

# GALVESTON COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT United Board of Health Bylaws

Proposed

ADOPTED NOVEMBER 29, 1972

These policies were reviewed and approved or revised, by the Galveston County Health District's United Board of Health at a regular meeting on October 30, 1985\*, May 28, 1986\*, August 1993\*, July 30, 2003\*, May 30, 2007, May 28, 2008\*, January 25, 2012\*, December 7, 2016\*, January 29, 2020, June 30, 2021\*, January 16, 2025\*.

\* *Revisions Made*

## PREAMBLE

The United Board of Health hereby adopts these Amended and Restated Bylaws to provide a framework for self-government of the Galveston County Health District. This framework permits the District to operate pursuant to the Constitution and governing statutes of the State of Texas, including Chapter 121 of the Texas Health and Safety Code. Portions of these governing laws may be included in these Bylaws for the purpose of clarification or ease of reference.

## ARTICLE I DEFINITIONS, PURPOSE, AND GENERAL INFORMATION

### SECTION 1.1 DEFINITIONS.

The terms set forth below shall have the following meanings unless otherwise required by the context in which they may be used:

“Board” or “UBOH” means the United Board of Health of the District.

“Board Member” means a person appointed to serve on the Board and duly qualified.

“Bylaws” shall mean the Bylaws of the District, and any amendments thereto, except where reference is specifically made to the bylaws of another entity.

“Commissioners Court” means the Commissioners Court of Galveston County, Texas.

“District” or “GCHD” means the Galveston County Health District.

“County Legal Services” means Galveston County’s Legal Services Manager and/or Galveston County’s General Counsel.

“Public Health” encompasses the functions and activities of a governmental entity, e.g., the Galveston County Health District, which stand to protect and promote the optimal health and well-being of its residents.

### SECTION 1.2 PURPOSE.

The purpose of the Bylaws is to outline the operational rules of the Galveston County Health District’s United Board of Health to include the responsibilities of the Board, legal authority, function, composition of members, responsibilities of members and officers, meeting procedures, conflicts of interest and confidentiality, and to outline the responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer.

### SECTION 1.3 GENERAL INFORMATION.

The United Board of Health is a policy-making board responsible for the oversight of the Galveston County Health District, of which was created by an interlocal agreement as permitted under Chapter 121 of the Texas Health and Safety Code between the County of Galveston, Texas, and the following member cities:

Bayou Vista;  
Clear Lake Shores;  
Dickinson;  
Friendswood;  
Galveston;  
Hitchcock;  
Jamaica Beach;  
Kemah;  
La Marque;  
League City;  
Santa Fe;  
Texas City; and  
Tiki Island.

The District may perform any public health function that any of its Member Governments may perform unless otherwise restricted by law. The Board shall determine which public health programs and services will be provided by the District based on needs assessment and the availability of resources. But for the powers expressly delegated to the Coastal Health and Wellness Governing Board, these Bylaws provide controlling authority and guidance to the duties, functions, and internal operations of the District.

### SECTION 1.4 STATUTORY FUNCTIONS.

The United Board of Health shall adopt policies that are consistent with the essential public health functions as defined by Chapter 121 of the Texas Health and Safety Code.

### SECTION 1.5 MISSION.

“Protecting and Promoting the One Health of Galveston County.”

## ARTICLE II GOVERNANCE

### SECTION 2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION.

The affairs of the District shall be governed by a public health board, which shall be called the United Board of Health. The Board shall be an administrative public health board and shall have the authority to adopt substantive and procedural rules which are necessary and appropriate to promote and preserve the health and safety of the public within its jurisdiction, provided that no rule adopted shall be in conflict with the laws of the State of Texas or the Interlocal Agreement between the members.

### SECTION 2.2 RESPONSIBILITY.

Board Members are appointed by and shall be responsible to the Galveston County Commissioners Court.

### SECTION 2.3 GENERAL DUTIES AND AUTHORITIES.

The United Board of Health shall provide the required community-based governance and oversight of the Galveston County Health District, consistent with these Bylaws, as set forth herein. Per this delegation and in addition to providing the essential public health services, the United Board of Health shall hold specific responsibility to:

- consider, adopt, amend, or rescind policies;
- set fee schedules for the provision of public health services;
- implement any proposed changes to the level of public health services offered, i.e., the hours of operation, the expansion or decrease of certain services, offering of new or temporary services, etc.;
- review and approve the operational budgets for the District, except for those of which have been delegated to and pertain solely to the function of Coastal Health & Wellness;
- appoint and oversee the Chief Executive Officer for the District and Coastal Health & Wellness;
- appoint the Chief Financial Officer for the District and Coastal Health and Wellness who will be overseen by the CEO;

- nominate persons to serve on the Coastal Health & Wellness Governing Board when vacancies become available;
- develop a philosophy and strategic goals for the District to be reflected in a comprehensive, coordinated strategic plan (“Strategic Health Plan”). A Strategic Health Plan must be adopted by the Board every five (5) years;
- monitor and measure the outcomes of the Strategic Health Plan;
- review the District’s emergency and disaster plans and procedures on an annual basis, and revise if necessary; and
- retain an independent auditor to conduct an annual review of the District’s fiscal records and retain the annual audit report.

#### SECTION 2.4 RESERVED AUTHORITY.

Only the Board shall have the authority to change, remove, or add policies applicable to the District, including but not limited to policies that affect budget, finance & accounting, purchasing, human resources, and operational management.

During an emergency, the Local Health Authority has the authority to modify, remove, or implement policies that apply to the District. This includes, but is not limited to, policies related to budget, finance and accounting, purchasing, human resources, and operational management.

#### SECTION 2.5 LIMITED AUTHORITY.

No individual member of the Board shall act for the Board, except as may be expressly authorized by the Board. The Board may, by a majority vote, authorize the Chairperson of the Board to act on its behalf during an emergency.

No individual may exercise the Board’s authority except as expressly delegated by the Board.

ARTICLE III  
MEMBERS

SECTION 3.1 GENERAL.

Members of the Board, including the Chairperson, serve at the pleasure of the Commissioners Court and may be removed at its discretion by a majority vote.

SECTION 3.2 RESIGNATION.

A member of the Board may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Board Chairperson and to the Commissioners Court.

ARTICLE IV  
OFFICERS

SECTION 4.1 GENERAL.

The officers of the Board shall consist of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

SECTION 4.2 APPOINTMENT.

The Commissioners Court shall select a Chairperson from the pool of current Board members. The Board shall select any other officers of the Board from those members serving on the Board.

SECTION 4.3 TERM.

Each officer's term shall be for a period of one (1) year. An officer may serve consecutive terms. Each officer shall continue to serve in their incumbent position after an expired term until a new selection is made. An officer may not continue to serve as an officer if he or she is no longer a member of the Board.

SECTION 4.4 CHAIRPERSON.

The Chairperson of the Board serves as the primary officer of the Board and shall have the responsibility and authority for:

- presiding over all meetings of the Board;
- ensuring the Commissioners Court appoints and approves the Local Health Authority and the County Judge signs and submits the Health

Authority's Oath of Office in accordance with state law, officially designating the selected individual as the District's Local Health Authority;

- providing an annual report to the Galveston County Commissioners Court of the finances, operations, and activities of the Galveston County Health District, including Coastal Health & Wellness;
- serving as the signatory for the Board's official correspondences and other documents, including the minutes of any meeting of the Board; and
- performing such other duties as are assigned by statute, these Bylaws, or other action of the Board.

#### SECTION 4.5 VICE-CHAIRPERSON.

The Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in the absence or incapacity of the Chairperson and in the case of the resignation or death of the Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall perform such duties as are imposed on the Chairperson until such time as the Chairperson resumes the office or until a replacement Chairperson is appointed.

### ARTICLE V MEETINGS OF THE BOARD

#### SECTION 5.1 GENERAL.

All meetings of the Board shall be held in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, and District policy.

#### SECTION 5.2 REGULAR MEETINGS.

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held monthly based on the availability of the members in the Boardroom of the Galveston County Health District. Regular meetings will be scheduled for a time determined by the Board that is best suited to maintain a quorum. The date, time, and location of regular meetings shall be publicly announced by the Board. The time and location of regular meetings may be changed by majority vote.

#### SECTION 5.3 SPECIAL MEETINGS.

Special meetings of the Board may be held on any date that permits the Chairperson to provide notice of the meeting in a manner that complies with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, at any location suitable to convene a quorum of

the Board. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or at the request of a majority of the Board, and shall begin at a time designated by the Chairperson. An attempt shall be made to notify all members of the time, date, and location of any special meeting.

#### SECTION 5.5 CONDUCT OF MEETINGS.

Meetings of the Board shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, when not in conflict with other Board-adopted rules of procedure, these Bylaws, or applicable law. There shall be no requirement to read the minutes, and the Chairperson of any meeting may vote and establish time limits for discussion of each agenda item without the necessity of receiving a two-thirds vote of the Board. To the extent of any conflict, the Board's traditional practices shall prevail over Robert's Rules, unless a point of order is raised and a majority of the Board concurs that any particular formality should be observed as required by Robert's Rules. Noncompliance with Robert's Rules shall not constitute grounds to void any Board action.

The Chairperson shall determine the order of business for each meeting of the Board.

#### SECTION 5.6 QUORUM.

The presence of the majority of the Board of Health shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. If a quorum is not present at a meeting, or a quorum is not present at the time business is to be transacted, a majority of the Board members present may adjourn the meeting to another time and shall give absent members reasonable notice of the time and place of such adjourned meeting. The presence of the CEO shall not count for the purposes of determining whether a quorum is present.

#### SECTION 5.7 MANNER OF ACTION.

Except as otherwise specified, the action of a majority of the members present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is physically present shall be the action of the Board. To the extent permitted by the Open Meetings Act, Board members participating via videoconference will be considered as present and voting in accordance with applicable laws, rules, and District policy.

No final action, decision, or vote shall be taken while the Board is convened in closed session, and any motion to adjourn must be made after the Board has reconvened in an open meeting.



## SECTION 5.8 RECORD OF MEETINGS.

Minutes shall be kept of all meetings in accordance with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

Meetings shall be recorded and filed until the minutes are approved. Recordings of meetings with items of special interest, to be determined by the Chairperson or the Chief Executive Officer, will be retained for a period of one (1) year. The minutes of the preceding meeting will be approved at the next regular meeting and at that time will be signed by the Chairperson.

The minutes of the Galveston County United Board of Health shall be summary-type minutes.

## SECTION 5.9 RECORD OF CLOSED MEETINGS.

The Board shall keep a record of the proceedings of each closed meeting in a manner that complies with the Open Meetings Act.

## SECTION 5.10 NOTICE OF MEETINGS.

The Board shall provide notice of the date, hour, place, and subject of each meeting held by the Board in a manner that complies with the Open Meetings Act.

## SECTION 5.11 AGENDAS.

Any member may submit items to the Chair for inclusion on a meeting agenda.

## ARTICLE VI SPECIAL COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES

### SECTION 6.1 GENERAL.

Special ad hoc committees may be created by the Board for such purposes as arise from time to time, e.g., to perform certain tasks or to advise the Board of specific issues affecting the District. Such committees shall limit their activities to the task for which they are appointed and shall have no powers, except to develop and propose recommendations to the Board for approval. Committees shall report to and are accountable to the Board.

Special committees may be formed for the following purposes: development of the strategic plan, Animal Resource Center, health inspections, community outreach, environmental operations, community partnerships and engagement, or any other purpose deemed necessary by the Board.

## SECTION 6.2 COMPOSITION OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES.

Special Committees may include members of the Board and members of the public.

## ARTICLE VII BUDGETARY AUTHORITY

### SECTION 7.1 GENERAL.

The Board shall retain complete authority and oversight of the District's budget, unless otherwise prohibited or restricted by law.

### SECTION 7.2 ANNUAL BUDGETS.

The Board shall review, allocate, and approve the annual budgets for the District's General Fund, the Galveston Area Ambulance Authority Fund, and any non-federal funds allocated to the budget for Coastal Health and Wellness.

Each budget must include the following categorization of funds: staffing and personnel, employee benefits, operations, capital, and any other category of funds that has been allocated to, reserved by, or restricted to Board oversight. Budget categorizations may be more specific or numerous at the Board's discretion.

### SECTION 7.3 REVISIONS OR REALLOCATIONS OF FUNDS.

The annual budget may not be revised or reallocated after it has been approved by the Board unless the Board accepts a proposed revision or reallocation by majority vote of a quorum at a properly posted meeting; this includes any changes to personnel salaries or benefits or to the number of available personnel positions.

### SECTION 7.4 UNBUDGETED EXPENSES.

Board approval is required for any unbudgeted expense, i.e., unexpected expenditures that are not accounted for in the approved budget, in excess of \$10,000.00.

### SECTION 7.5 UNEXPECTED REVENUE.

The Board must review any unexpected or unbudgeted increase in revenue and shall allocate or reserve the funds as appropriate.

ARTICLE VIII  
PURCHASING AUTHORITY

SECTION 8.1 GENERAL.

The District must comply with the Galveston County Health District's Purchasing Policy, as amended or revised, as applicable. Those interested in contracting with the District must also comply with this policy. All contracts and agreements entered into by the District must be reviewed and approved by County Legal Services.

SECTION 8.2 PURCHASING AUTHORITY.

PURCHASES UNDER \$10,000. The Director may authorize single expenditures of less than \$10,000 which are not in conformance with the Board's current budget, provided that sufficient funds must be available from reserves or unbudgeted revenue.

PURCHASES IN EXCESS OF \$10,000. Purchases in excess of \$10,000 which are not in conformance with the Board's current budget may only be authorized by the Board.

PURCHASES IN EXCESS OF \$25,000. Board approval is required for any purchase or contract over \$25,000, whether or not the expenditure conforms with the budget.

SECTION 8.3 BIDDING REQUIREMENTS.

Any purchase, expense, or contract in excess of \$1,500 but less than \$25,000 may be executed and authorized by the Director after three quotes have been obtained and documented as required by the Purchasing Policy along with County Legal Services approval.

Any purchase, expense, or contract in excess of \$25,000 but less than \$50,000 must require three quotes being obtained as required by the Purchasing Policy and may only be executed and authorized by the Board.

Any purchase, expense, or contract in excess of \$50,000 may only be executed and authorized by the Board following a formal competitive procurement process, as set forth by the Galveston County Health District's Purchasing Policy. Competitive procurements must comply with state and federal procurement law.

## SECTION 8.4 REVIEW

Bids, proposals, quotes, and others of the like received by the District in response to a formal procurement shall be reviewed by a committee. The committee shall report its findings of its review and make a recommendation to the Board.

## ARTICLE IX COASTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS GOVERNANCE

Coastal Health & Wellness is a clinic operated by the Galveston County Health District. The Clinic shall have its own governing board, of which is separate from the United Board of Health, and shall have complete oversight authority of the Clinic and its operations. These Bylaws herein, too, grant the exclusive authority to set policies for and operate the Clinic in accordance with its bylaws to the governing board of the Clinic.

## ARTICLE X CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

### SECTION 10.1 GENERAL.

The Chief Executive Officer (“CEO” or “Director”) shall serve the District and the Clinic and shall be accountable to the governing boards of both.

### SECTION 10.2 RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY.

The CEO shall have the responsibility and the authority to:

- enter into agreements on behalf of the District in order to accept funding from an awarding entity, e.g., from a local, state, federal, public, private, or nonprofit agency or organization, for purposes of furthering the District’s program offerings.
- compile an executive report of GCHD activities and a summary of any contract or service agreement signed by the CEO or the CEO’s designee.
- subject to the oversight of the Board, the CEO shall have the responsibility for the general care, supervision, and direction of the District’s affairs in furtherance of the policies and programs established by the Board, consistent with these Bylaws.
- oversee, monitor, and supervise District Staff.
- support the Board’s activities, mission, and policies.

- ensure the District remains compliant with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.
- notify the members of the Board of the time, date, location, and purposes of any special meeting called.
- delegate any of the aforementioned actions to appropriate District staff.

#### ARTICLE XI CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Each member of the Board has a fiduciary duty to the Board and must give the Board their loyalty. The Board shall establish and adopt a written policy, consistent with Texas Local Government Code Chapter 171.001 et seq., that establishes procedures for: (i) disclosing and addressing conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest by United Board of Health members, officers, employees, consultants, and/or agents who provide services or furnish goods to the Galveston County Health District; and (ii) maintaining the confidentiality of information obtained by a United Board of Health member, officer, employee, consultant and/or agent by virtue of their position. Such standards shall also establish policies and procedures regarding nepotism, bribery, and the offer of gratuities.

No Board member shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of any contract or other affiliation relating to operations conducted by the Galveston County Health District or for the furnishing of services or supplies to the Galveston County Health District, in which the Board member or the Board member's immediate family has a real or potential conflict of interest, financial or otherwise, or with whom the Board member is negotiating or has any arrangement concerning employment, nor shall any United Board of Health member divulge the subject or substance of such discussions, contracts or other affiliations to any person, institution, entity, company, or other third-party. Notwithstanding the foregoing, such contracts or affiliations may be approved or authorized by a majority of the disinterested Board members present at a meeting at which a quorum exists if the facts of any such interest by a Board member shall have been disclosed to the Board by the interested Board member prior to or at the meeting at which the contract or affiliation was approved or authorized and such interested Board member abstains from voting in that regard, provided that the contract or affiliation is otherwise fully consistent with the procurement policies of the Galveston County Health District.

ARTICLE XII  
PROHIBITION AGAINST POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND LIMITATIONS ON LOBBYING

The District, along with any individual Board member acting on behalf of the Board, shall be prohibited from participating or otherwise intervening in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. This prohibition includes the publishing or distribution of statements regarding a candidate or their campaign.

No substantial part of the District's activities shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation of any kind, except to the extent permitted by law for certain registered non-profit or tax-exempt organizations.

ARTICLE XIII  
CONFLICT OF BYLAWS

If any provision of these Bylaws now or hereinafter conflicts with any federal or state statute, regulation, or any other law relating to the operation of the District, such statute, regulation, or other law, as long as it is in effect, shall take precedence over these Bylaws. Likewise, in the event of any conflict with the Interlocal Agreement establishing the District and these Bylaws, the Interlocal Agreement controls.

ARTICLE XIV  
REVIEW AND CHANGES TO BYLAWS

The Board shall review these Bylaws and may propose alterations, revisions, or amendments to the terms contained herein as needed or desired. To take effect, the proposed alterations, revisions, or amendments must be approved by majority vote of the Galveston County Commissioners Court.

ARTICLE XV  
ADOPTION

These Bylaws shall become effective immediately upon their acceptance and adoption and shall supersede all previous Bylaws.

Accepted and adopted by the Commissioners Court of Galveston County, Texas on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Galveston County Judge

Proposed