

## Arizona—Establish Marriage and Communication Skills Commission

Sec. 11. Title 46, chapter 2, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended by adding article 10, to read:

### ARTICLE 10. MARRIAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

#### 46-361. Marriage and communication skills commission; membership; duties; staff; compensation; definition

A. The marriage and communication skills commission is established consisting of the following members who serve at the pleasure of the appointing person:

1. Two members of the senate who are from different political parties and who are appointed by the president of the senate. These members serve as advisory members. The president of the senate shall select one member to cochair the commission.
2. Two members of the house of representatives who are from different political parties and who are appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives. These members serve as advisory members. The speaker of the house of representatives shall select one member to cochair the commission.
3. The governor or the governor's designee.
4. The director of the department of economic security or the director's designee.
5. one member of the news media who is appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives.
6. an expert in the field of marriage and family education and counseling who is licensed to practice medicine or psychology in this state, who SPECIALIZES in marriage counseling and who is appointed by the president of the senate.
7. AN ATTORNEY WHO IS LICENSED TO PRACTICE LAW IN THIS STATE, WHO SPECIALIZES IN FAMILY LAW RELATED EDUCATION AND WHO IS APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR.

b. The marriage and COMMUNICATION skills commission shall:

1. review plans submitted TO THE DEPARTMENT by the applicant community-based organizations for participation in the marriage and COMMUNICATION SKILLS program and shall recommend community-based organizations that are eligible to receive funding pursuant to section 46-362.
2. review renewal applications from participating community-based organizations AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT.
3. develop and distribute free of charge to marriage license applicants a handbook that includes information about the importance of communication, shared parental responsibility for children, child support responsibilities, alimony, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, court process for divorce, community resources for parents who are divorced or separated, community resources for children of parents who are divorced or separated and marriage education courses that are available in each county.
4. evaluate the program and beginning on november 1, 2001 report annually by november to the governor, the president of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives and the joint legislative audit committee. the commission shall provide a copy of the report to the secretary of state and the department of library, archives and public records.
5. RECOMMEND QUALIFYING CRITERIA FOR MARRIED OR COHABITATING PARENTS WHO APPLY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY FOR A VOUCHER TO ATTEND A MARRIAGE SKILLS TRAINING COURSE.

C. THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY SHALL PROVIDE Staff and support services to the commission.

D. FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "ADVISORY MEMBER" MEANS A MEMBER WHO ADVISES THE COMMISSION BUT WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO VOTE AND IS NOT A MEMBER FOR THE PURPOSES OF DETERMINING A QUORUM.

46-362. Community based marriage and communication skills program; fund; program termination

A. A community-based organization may apply to participate or may complete an application to continue in the marriage and communication program as provided in this section for any fiscal year by submitting by April 15 a program proposal or an application to continue the program to the DEPARTMENT. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL APPROVE APPLICANTS AFTER REVIEWING RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE marriage and communication skills commission established by section 46-361. New applicants are restricted to unencumbered monies that have been appropriated in previous fiscal years or monies appropriated to expand the program.

b. a program proposal shall contain:

1. A plan for implementing a marriage and communication skills program or a plan that demonstrates the existence of a marriage and communication skills program.
2. A plan to adopt a marriage and communication skills curriculum that emphasizes relationship skills, including communication and negotiation skills that are necessary to resolve common relationship problems.
3. A description of any model curricula that the community-based organization plans to use to provide marriage and communication skills. ANY MODEL CURRICULA USED BY A COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION SHALL NOT DISCUSS OR ENCOURAGE UNLAWFUL BEHAVIOR.
4. A plan to INCORPORATE discussions of family law and domestic violence issues into the curriculum and marriage license options, including covenant marriage options.

C. a community-based marriage and communication skills program fund is established consisting of legislative appropriations. the department of economic security shall administer the fund and not more than five per cent shall be used for administrative costs. The department of economic security shall distribute monies to the community-based organizations whose plans have been recommended by the marriage and parenting skills commission. monies in the fund are exempt from the provisions of section 35-190 relating to the lapsing of appropriations and are continuously appropriated.

D. community-based organizations shall spend Monies received under the program to implement approved plans.