DEC Subdivision Guidebook

DEC SUBDIVISIONS

DEC Subdivisions are state, province, or international units comprised of DEC members. For example, the Illinois DEC Subdivision is comprised of all DEC members in Illinois. Subdivisions provide a means for networking, professional development, and information sharing for DEC members in each state, province, or international unit. Anyone involved in subdivision must be a member of CEC/DEC. Typical activities include sponsoring sessions, strands or workshops at state or provincial conferences; publishing a newsletter; engaging in political advocacy; and supporting the activities of DEC.

GENERAL INFORMATION

SUBDIVISIONS MANAGEMENT

Subdivisions are managed and led by Subdivision Officers who are DEC members and volunteers of the organization.

EXAMPLES OF SUBDIVISION OFFICER POSITIONS:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Program Chair
- Communications Chair
- Social Media Chair
- Membership Chair
- Member---At---Large
- CAN Coordinator
- Government Relation
Subdivisions do not need to have each of these positions represented; these are examples of positions that have existed in other Subdivisions. Subdivisions may also create any position (permanent or temporary / ad hoc) that they believe is necessary to complete their activities and tasks.

ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURES

It may be beneficial for some states to form a Subdivision partnership where you have 2, 3 or 4 states become one Subdivision. For example: Maine and New Hampshire come together to form 1 subdivision.

CHECKLIST IN ORGANIZING A NEW SUBDIVISION

1. EMAIL THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

   To initiate a new or reactive a formerly active Subdivision, email the DEC Executive Office dec@dec-spied.org stating the interest your state has in becoming an active Subdivision. In this email include the name of your state and at least 6---8 DEC Members in that state who will assist in starting a Subdivision. If you need a list of members in your state, request this from the DEC Executive Office.

2. SCHEDULE THE FIRST MEETING.

   a. To invite all members in the state to participate, request a list of members from the DEC Executive Office.
   b. Determine the overarching goals of the Subdivision that specifically align with DEC's policies and mission statement.
   c. Create a schedule of meetings and set deadlines for accomplishing tasks.
3. ELECT OFFICERS

Within the first 3 months, the newly established Subdivision must appoint or elect officers and establish bylaws. A sample bylaws document will be provided from which a new Subdivision may base their bylaws.

4. EMAIL THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Once officers are confirmed, the Subdivision president should send an email to the DEC Executive Office with the following:
   a. Each position filled
   b. Name and contact information of each officer
   c. Member number of each officer and date DEC membership expires

5. THE SUBDIVISION WILL BE OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED BY THE DECEXECUTIVE BOARD WHEN THE FOLLOWING ARE COMPLETE:

   a. The above email has been sent confirming all officers are DEC active DEC members.
   b. Bylaws have been approved by Subdivision officers and state members with supplemental information required from the DEC Executive Office.
   c. At least 10 DEC members in good standing reside in that state or province.
   d. Note: As explained below all subdivisions are required to be incorporated and to open a bank account. Subdivisions are only provisionally recognized as official DEC subdivisions pending completion of these activities within 6 months of official recognition.

6. RECEIVE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Upon approval, the Subdivision officers will receive a letter from the Executive Office acknowledging the status as an active DEC Subdivision.
SUBDIVISION RESPONSIBILITIES

MEETINGS

Subdivisions should hold no less than 4 member meetings per year. These can be face-to-face, conference call / webinar, and/or held at state and national conferences. As well, Subdivision officers should hold monthly meetings to ensure the Subdivision is meeting its goals and timelines. All state subdivision meetings should be listed on the DEC calendar, which is available at www.dec-spied.org/calendar.

For these meetings, Subdivisions may request a DEC conference call line. Please email dec@dec-spied.org to retrieve the free conference call information.

SUBDIVISION LEADER ACTIVITIES

Subdivisions will participate in the regularly scheduled Subdivision Leader activities conducted by the Executive Office, Executive Board and/or the Membership Council. These meetings will occur via conference call, webinar, and/or at the annual DEC conference. These meetings will help Subdivisions connect to one another and share ideas about activities, ways to communicate with members, strategies for inspiring member involvement, and examples of community collaboration activities sponsored by DEC Subdivisions. A list of these meetings can be found at http://www.dec-spied.org/subdivisions.

MARKETING/BRANDING

All DEC Subdivisions must use the DEC logo.

All Subdivision must use the following name: [insert state] DEC. Example: Vermont DEC or Vermont Division for Early Childhood.

Subdivisions are encouraged to host a website. Subdivisions may host their own website through local resources. If subdivisions would like to host a subdivision website through the DEC platform with DEC branding, that is an option. DEC is able to offer this option at a reduced cost to subdivisions. The cost is $77/year. dec@dec-spied.org

Please contact DEC for more information.
DEC is not able to furnish communication resources such as toll free call lines, virtual meeting sites, or collaboration sites. We have included a list of suggestions for free resources in appendix A.
LISTSERVS

It is the responsibility of the Subdivision to monitor the state listserv. Four times a year, the designated Subdivision officer should send out an email informing listserv members of the purpose for the listserv, the type of information that can be posted and instructions for joining or removing oneself from the listserv. All DEC listservs are managed by the DEC Executive Office. DEC members self-select to join or remove themselves from the listserv.

If a state does not have an active listserv and would like one, a Subdivision officer should email dec@dec-spied.org to request the listserv initiation.

STATE MEMBERSHIP LISTS

Once a month, the Executive Office will email out membership lists to each state subdivision President or person that is listed as the state subdivision point of contact on the DEC website. The lists will be sent out between the 15\textsuperscript{th} – 21\textsuperscript{st} of each month. DEC only receives updated lists once a month from CEC so new lists can only be distributed on the above dates.

SUBDIVISION ANNUAL REPORT and SUBDIVISION REBATES

Subdivisions are responsible for completing an annual report. Details regarding the annual report are made available on the DEC website at www.dec-spied.org/subdivisions.

Each officially recognized subdivision will receive a membership rebate check for the preceding fiscal year by August 1. The rebate is $2 for each regular member and $1 for each student member who lists the state as residence. Subdivision rebates will only be sent to subdivisions who are incorporated and who have a bank account. See the next section for details on incorporation and bank accounts.
DEC Subdivisions Incorporation, Non-Profit Status, and Bank Requirements

DEC does not require you to have nonprofit or tax exempt status, however, individual states may require it to gain your incorporation status, which DEC does require. Incorporation status requires gaining a Federal Employee Identification Number (FEIN).

DEC does highly encourage you to gain nonprofit and tax exempt status if you intend to, or currently do, conduct activities such as conferences and other sources of revenue that you will have to pay taxes on. Subdivisions cannot do this through the Executive Office but must gain their own nonprofit and tax exempt status through their own state. A reminder: any revenue generation activity must occur only after the subdivision bank account is in place.

To check if a subdivision already has active non-profit status, go here: https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/exempt-organizations-select-check


A reminder: upon completion of their Annual Reports, all DEC Subdivisions are entitled to an annual rebate, proportionate to the number of active DEC members located in their state. In order to receive this rebate, DEC Subdivisions must have a bank account opened under their Subdivision Name. DEC will not make Subdivision checks payable to individuals. You cannot gain a subdivision bank account without being first incorporated.

In summary, at a bare minimum, subdivisions must be incorporated. New subdivisions will be provisionally approved pending incorporation status within 6 months of approval. Permanent approval will occur after incorporation.

DEC Subdivisions Incorporation, Non-Profit Status, and Bank Requirements

More on Becoming A Non-Profit/Filing for Incorporation/FEIN

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) is a division of the Council for Exceptional Children, but has independent tax exempt status (501(c)(3)) from the IRS. DEC’s Subdivisions are considered separate entities distinct from the international organization.
Below are some suggestions for how to become a non-profit organization:

**About Non-profits**
A non-profit organization is one whose primary objective is to support some issue or matter of private interest or public concern for non-commercial purposes. There are different kinds of non-profits, one of them being a 501(c)(3), which is exempt from income and (sometimes) property tax, and able to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions.

**Formulate a Mission Statement**
As a non-profit organization, you exist to accomplish your mission, which should be crafted based upon your purpose, services and values. Many Subdivisions choose to align their mission with DEC’s. DEC’s mission statement is:

_The Division for Early Childhood promotes policies and advances evidence-based practices that support families and enhance the optimal development of young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays and disabilities._

**Elect Officers**
Forming a board of officers requires careful thought and extensive recruitment efforts. Identify qualified individuals who are supportive of our mission and are willing to give of their talents and time.

**File Articles of Incorporation**
Articles of Incorporation are official statements of creation of an organization filed with the appropriate state agency. They are important to protect both board and staff from legal liabilities incurred by the organization, making the corporation the holder of debts and liabilities, not the individuals and officers who work for the organization.

The specific requirements governing how to incorporate are determined by each state. You can obtain the information you need to proceed with this step from your state Attorney General’s office or your state Secretary’s office.

**Draft a Constitution and Bylaws**
These are simply the "rules" of how the organization operates. Although a Constitution and Bylaws are not required to file for 501(c)(3) status, they will help you in governing your organization.
File for 501(c)(3) Status
To apply for recognition of tax-exempt status obtain the correct application and detailed instructions from the local IRS office. Documents can be downloaded from IRS web site at http://www.irs.gov/charities/non-profits/index.html

It is important to file your application within 27 months of the date when your organization was established, or when your Articles of Incorporation were filed. Although the IRS may approve an additional extension under certain circumstances, missing the deadline may result in your Subdivision not getting 501(c)(3) recognition retroactive to its incorporation date.

Apply for a Federal Employer Identification Number
Regardless of whether or not you have employees, non-profits are required to obtain a federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) — also referred to as the federal ID number. Available from the IRS, this number is used to identify the organization when tax documents are filed and is used not unlike an individual’s Social Security number. If you received your number prior to incorporation, you will need to apply for a new number under the corporate name. Ask for Form SS-4 when applying for your EIN.

File for State and Local Tax Exemption
In accordance with state, county, and municipal law, you may apply for exemption from income, sales, and property taxes. Contact your state Department of Revenue, your county or municipal Department of Revenue, local Departments of Revenue, and county or municipal clerk’s offices.

Additional Considerations
1. Fulfill charitable solicitation law requirements. If your organization’s plans include fundraising, be aware that many states and few local jurisdictions regulate organizations that solicit funds within that state, county, or city. Usually compliance involves obtaining a permit or license and then filing an annual report and financial statement. Contact the state Attorney General’s office, the state Department of Commerce, state and local Departments of Revenue and county or municipal clerk’s offices to get more information.

2. Apply for a non-profit mailing permit. The federal government provides further subsidies for nonprofits with reduced postage rates on bulk mailings.

3. Open a bank account and ascertain whether to use the accrual or cash method of accounting.
DEC Ends and DEC Structure

The subdivisions are a critical component in meeting the DEC Ends. Below you will find the DEC End’s Policies and the DEC Organizational structure. DEC advises that this information become a part of your onboarding process for new members. It is important for subdivision leaders and members to understand the value of and align their work in the organization.

DEC End’s Policies

DEC exists so that young children with disabilities and other special needs participate as full members of families and communities and benefit from competent, informed, and connected professionals, families, and policy makers to the extent that justifies the overall cost-benefit ratio.

• COMPETENT PROFESSIONALS & FAMILIES
  o As a first priority, professionals, and families implement all of DEC’s Recommended Practices and teacher educators implement relevant CEC Personnel and Preparation Standards to fidelity. Review of DEC’s Recommended Practices and CEC Personnel and Preparation Standards will assure that they are current with respect to owner and stakeholder values, contemporary developments, and research evidence.
  o Owner values respect the importance of authenticity and inclusivity, developmental and individual appropriateness, family-centeredness, and the need to promote diversity and cross-discipline integration.
  o Contemporary practices and standards represent the next steps for the field (i.e., are forward-looking and at the forefront of current movements) and are relevant, transparent, socially valid, and in line with current legislation and policy.
  o Evidence is based on well-established theory and empirical research that mirrors are accepted indicators and standards for quality, includes up-to-date research, supports implementation, and promotes replication.
INFORMED PROFESSIONALS & FAMILIES

As a second priority, professionals and families are informed and guided by resources and events that have been identified, delivered, and evaluated according to the supports and practices perceived by professionals and families as needed to promote the community participation of young children with special needs and their families.

Professional resources and events further implement and extend DEC’s Recommended Practices and CEC’s Personnel and Preparation Standards. Policy of the Executive Board of the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children.

Resources include papers and/or statements of DEC’s positions that are available to professionals and families no more than one year from the identified need. Position papers and/or statements currently approved to be created or are in process include (a) the role of Special Instruction in Early Intervention, (b) competent early intervention workforce, and (c) challenging behaviors identification and intervention.

Professional and family resources and events reflect the depth and breadth of knowledge needed by professionals and families at the individual and system levels. Knowledge about practices is limited to established evidence-based practices and emerging practices. Emerging practices (a) have initial evidence indicating the practice will likely benefit the development of young children or support their families and (b) are consistent with DEC’s values and beliefs. Emerging practices promote and assure innovation in the early intervention/early childhood special education field.

Professional and family resources and events are provided through multiple means of presentation via various technologies to reflect effective modes of delivery and diverse learning preferences, including an annual international conference.

CONNECTED PROFESSIONALS & FAMILIES

As a third priority, professionals and families have various opportunities to connect and participate with others in ways that foster a sense of community focused on the full community participation of young children with special needs and their families.

Opportunities for connection include a variety of forms for communication and collaboration across diverse and common areas of interest, roles, topics and organizations, and across and within international, national, regional, and local communities, including DEC Subdivisions.

INFORMED POLICY MAKERS

Policy makers have timely access to usable and accurate information when making decisions regarding young children, families, and professionals.

Members effectively advocate on behalf of young children, their families, and the profession of international, national, and Subdivision levels.
• DEC shapes the development of policies that are responsive to the current needs of the early intervention/early childhood special education field, reflect the depth and breadth of issues, and promote effective practices at the individual and system levels to foster full community participation of young children with disabilities and their families.

DEC Structure – The Role of Subdivisions

Appendix 1
Free Tools for Subdivision Communication/Team Collaboration

Free Video and Phone Conferencing

**Free Conference Call** - Accounts include free video conferencing possibilities with up to 1,000 participants as well as regular conference call capabilities.
https://www.freeconferencecall.com/
https://www.freeconferencecall.com/video-conferencing

Free Website Creation, Design, and Hosting

**Wix** unites beauty and advanced technology to create your stunning website using an intuitive drag and drop editor. It’s easy and free.
https://www.Wix.com

Free Shared Document Storage

**Dropbox** - Dropbox works the way you do. Get to all your files from anywhere, on any device, and share them with anyone.
https://www.dropbox.com

**Google Drive** - Drive starts you with 15 GB of free Google online storage, so you can keep photos, stories, designs, drawings, recordings, videos – anything. You can quickly invite others to view, download, and collaborate on all the files you want–no email attachment needed.
https://www.google.com/drive/