

# STATE OF DELAWARE



## EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT DOVER

### EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER FIFTEEN

**TO: HEADS OF ALL STATE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

**RE: EXPANDING THE DELAWARE INTERFAITH COUNCIL'S ADVISORY ROLE AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE TO STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENT**

**WHEREAS**, Delaware's religious traditions have long served as a foundation for strong communities across our State, and faith institutions have contributed to the development of our citizens and neighborhoods by addressing issues of poverty, crime, violence, lack of education, homelessness, and other social challenges; and

**WHEREAS**, faith-based organizations have a reach that extends beyond their congregations, and they bring unique skills, services, and resources to support the most vulnerable individuals in our communities; and

**WHEREAS**, there are numerous opportunities for faith-based organizations to partner with executive branch agencies and other government entities to strengthen our communities by promoting public safety, facilitating recreation and youth programming, supporting educational achievement, and expanding awareness of health care needs; and

**WHEREAS**, partnerships between executive branch agencies and faith-based organizations can lead to more effective service delivery for Delaware citizens than either government or faith-based groups can achieve alone; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 4, 2012, in consideration of the preceding, Governor Jack Markell issued Executive Order Number 33 to establish the Delaware Council of Faith-Based Partnerships;

**WHEREAS**, on September 26, 2024, Governor John Carney issued Executive Order Number 63 to rename the Delaware Council of Faith-Based Partnerships to the Delaware Interfaith Council; and

**WHEREAS**, the Council has served as a forum for strengthening communication and collaboration among faith-based organizations and government service providers; and

**WHEREAS**, enhancing the Council's role to provide policy advice to the Governor and General Assembly will ensure that the perspectives of Delaware's faith communities are meaningfully included in the policymaking process; and

**WHEREAS**, establishing a structure for regular meetings, reporting, and leadership rotation will support transparency, continuity, and the ongoing effectiveness of the Council.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, MATTHEW MEYER**, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Delaware, do hereby **DECLARE** and **ORDER** the following:

1. The Delaware Interfaith Council (the "Council") is hereby continued.
2. The Council shall be composed of no fewer than nine (9) members. Eight (8) members shall be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Governor. One (1) member shall be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Lieutenant Governor. The membership of the Council shall reflect the religious and geographic diversity of the people of the State of Delaware.
3. The Governor shall designate one or more members of the Council to serve as Chairperson(s). Each Chairperson shall serve a term of two (2) years. Upon expiration of the term, the Governor shall appoint a new Chairperson, who may be the same individual or a different member of the Council. Members of the Council shall receive no compensation. The Council shall adopt and make public procedures and standards for the conduct of its affairs, consistent with this Order. The Council shall meet no less than once each calendar quarter.
4. All executive branch state agencies and departments shall cooperate with the Council upon its request. The Council may call upon the expertise of individuals and organizations outside its membership for research, advice, support, or other assistance necessary and appropriate to accomplish its mission.
5. The Council shall have the following powers, duties, and functions:
  - a. Work closely with faith-based and community-based groups, charitable organizations, private foundations, voluntary associations, educational institutions, and other nonprofit organizations to promote volunteerism and community service;
  - b. Develop partnerships between faith-based organizations and executive branch agencies to support shared goals in education, social services, health, housing, and other community needs;
  - c. Provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among faith-based organizations to improve service delivery in the community;

- d. Promote innovative and model programs and share best practices among faith-based groups;
  - e. Coordinate Council activities with those of other private, faith-based, and governmental organizations to ensure efficient service delivery and avoid duplication of effort;
  - f. Develop sustainable funding from private sources to support the objectives of the Council and the collaborative work of faith-based organizations; and
  - g. Provide advice and guidance to the Governor and the General Assembly on proposed and pending legislation and policy matters relevant to the faith-based community and to the Council's mission.
- 6. The Council shall ensure that its activities comply with applicable laws regarding freedom of religion, including the Delaware Constitution and the Constitution of the United States.
  - 7. The Council shall report its recommendations to the Office of the Governor and relevant State agencies on a periodic basis.
  - 8. In addition, the Council shall submit a written report annually to the Governor and the General Assembly summarizing its activities, findings, and policy recommendations.
  - 9. This Order shall take effect immediately and supersedes Governor Carney's Executive Order Number 63.

**APPROVED** this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January 2026.

Matthew Meyer  
Governor

**ATTEST:**

Secretary of State

