CalSAWS

California Statewide Automated Welfare System

Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Board of Directors

Policy Manual

Initial Draft: September 11, 2026

CalSAWS	DOCUMENT APPROVAL HISTORY	
	Owner	Executive Director
	Preparer	Legal Counsel
	Reviewer	Board of Directors
	Approver	Board of Directors
APPROVAL DATE	**APPROVED VERSION**	**REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY**

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JPA Board of Directors Policy Manual

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this CalSAWS JPA Board Policy Manual (hereinafter, "Manual") is to:

- Compile and centralize in one location policies adopted by the Board of Directors (hereinafter, "Board) concerning the governance of the CalSAWS Joint Powers Authority (hereinafter, "CalSAWS Consortium") and
- To publish these policies for the benefit of members of the Board, CalSAWS staff, vendors, and members of the public.

This Manual is intended to be a living document that will be regularly reviewed and revised by the Board to ensure it continues to speak to the mission, goals, and values of the CalSAWS Consortium.

II. THE CALSAWS JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY (JPA)

A. CalSAWS is a Joint Powers Authority ("Consortium") created pursuant to the California Joint Exercise of Powers Act, Government Code section 6500, et seq. It was formed through the execution of a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement executed by all 58 California counties. The current operative agreement is the Second Amended and Restated Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement, which has an Effective Date of June 28, 2019. The fully executed Second Amended and Restated Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (hereinafter, "Agreement") is found at Appendix A to this Manual.

B. General Powers. As established by Section 4.01 of the Agreement, the Consortium shall exercise the powers which are common to each of the Members, or as otherwise permitted under the Act, and, necessary to the accomplishment of the purpose, as provided in Section 2.01 (Purpose) of the Agreement. As provided in the Act, the Consortium shall be a public entity separate from the Members.

C. Specific Powers. As established in Section 4.02 of the Agreement, the Consortium is authorized, in its own name, to do all acts necessary for the exercise of the foregoing general powers, including, but not limited to, any or all of the following: (a) to make and enter into contracts; (b) to employ agents or employees; (c) to sue and be sued in its own name; (d) to incur debts, liabilities, or obligations, provided that no such debt, liability, or obligation shall constitute a debt, liability, or obligation of the Members; (e).to apply for, accept, receive, and disburse grants, loans, and other aids from any agency of the United States of America or of the State; (f) to invest any money in the treasury pursuant to section 6509.5 of the Act which is not required for the immediate necessities of the Consortium, as the Consortium determines is advisable, in the same manner and upon the same conditions as local agencies, pursuant to Section 53601 of the Government Code; and (g) to carry out and enforce all the provisions of this Agreement.

D. Consortium Governance Organizational Chart. The governance structure of the CalSAWS Consortium is depicted in the following organizational chart:

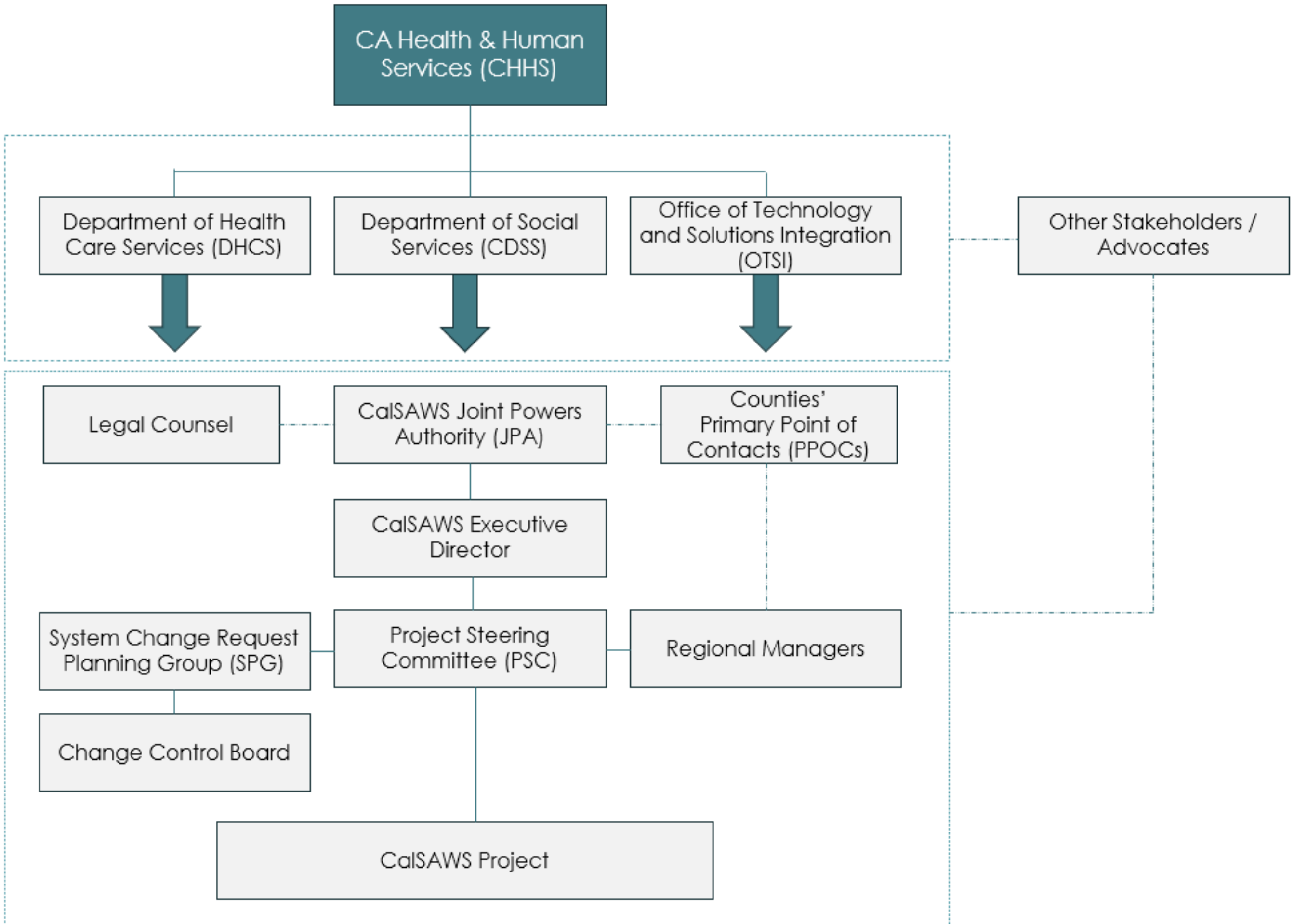


Figure 1: Consortium Governance Organizational Chart

III. CALSAWS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The CalSAWS Guiding Principles that follow were developed in April 2018 by CDSS and DHCS in consultation with the CalSAWS Leadership team and the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA). These guiding principles establish the intent of the parties and the key precepts that shape the governance structure and processes as they exist today and as they will exist into the future.

A. California and its counties have a decades-long partnership and commitment to excellence in service delivery for its health and human service programs. This partnership is a relationship built on effective communication, transparency and a shared vision of service to millions of low-income and vulnerable Californians. Accordingly, a guiding governance principle for the implementation and administration of CalSAWS will be a consensus-based governance process between the state and the counties in order to achieve the best outcomes for the citizens of California.

B. The State will be present but not voting in CalSAWS executive board and committee meetings. The State will strive for consistency in attendance and executive-level representation at meetings. State staff will not attend meetings, nor portions of meetings, involving personnel and sensitive vendor contract negotiations.

C. The State shall have access to client level data sufficient to support single state agency functions and program evaluation, including cross-program utilization, budget construction, and trends. State staff provided such access will be subject to the same confidentiality requirements as Consortium and county staff. Plans for data exploration and dissemination will be coordinated through a Data Management Board comprised of state and county staff.

D. Governance must support the concepts of modular procurement so one vendor does not dominate more than necessary, user-centered design, and interoperability. In addition to fostering competition within the vendor community, governance will strive to obtain best value for the state, counties, and clients.

E. The State will be part of the Change Control Board (CCB). The State will strive for consistency in attendance and executive-level representation at meetings.

F. As new statewide functionality for the programs SAWS supports is created, it shall be added to CalSAWS. If, due to expediency, this is not initially possible, it shall be developed in a manner that allows it to be efficiently integrated into CalSAWS at the next available opportunity.

G. Governance will support consistent practice to promote equity in service delivery and access for clients while still allowing for county innovation.

The central CalSAWS Consortium leadership bodies are described below in the following three subsections.

IV. THE JPA BOARD

A. The Authority of the Board.

1. As established by Section 2.04(c) of the Agreement, the CalSAWS Consortium is "governed and administered" by the Board. This means that the Board is the governing or "legislative" body as that term is defined in the Ralph M. Brown Act (hereinafter, "Brown Act"), Government Code section 54950, et seq. Accordingly, and pursuant to the authority granted it by the Agreement, the Board has the authority to, and is responsible for the following:

   a. Providing leadership and direction for the CalSAWS Consortium through the establishment of short-, medium-, and long-term strategic goals for the CalSAWS System in a manner that best serves the mission of the CalSAWS Consortium, which is to provide a comprehensive, reliable and efficient automated social services eligibility system that supports the needs of all 58 counties in California, and the individuals and families they serve, ensuring equitable access to essential social services in order to improve the overall well-being of the communities served by those social services.

   b. Ensuring the fiscal sustainability of the CalSAWS Consortium through oversight of budget development, approval of annual budget, and approval of expenditures.

c. Directly overseeing the performance of, and providing support and direction to, the CalSAWS Consortium Executive Director to ensure the achievement of agreed upon goals.

d. Holding CalSAWS Consortium staff and vendors accountable for the maintenance and ongoing enhancement of the CalSAWS System to achieve the above-stated mission of the CalSAWS Consortium through the establishment of clear policies and directions.

2. In addition to the Agreement, the Board's authority is prescribed by duly enacted Bylaws (Fourth Amended) (hereinafter, "Bylaws"), which are found at **Appendix B** to this Manual.

B. The Composition of the Board.

1. The Board consists of twelve (12) Directors and one (1) State Representative. The twelve Directors are selected from each of the six regions into which the 58 California counties are organized for purposes of the CalSAWS Consortium. (See discussion of Regional Structure below). The manner of selecting Directors is established in both the Agreement and Bylaws. Specifically, Directors from Regions 1 through 5 shall be selected from the Member Representatives from their respective regions. ("Member Representative" is defined in Section 1.01 of the Agreement as the person representing each "Member." "Member" is defined in that same section as the 58 California counties that make up the CalSAWS Consortium.) Regions 1 and 4 shall each select two (2) Directors, Regions 2, and 3 shall each select one (1) Director, and Region 5 shall select three (3) Directors. Region 6, represented by Los Angeles County, shall have three (3) Directors, who shall be the three (3) Member Representatives from Region 6.

2. For Regions comprised of more than one (1) county, each Director may designate a second Member Representative from within the Region to serve as an alternate Director ("Alternate Board Director"). For Region 6, each Director may designate a county employee who holds an upper management position immediately below the county Welfare Director, or Children and Family Services Director, if applicable, within that Region to serve as an Alternate Board Director. Alternate Board Directors may only act in their Director's absence and shall exercise all rights and privileges of a Director.

3. The State of California shall have the right to select one person from among the following to serve on the Board as the representative of the State: the Director of the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration or his/her designee, the Director of the Department of Social Services or his/her designee, or the Director of the Department of Health Care Services or his/her designee. This person shall be identified as the "State Representative." The two other state departments not selected as the State Representative shall retain the right to attend all public sessions of the Board meetings. The State Representative shall retain his or her State position while acting as State Representative. The State Representative shall have a right to: Serve as an ex officio member of the Board, receive notice of Board meetings, attend Board meetings, excluding closed sessions, unless otherwise permitted by the Board

Chair. The State Representative shall not have a right to vote on items put before the Member Representatives or the Board.

4. Each Director and the State Representative shall serve for a one-year term, which shall run concurrently with the fiscal year. Directors and the State Representative may serve successive one-year terms.
5. Each Region shall notify the Board Secretary of its appointed Director(s) at least fourteen (14) days before the start of the next fiscal year. The Board Secretary will notify the Board of each Region's Director(s) at the first Board meeting of each fiscal year.
6. The State of California shall notify the Board Secretary of the person it has selected to be the State Representative before the start of each fiscal year. The Board Secretary will notify the Board of the State's selection of the State Representative at the first Board meeting of each fiscal year.

C. Board Officers.

Pursuant to Sections 3.01 and 3.02 of the Agreement, as well as Article VI of the Bylaws, the Board officers shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Their authority, duties, and responsibilities are as follows:

1. **Chair.** The Board Chair shall conduct all meetings of the Board, whether regular or special, open or closed, including deciding questions of order at such meetings. In conjunction with the Vice Chair and the CalSAWS Consortium Executive Director, the Board Chair shall establish agendas for all Board meetings. In addition, the Board Chair, or his or her designee, shall sign all contracts on behalf of the CalSAWS Consortium.
2. **Vice Chair.** In the Board Chair's absence, the Board Vice Chair shall exercise all authority of the Board Chair. In addition, the Board Vice Chair shall consult with the Board Chair and CalSAWS Consortium Executive Director, to establish agendas for all Board meetings.
3. **Secretary.** The CalSAWS Consortium Executive Director shall act as Secretary to the Board and shall countersign all contracts signed by the Chair or Vice-Chair on behalf of the CalSAWS Consortium. In consultation with the Board Chair and Vice Chair, the Secretary shall prepare agendas for all Board meetings. The Secretary also will prepare minutes of all open Board meetings.

D. Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Directors.

The following elements constitute the Board's collective commitment to a set of common values that should guide each individual CalSAWS JPA Director in their approach to their duties and responsibilities as Directors.

1. **Having a governance mindset.** An important characteristic of an effective Board is the development of a governance mindset. Knowing how to think about governance and always applying that knowledge and understanding in each individual Director's approach to, and decision-making, on matters that come before the Board are essential traits of a director.
2. **Having a strategic focus.** Maintaining a strategic focus requires the Board to make deliberate, well-considered decisions. Strategic decisions have several key characteristics that distinguish them from operational or tactical choices:

a. **Long-term Impact:** Directors must consider the long-term impact of the strategic decisions reached by the Board and whether such decisions align with the Consortium's overall vision, mission, and principal objectives.

b. **Resource Allocation:** Strategic decision-making must prioritize the finite financial, human, and technological resources available for the achievement of short-, medium-, and long-term goals.

c. **Cross-Functional Influence:** Strategic decision-making must consider the impact on multiple entities and stakeholders not only within the Consortium but within the communities served by the Consortium.

d. **Risk Mitigation:** Strategic decision-making often involves weighing relative risks and choosing a direction that mitigates the greater risks given competing and sometimes contradictory legal, regulatory, and technological challenges.

3. **Being Prepared.** Directors should be prepared to perform their duties as members of the governing body of the CalSAWS JPA. This involves, at a minimum, thoroughly reviewing the Board packet provided to Directors ahead of Board meetings and being ready to raise questions and discuss matters to be covered at the meeting. This will enable Directors to be more than just passive recipients of information at Board meetings but rather active participants in bilateral discussions with CalSAWS staff and vendors on topics to be covered during the meeting. Finally, Directors must commit to making decisions based on quality information, evidence, and data.

4. **Engaging in Civil and Productive Discourse.** Directors should be respectful of other Directors, CalSAWS staff, and vendors in the manner in which they engage in discussions both during and outside of Board meetings. Working toward a common goal requires patience, understanding, respect and most importantly, common courtesy. Directors should model the behavior they expect others to exhibit.

E. CalSAWS Code of Ethics. The Board adopts the following Code of Ethics to not only govern the behavior of individual Directors, but also the behavior of CalSAWS staff and vendors.

1. **Professional and Courteous Behavior.** Directors and CalSAWS staff shall treat one another, as well as members of the public with respect, courtesy, and civility.

2. **Confidential Information.** Directors and CalSAWS staff shall adhere to all non-disclosure requirements relating to any and all confidential information to which they may come into contact in the performance of their duties.

3. **Incompatible Activity.** Directors and CalSAWS staff shall not engage in any business, or have a financial interest in a business, which is in conflict with the proper discharge of their duties. Directors and CalSAWS staff must comply with the requirements of Government Code Sections 1090, 1126 and 87100.

4. **Gifts and Gratuities.** Directors and CalSAWS staff shall not accept any fee, compensation, gift, or payment of expenses which results in private gain in return for preferential treatment.

5. **Favored Treatment.** Directors and CalSAWS staff shall not grant any special consideration, treatment or advantage to any person beyond that which is available to every other person in similar circumstance.

6. **Public Trust.** Directors and CalSAWS staff shall perform their duties mindful of the fact that they perform those duties on behalf of members of the public.

F. Conflict of Interest. The CalSAWS Board of Directors has adopted the following Conflict of Interest Code pursuant to the Political Reform Act (Gov. Code section 81000, et seq.).

The Political Reform Act, (Government Code Section 81000, et seq., requires state and local government agencies to adopt and promulgate conflict of interest codes. The Fair Political Practices Commission has adopted a regulation (2 California Code of Regulations Section 18730) that contains the terms of a standard conflict of interest code, which can be incorporated by reference in an agency's code. After public notice and hearing, the standard code may be amended by the Fair Political Practices Commission to conform to amendments in the Political Reform Act. Therefore, the terms of 2 California Code of Regulations Section 18730 and any amendments to it duly adopted by the Fair Political Practices Commission are hereby incorporated by reference. This regulation and attached Appendices, designating positions and establishing disclosure categories, shall constitute the conflict of interest code of the CalSAWS Consortium.

Members of the Board of Directors and designated employees must file their statements of economic interests with the Consortium, which will make the statements available for public inspection and reproduction. (Government Code section 81008). All statements will be retained by the Consortium.

APPENDIX A

DESIGNATED OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

Designated Positions	Disclosure Category
Executive Director	1
Release & Test Director	1
Policy, Design, & Governance Director	1
Chief Administrative Officer	1
Chief Information Officer	1
Chief Technology Officer	1
Customer Engagement Director	1
Legal Counsel	1
Consultants/New Positions	*

*Consultants/new positions shall be included in the list of designated positions and shall disclose pursuant to the broadest disclosure category in the code subject to the following limitation:

The Executive Director may determine in writing that a particular consultant or new position, although a "designated position," is hired to perform a range of duties that is limited in scope and thus is not required to comply fully with the disclosure requirements described in this section. Such written determination shall include a description of the consultant's or new position's duties and, based upon that description, a statement of the extent of disclosure requirements. The Executive Director's determination is a public record and shall be retained for public inspection in the same manner and location as this conflict of interest code (Gov. Code Sec. 81008).

The following positions are NOT covered by the conflict of interest code because they must file under Government Code Section 87200 and, therefore, are listed for informational purposes only:

- Member, Board of Directors

An individual holding one of the above listed positions may contact the Fair Political Practices Commission for assistance or written advice regarding their filing obligations if they believe that their position has been categorized incorrectly. The Fair Political Practices Commission makes the final determination whether a position is covered by Government Code Section 87200.

APPENDIX B
DISCLOSURE CATEGORIES

DISCLOSURE CATEGORY 1

Designated positions in this category shall disclose investments and business positions in business entities and sources of income (including receipt of gifts, loans, and travel payments) if the business entity or source provides leased facilities, products, equipment, vehicles, machinery, or services (including training or consulting services) of the type utilized by the Consortium.

G. Board Meetings.

1. **Regular Meetings.** The Board shall hold regular meetings. The Agreement and Bylaws require that the Board hold at least one regular meeting each quarter of every year. (Agreement section 2.05; Bylaws article IV.B.1.) Typically, however, the Board conducts monthly meetings on the second Friday of each month. The specific date and hour of the regular meetings shall be determined by the Secretary or as specified by the Board. Any addition to the number of meetings held each year shall be as specified by the Board.

   The agenda and meeting materials are distributed electronically to the Board of Directors and the Member Representatives a minimum of 72 hours prior to the scheduled Board meeting. The agenda and materials are posted both online at www.CalSAWS.org, and physically at facilities where Board Members will join the meeting for public viewing in advance of the scheduled Board meeting (unless exempt under stay-at-home orders by government officials).

2. **Location of Meetings.** Regular Board meetings are typically held in one of two locations: Tsakopoulos Library Galleria located at 828 I Street, Sacramento, California or at the Consortium's offices located at 11971 Foundation Place, Suite 300, Gold River, California. The location of special or closed meetings typically will be held at one of these same two locations unless otherwise designated by the Board Chair.
3. **Open Meetings – Brown Act Compliance.** All meetings of the Board shall be open and public in accordance with the provisions of the Brown Act (Gov. Code section 54950 et seq.), and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting of the Board, except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws or by operation of law.
4. **Special Meetings.** As provided in article IV.B.9 of the Bylaws, a special meeting may be called at any time by the Chair of the Board, or by a majority of the members of the Board, by delivering personally or by mail or electronically written notice to each member of the Board. Such notice shall be received at least twenty-four (24) hours before the time of the meeting as specified in the notice. The call and notice shall specify the time and place of the special meeting and the business to be transacted. The Board shall consider no other business at such meetings. The written notice may be dispensed with as to any member of the Board who at, or prior to, the time the meeting convenes files with the Secretary to the Board a written waiver of notice. The written notice may also be dispensed with as to any member of the Board who was actually present at the meeting at the time it convenes. The call and notice of the special meeting shall be posted at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting in a location that is freely accessible to members of the public.
5. **Teleconference Meetings.** A meeting may be conducted by teleconference at the discretion of the Chair of the Board. All teleconference meetings shall comply with Government Code section 54953(b). A quorum of the Directors must participate in the teleconference meeting from counties in which the Consortium operates. All votes taken during a teleconference meeting must be conducted by roll call. All teleconference locations shall be accessible to the public, including those with disabilities, during the meeting. A meeting agenda shall be posted at each teleconference location.
6. **Closed Sessions.** As provided in article IV.B.7 of the Bylaws, the Board may hold closed sessions as provided by law. All information received by a Director or Alternate Board Director in closed session related to information presented to the Consortium shall be confidential. However, the Director or Alternate Board Director may disclose information obtained in a closed session that has direct financial or liability implications for the Member that the Director or Alternate Board Director represents, to the following individuals:
    1. Legal counsel of that Member for purposes of obtaining advice on whether the matter has direct financial or liability implications for that Member.

2. Other members of the legislative body of the Member present in a closed session of that Member.

7. **Addressing the Board.** Any member of the public may address the Board: (a) on an agenda item before or during the Board's consideration of the item, and (b) on any matter not on the agenda that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board at the time provided on the agenda for public comment. The person wishing to address the Board may, when recognized by the Chair of the Board, announce his or her name and organization. The Chair shall, in the interest of facilitating the business of the Board, limit the amount of time which a member of the public may use in addressing the Board. While the Bylaws provide that members of the public may have up to five minutes to address the Board on each action item, it is the practice of the Board, under the authority granted it in the Bylaws, to limit public comment to three minutes. In addition, the Chair shall, in the interest of facilitating the business of the Board, limit the total amount of time which a member of the public may use in addressing the Board on all agenda items to ten minutes, unless the Chair, or a majority of the Board, determines that a different limit is appropriate.

8. **Conduct During Board Meetings.** In the event any meeting of the Board is willfully disrupted by a person or by a group or groups of persons so as to render the orderly conduct of the meeting impossible, the Chair may recess the meeting or order the person, group or groups of persons willfully disrupting the meeting to leave the meeting or be removed from the meeting. Disruptive conduct includes, but is not limited to, addressing the Board without first being recognized, not addressing the subject before the Board, repetitiously addressing the same subject, failing to relinquish the floor when requested to do so, or otherwise preventing the Board from conducting its meeting in an orderly manner.

9. **Quorum Requirements.** As established at section 2.07 of the Agreement, at least seven (7) of the Directors or Alternate Board Directors from five (5) Regions shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, except that less than a quorum may adjourn. The State Representative's attendance or non-attendance at any meeting shall have no effect on quorum. The affirmative votes of at least seven (7) of the seated Directors from five (5) Regions shall be required to take any action by the Board.

10. **Appeal to the Board.** At any Board meeting with less than all twelve (12) Directors present, any two (2) Directors, or Alternate Board Directors, from two (2) Regions may appeal any action taken or not taken by the Board, by requesting the continuance of the item(s) under appeal to a meeting of the full Board, at which all the Directors or Alternate Board Directors must be present. The full Board meeting shall be held within thirty (30) days, at either the next regular Board meeting, or a special meeting at which the full Board is available to attend. Any Director'(s) or Alternate Board Director'(s) failure to attend a meeting of the full Board shall result in a forfeit of the Director'(s) or Alternate Board Director'(s) vote. At the meeting of the full Board, the affirmative votes of at least seven (7) Directors or Alternate Board Directors

from four (4) Regions shall be sufficient to take action by the Board only on the item(s) under appeal. The action(s) taken by the full Board shall be final.

11. **Waiver of Rules.** The Board Chair may any rule contained in the article IV of the Bylaws relating to Board meetings or as otherwise contained in this Manual.

V. MEMBER REPRESENTATIVES; MEETINGS.

A. Member Representatives.

1. With the exception of Los Angeles County, each Member shall be represented by its county Welfare Director, or person holding the equivalent position within that county, unless the Board of Supervisors of the Member appoints one of its board members to serve as the representative (either shall be referred to as "Member Representative"). With respect to Los Angeles County, this Member shall be represented by three (3) Member Representatives, which shall include its county Welfare Director, or person holding the equivalent position within the county, its Children and Family Services Director, or person holding the equivalent position within the county, and one (1) other person who holds an upper executive management position in the social services department.
2. Individuals serving as Member Representatives shall serve while they retain their county offices or positions, and shall be deemed to have automatically resigned upon leaving that county office or position. The individual who succeeds in that county office or position on a regular or interim basis shall be automatically deemed the Member Representative. Upon change of title or reclassification of any Member Representative's county office or position, the successor to the county Welfare Director position, or the Children and Family Services Director, if applicable, its equivalent position within the Member county, shall be deemed a replacement for the Member Representative.
3. Subject to the provisions of this Agreement, each Member Representative shall have a right to:
    a. Receive nomination for appointment to the Board.
    b. Serve on workgroups and committees or appoint designees to serve in their place.
    c. Recommend items for inclusion for consideration on the Board meeting agenda.
    d. Receive notice of Board meetings.
    e. Attend Board meetings.
    f. Vote on items.

B. Meetings of Member Representatives.

1. **Regular Meetings.** The Member Representatives shall hold at least two regular meetings each year. The date and hour of the regular meetings shall be determined by the Secretary or as specified by the Member Representatives.

Any addition to the number of meetings held each year shall be as specified by the Member Representatives.

2. **Meeting Locations.** Regular meetings of the Member Representatives shall be held within the boundaries of Sacramento County or any Member county at a location determined by the Secretary or as specified by the Member Representatives.

3. **Quorum Requirements.** The presence of forty percent (40%) of the Member Representatives shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business except that less than a quorum may adjourn. The State Representative's attendance or non-attendance shall have no effect on quorum. The affirmative votes of at least a majority of the Member Representatives present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be required to take any action by the Members.

VI. CALSAWS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

The CalSAWS Executive Director serves at the pleasure of and reports to the JPA Board. The Executive Director is responsible for transforming the Board's strategic priorities, goals and mandates into operational and tactical actions. The Executive Director is responsible for identifying and documenting appropriate issues and risks to escalate to the Board for review, discussion and decision-making.

As Secretary to the Board, the Executive Director is expected to prepare JPA Board Meeting Minutes. These minutes shall include, at a minimum, relevant details of Board discussion on items on the meeting agenda; any votes taken by the Board on matters presented to it; any Board direction on specific action items, including identification of responsible CalSAWS staff charged with carrying out the direction of the Board; and any corresponding due dates for resolution of action items.

VII. CALSAWS COMMITTEES AND WORKGROUPS

A. Overview. CalSAWS has a number of committees and workgroups that exist to fulfill the overall CalSAWS mission. This section of the Manual provides a general description of those committees and workgroups.

B. Project Steering Committee.

1. **General Description.** The CalSAWS Project Steering Committee (PSC) serves at the request of, and is answerable to, the JPA Board of Directors. The PSC provides a stabilizing influence so organizational concepts and directions are established and maintained with a visionary view.

2. **Meetings of the PSC.** The PSC typically meets monthly to obtain CalSAWS System status updates, review and resolve outstanding issues and provide feedback and insight regarding the direction of the CalSAWS System. All meetings are public in accordance with the provisions of the Brown Act.

   The PSC agenda is created by the CalSAWS Executive Director with input from the CalSAWS project management team and PSC members. Agendas generally are available to the PSC members the week prior to the scheduled meeting. The meeting agenda and materials are posted to the CalSAWS website 72 hours prior to the meeting.

The Project Steering Committee shall follow the quorum and voting requirements for the Board as set forth in Section 2.07 (Quorum; Required Votes; Approvals) of the Agreement.

3. **Primary Functions of PSC**. The PSC provides insight on long-term strategies in support of legislative mandates and the JPA strategic priorities. This includes serving as an escalation body for issues involving enhancements to the CalSAWS System. Members of the PSC ensure business objectives are adequately addressed and the CalSAWS System remains under close guidance.

   In addition to any duties assigned by the Board, the Project Steering Committee shall meet with the Consortium's Executive Director and Consortium staff for Consortium status updates, to review and resolve outstanding CalSAWS issues and to provide feedback and insight regarding the direction of the Consortium. The Project Steering Committee shall also coordinate and communicate with the Members to ensure work products reflect a consolidated business approach, represent Member views in policy discussions that impact county business practices and operations.

   Project Steering Committee members, or their designees, shall recruit personnel from their respective Regions to serve on workgroups, which are established from time to time to address specific Consortium and system(s)-related initiatives. These workgroups are time-limited and disbanded at the completion of the initiative. The number of personnel and type of skill set required shall be determined by the Project Steering Committee members, or their designees, for each Region.

   In practice, these responsibilities are carried out by:

   a. Meeting to obtain CalSAWS System updates.
   b. Discussing and prioritizing regional items for escalation to the JPA Board.
   c. Monitoring, reviewing, and providing feedback and insight regarding the direction of CalSAWS Consortium activities.
   d. Coordinating and communicating with the counties to ensure work products reflect a consolidated business approach, and represent a regional view in policy discussions that impact business practices.
   e. Serving as advisors for Consortium staff.
   f. Sponsoring identified CalSAWS initiatives.
   g. Working closely with the Regional Managers (RM(s)) to communicate issues and information to the CalSAWS Consortium and JPA Board.

4. **PSC Membership.** The PSC is comprised of 12 members. Regions 1 and 4 shall each have two representatives; Regions 2 and 3 shall each have one representative; Regions 5 and 6 shall each have three representatives. Members are nominated each spring and are elected by the JPA Member Representatives to serve for a one (1) year term running concurrently with the

CalSAWS Consortium's fiscal year (July – June). No person shall be elected to serve on the PSC unless he or she accepts the nomination from his or her Region. PSC members shall serve for one (1) year terms running concurrently with the Consortium's fiscal year. Candidates are each region's Deputy Directors, or small county equivalents. This person must be at an executive level within the county (second-in-command), with immediate access to the County Welfare Director, or Children and Family Services Director, as applicable, and is empowered to make executive level decisions. For regions comprised of more than one county, each Project Steering Committee Member may designate a second Deputy Director, or small county equivalent, from within the Region to serve as an alternate PSC Member. For Region 6, each PSC Member may designate a county employee who holds an upper management position immediately below the county Welfare Director, or Children and Family Services Director, within that Region. A PSC Member shall provide the CalSAWS Executive Director written notice identifying that the specified Alternate PSC Member is authorized to act on behalf of the PSC Member during his or her term. In the event a designated Alternate PSC Member needs to be changed, a new written notice by the PSC Member to the Secretary to the Board is needed prior to the new Alternate PSC Member's participation at any meeting.

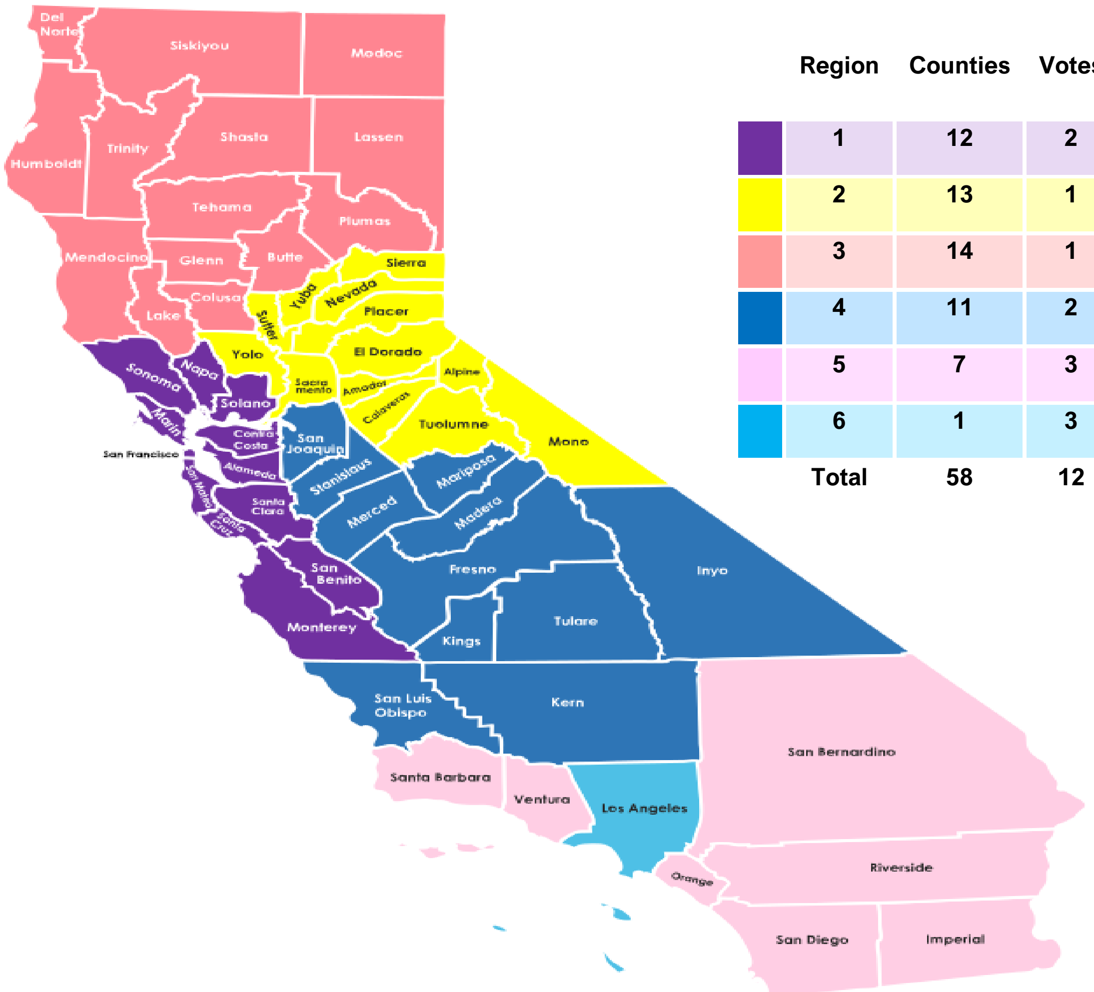
5. **Expectations of PSC Members.** PSC members are expected to attend the following meetings:
    a. Regularly scheduled PSC meetings.
    b. JPA Annual Conference and Strategic Planning Meeting.
    c. Semi-Annual Member Representatives meetings.
    d. Regional Meetings (Optional).
6. **Reports from PSC to Board.**

    The Board relies on the PSC to provide necessary and timely information to help inform its decision-making processes. In the event the PSC determines that an issue that has come before it requires escalation to the Board, the PSC will direct the Executive Director to prepare a timely summary of the key issues and risks identified to be to be included as a discussion item on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. Those issues and risks are presented at the subsequent Board meeting by either a PSC member or the Executive Director.

C. CalSAWS Regional Structure.

1. **CalSAWS Regions.** The CalSAWS Consortium is comprised of 58 member counties, which are organized into six (6) regions based on geographic proximity and loosely based on persons served by such counties. Regional Managers (RMs) and other county personnel coordinate and communicate information relevant to the CalSAWS Consortium and System as described below.

The CalSAWS regional geography, counties by region, number of representative votes, number of RMs, and persons count percentage by region are depicted in the graphical representation of California and the chart below.



Region	Counties	Votes	RMs	Person Counts
1	12	2	3	15.10%
2	13	1	2	6.63%
3	14	1	2	2.85%
4	11	2	3	15.87%
5	7	3	4	29.74%
6	1	3	4	29.81%
Total	58	12	18	100%

2. **Regional Managers.** RMs serve as the key point of management contact between the Consortium and the counties. They serve as the conduit for county or region-specific information to the Consortium. They assist in the resolution of county issues. They recruit county personnel to serve on regional committees. They facilitate regional meetings. RMs attend Board and PSC meetings and report back information from those meetings to their respective regions. They also may be called upon to provide county or region-specific information to the Board or PSC. Finally, RMs may provide information to county governance bodies related to CalSAWS operations.

3. **Regional Meetings.** The Regional Meetings provide a forum for Primary Point of Contacts (PPOCs) to discuss important topics with other counties in the Region and a forum to discuss best practices, comments, questions or

concerns with the Project. Regional Meetings are typically scheduled on the fourth Tuesday of the month and are facilitated by the Regional Managers.

The goals of the Regional Meetings are:

a. RM updates on project activities, goals, priorities and outcomes.

b. Counties' opportunity to provide updates county activities and issues which may need to be addressed by CalSAWS.

c. Counties' opportunity to share best practices or procedures with each other.

d. Share committee and county action items or challenges.

e. Allow PSC members to provide updates and receive regional feedback.

4. **Reports to Board.** Regions should report issues of concerns or matters that require escalation to the Board within seven (7) days of their monthly meetings to ensure matters can be placed on the Board's agenda for the following Board meeting. This report should take the form of an executive summary outlining the topic or areas of concern and any proposals from the Regions regarding resolution. This report should be submitted to the Consortium Executive Director to be included on the Board's agenda.

D. County Primary Point of Contact (PPOC).

1. **Roles and Responsibilities of PPOCs.** PPOCs serve as the primary point of contact between individual counties and the Consortium. They serve as the liaison between RMs, the county they represent, and the Consortium. They receive, provide, and disseminate information regarding CalSAWS operations as appropriate.

2. **Identification and Selection of PPOCs.** PPOCs are designated by county executives or county directors.

E. County Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).

1. **Roles and Responsibilities of SMEs.** SMEs provide expertise in county-specific operations and processes to the Consortium. They serve as a communication conduit between Regional Committee Members (RCMs) and their respective counties.

2. **Identification and Selection of SMEs.** SMEs typically are county staff designated by their county director.

F. System Change Request (SCR) Planning Group (SPG).

1. **General Description.** SCR Planning Group (SPG) is responsible for approving CalSAWS Application SCRs for design. The group is responsible for balancing policies and the priorities of the Board and Project Steering Committee, as well as subordinate committees within available capacity.

2. **Roles and Responsibilities.** SPG reviews, prioritizes, and approves all SCRs in CalSAWS. The group meets monthly, or on an as needed basis. All SCRs require SPG approval in order for CalSAWS vendors to begin any work. Note: SCRs that receive emergency approval will inherently also receive SPG approval.

3. **SPG Guidelines for Approving SCRs.** In approving SCRs, the SPG must adhere to the following guidelines:

   a. Balance priorities so that the appropriate SCRs are queued up to start Design in order to meet mandated deadlines and not adversely impact County operations (within the Project's control).

   b. Utilize one set of:

      - State: Reports, Forms, and NOAs
      - Non-compliance and Change Reasons
      - Rules for EDBC
      - Job Aids, Online Help, and Web Based Trainings (WBTs)

   c. SCRs must be designed for 58 counties.

   d. SCRs must be reviewed and approved by Consortium committees.

   e. Some SCRs are exempt from the SPG process. This includes, but is not limited to:

4. **SPG Membership.** SPG is comprised of the CalSAWS Section Directors/Managers, Regional Managers (RMs) and designated Consortium Application Leads, along with the application vendor and quality assurance vendor.

5. **Reports from SPG to Board.** While the SPG does not prepare formal reports specifically for the JPA Board, the SPG does prepare and publish the list of SCRs that have been approved to begin the design phase.

G. Change Control Board (CCB).

1. **General Description.**

   The Change Control Board (CCB) is an internal group comprised of Regional Managers (RMs). The CCB serves as the gateway for the finalization of System Change Request (SCR) design and the authorization to move the SCRs forward into the build/test/implementation process.

2. **CCB Meetings.**

   Meetings occur every other week and, in addition to the RMs, are attended by Consortium, Quality Assurance and vendor staff. This group reviews feedback on the questions and comments received on the SCRs in the CCB packet, with the RMs providing the regional vote of approval. The CCB packet is sent to all counties to provide timely feedback or questions on SCRs to be presented at subsequent CCB meetings.

3. **Reports from CCB.**

   CCB reports are published to CalSAWS.org.

H. Technical Advisory Workgroup (New).

1. **General Description.**

   The Technical Advisory Workgroup oversees software-version review and analysis, recommends pre-approval of software license agreements, reviews and recommends technology innovation proof of concept/pilot projects, and approves one- to three-year technology plans. The Technical Advisory Workgroup brings county expertise, industry knowledge, and technology-domain experience to support CalSAWS enterprise architecture and strategic information technology needs. Its decisions, recommendations, and votes address the timing of major software upgrades, technical innovation, technology plans, and enterprise-architecture implementations that affect CalSAWS and BenefitsCal-related systems.

2. **Identification and Selection of Technical Advisory Workgroup Members.**

   The Technical Advisory Workgroup shall consist of one (1) representative selected by each Region from among Information Technology leaders in the counties within each respective region. The individuals selected should hold positions such as Chief Information Officers (CIOs), Deputy or Assistant CIOs, or equivalent positions, within the counties in which they are employed. IN addition to these individual, other members of the Technical Advisory Workgroup shall consist of Consortium technology leaders including the CIO, Chief Technology Officer (CTO) and Chief Information Security Officer. CalSAWS vendor technical managers may also be designated as members of the Technical Advisory Workgroup.

3. **Technical Advisory Workgroup Meetings.**

   The Technical Advisory Workgroup will meet on an as-need basis to address technology innovations and enhancements being proposed for the CalSAWS and related systems. These meetings provide a forum to collaborate and provide recommendations to the CalSAWS Executive Director and JPA Board, to achieve technology-related goals and objectives. The Technical Advisory Workgroup meetings are jointly planned and facilitated by the Consortium CIO or CTO. Vendor technical managers are responsible for preparing and presenting topically focused technical briefings as the Technical Advisory Workgroup considers technology related items.

4. **Reports from Technical Advisory Workgroup to Board.**

   The Board relies on the Technical Advisory Workgroup to provide necessary and timely information to help inform its decision-making and ratification processes. The Consortium CIO or CTO will prepare and deliver a written summary of key recommendations, decisions, issues and risks identified and/or discussed by the Technical Advisory Workgroup for the Board's review and consideration. Those recommendations, decisions, issues and risks are presented at the subsequent Board meeting by either the Consortium CIO, CTO, or the Executive Director.

I. BenefitsCal Collaboration Model Advisory Group.

1. **General Description.**

   For BenefitsCal and other customer-facing enhancements, the monthly User Centered Design (UCD) meetings, managed by the CalSAWS BenefitsCal team, provide the opportunity for input from the public-facing stakeholders, including the advocate community. The Collaboration Model facilitates a united approach to customer-facing functional changes. This approach includes not only the BenefitsCal portal, but also other technologies such as imaging, call center, IVR and lobby management.

For BenefitsCal, the Collaboration Model Advisory Group identifies and prioritizes input for public-facing enhancements. The Advisory Group has representation from key stakeholders including advocates, CWDA/Counties, CDSS, DHCS, and SEIU. This prioritization process takes place as needed and the BenefitsCal team uses this input to help plan upcoming releases. The results provide guidance to the BenefitsCal team on top priorities which are then reviewed, researched, estimated and scheduled.

2. **Roles and Responsibilities.**

   Members of the Collaboration Model Advisory Group are charged with the following responsibilities:

   a. Advisory Group members partner with constituents to identify needs and develop Initiative Requests.

   b. Advisory Group members review and discuss Initiative Requests (60-day review period).

   c. Advisory Group members collectively prioritize Initiative Requests applying the Change Matrix.

   d. Prioritized requests are bundled and submitted to CalSAWS for JPA distribution.

   e. Initiative Requests are reported annually to the JPA Board for awareness.

3. **Identification and Selection of Members (SMEs may present specific initiatives as needed).**

   a. Advocate Co-leads.

   b. DHCS/CDSS representation.

   c. CWDA (one CWDA representative and two designated county directors/leaders).

   d. Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

   e. CalSAWS Consortium facilitation.

4. **Meetings.**

   a. Annually to provide strategic priorities (or as capacity allows).

   b. Mid-Year to reaffirm priorities.

   c. Quarterly to receive updates (CalSAWS Quarterly Stakeholder meetings).

J. Other CalSAWS Regional Committees and Workgroups.

1. **General.** The Consortium facilitates committee meetings for approximately 30 committees. The CalSAWS PSC provides overarching guidance on determining the composition of committees. CalSAWS Committee meetings are internal meetings, not subject to the Brown Act. Committees provide feedback and approvals for most functional changes in CalSAWS.

Regional Committee Members (RCMs) represent the regions in committees and work together to determine regional votes. There are typically five RCMs per region for participation, with voting following the regional voting structure used for JPA and PSC. Each region designates their voting members.

Each committee may have Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) who assist the regional Committee Member (RCM) by reviewing and providing feedback on materials the RCM may be voting on.

CalSAWS uses a smaller workgroup model for time-limited projects or specific SCRs. By meeting frequently, workgroups provide the opportunity to elicit quicker and more iterative feedback from regional participants. Workgroups may be created from existing committees or may be recruited as a standalone project. CalSAWS requests specific skillsets and RMs determine regional representation. Workgroups are initially focused on gathering requirements; they may then proceed with design or form a subsequent workgroup to address detailed design. Workgroup members provide the input and approval for these functional changes, with information shared back to related committees.

2. **Roles and Responsibilities.**
   a. Review, discuss, and approve applicable system changes.
   b. Review program regulations and county business and operational processes to determine system impact.
   c. Participate as a Workgroup Member for specific key changes.
   d. Identify outreach and/or Collaboration Model communication and requirements, as applicable.
   e. Share actions, tasks and other information with other committees and counties, as appropriate.
3. **Identification of CalSAWS Committees.** All committee agendas and minutes are posted on www.CalSAWS.org. Some committees are more active than others and meet more frequently. The most active committees in calendar year 2026 include:
   a. CalWORKs/CalFresh.
   b. Medi-Cal/CMSP.
   c. Foster Care.
   d. Training.
   e. Imaging.
   f. Lobby Management.
   g. Fiscal.
   h. Management Reports.
4. **Reports From Committees to Board.**

   For any committees with specific directions or assignments from the JPA Board, the Consortium committee facilitator will provide a written summary of their research, findings and recommendations within three business days of any such meeting for inclusion in the next JPA Board meeting materials.

VIII. SCR ESCALATION PROCESS.

In accordance with the guiding principles described in Section III, CalSAWS seeks to implement a 58-county solution to issues whenever possible. This may cause the need for counties to review and update county business processes impacted by a system change. When a county, committee, workgroup or group of counties believe there is a significant concern with an SCR and its potential impacts, this escalation process is designed to help counties seek resolution for any such concerns.

Escalations are managed by the Regional Managers (RMs) as expeditiously as possible to provide solutions to the counties or committees and finalize direction on SCRs as appropriate.

A. Escalation Drivers and Considerations.

Reasons for escalating an SCR may include:

1. A committee or workgroup unable to reach consensus on SCR requirements.
2. A significant negative impact on County business processes or operations.
3. Customer service impacts.

Some considerations to apply prior to escalating an issue:

4. Whether a reasonable effort has been made to reach consensus between counties or regions.
5. Whether policy clarification is required.
6. If the potential escalation is related to an issue outside of the committee or workgroup structure, the escalating county representative will attempt to resolve the issue through discussion with the county's PPOC and/or the Region's RMs to determine whether an alternate process is acceptable or whether the county wishes to escalate the issue, which will follow the same escalation process as a committee.

B. Escalation Path

The escalation steps are outlined below:

1. Sponsor RM and Escalation Region's RMs seek resolution with RMs from all regions.
2. RMs seek resolution by discussing with CalSAWS staff.
3. RMs seek resolution with the escalating Region's PSC Member(s).
4. RMs present issue to seek resolution through the PSC body.
5. Executive Director seeks resolution through region's JPA member(s).
6. Executive Director seeks resolution through the JPA Board.

Once resolved, the assigned RM provides a response to the committee, workgroup, counties, regions and Executive Director to formally close the escalation.

C. Pause SCR for Escalation Outcome.

If a county, committee or workgroup requests the SCR be pulled from development, CCB, or a release cycle pending the outcome of the escalation, the escalating county contacts their RM(s). The RM(s) of the region confer with their PSC member(s) prior to formalizing the SCR pause.

Whether the Consortium can pause an SCR depends on several factors, including implementation dates and where the SCR is in the SCR lifecycle. It should not be assumed that a request will result in the pause; however, the Consortium will seek to minimize any impacts should a pause be granted.