff and those who will be chairing the meeting at which the Resolution will be considered, sufficiently before the meeting so that the language can be prepared for display and for debate at the meeting.
D) The Chair of the meeting considering the Resolution will decide, with regard to each proposed Amendment, whether the Amendment is germane and, if so, whether it is:

1) editorial in nature, in which case debate will not be required and the change will be dealt with by the sponsors and staff in final preparation of the Resolution;

2) substantive, but acceptable to the sponsors of the original Resolution, in which case the revision shall be announced to the Resolution Session and, unless there is a motion to overrule acceptance of the revision, the Resolution as amended will be subject to debate and vote;

3) substantive, but not acceptable to the sponsors of the original Resolution, in which case the Chair must determine whether the proposed amendment is sufficiently within the scope of the original proposal to permit delegates to consider and vote upon it without prior instruction by their member organizations and review by the appropriate Task Force.

(a) If the Chair so determines, the proposed amendment may be debated and voted upon.

(b) If the Chair so determines, the proposed amendment shall be referred to the appropriate Task Force for later review in accordance with its procedures and this Process.

E) Limited Debate Procedure

1) Items scheduled for Limited Debate shall be confined to 5 minutes consisting of a brief statement by the proponent and brief comments from the floor

2) Upon motion, second and vote to hold full debate on the proposed resolution, the Chair of the meeting may determine that the vote is sufficiently substantial to justify rescheduling the matter for full debate.

F) All decisions by the chair are subject to a motion to overrule by a majority vote except a decision that a proposed amendment shall be referred to a Task Force, which may only be overruled by a two-thirds vote.

The chair of the meeting considering the resolution may at his or her discretion impose time limits for debate.

VII) Adoption and Consensus

A) Resolutions are adopted by vote at the Plenum or, if the Plenum is not in session, at a meeting of the Board of Directors.

B) Consensus

1) At the Plenum, upon adoption of a resolution and before the adjournment of the Resolution Session, the Chair of the JCPA or the Chair of the Resolution Session may, upon motion from the floor, refer that resolution back to Task Force(s) for further review. A 2/3 majority of votes cast at the Plenum shall be necessary to override such a referral.
2) At a meeting of the JCPA Board, upon adoption of a resolution and before the adjournment of the Board Meeting, the Chair of the JCPA may, upon motion from the floor, refer that resolution back to Task Force(s) for further review. It shall take a 2/3 majority of the votes cast at the Board to override such a referral.