Article I – Name

The name of this organization shall be the National Nurse Leadership Council (hereinafter referred to as NNLC).

Article II – Purpose

The purpose of the NNLC is to ensure that the Indian Health System Nursing Program representatives effectively participate in the establishment and implementation of Agency strategies to achieve the IHS mission.

SECTION - 1 The purpose of the NNLC shall be:

A. To assure a unified nursing voice that promotes an effective Executive Healthcare Leadership Group.

B. To provide an advisory group to the Chief Nurse, and other IHS leadership on all Indian Health Systems nursing issues.

C. To promote professional standards, professional competencies and research.

Article III - Membership

Active and Ex-Officio members comprise NNLC membership.

SECTION - 1 Active Member Criteria:

Each of the twelve (12) IHS Area Nursing Councils shall have two NNLC representatives. One representative shall be a Nurse Consultant if one exists for that Area. One representative shall be selected by the Area Nursing Council for a two year term (two if no Area Nurse Consultant exists for that Area):

- One Nurse Educator (Clinical Support Center)
- One Advanced Practice Nurse, term limited to two years
- The IHS Headquarters Division of Nursing (DNS) Program Consultants; they shall not hold office within the Council, but they do have voting privileges.

SECTION - 2 Ex-Officio Member Criteria:

A. The Chief Nurse shall be an ex-officio member of the NNLC and shall not hold office.

SECTION - 3 Membership Rights and Obligations

Members shall have rights and obligations including:

A. Participating in the election of NNLC officers and participating as committee members.

B. Serving in NNLC elected or appointed positions. A nominee has the option to decline the offered position.

C. All members of the NNLC shall represent their respective Areas and conduct business according to the IHS standards of ethical conduct.

Article IV – Decision Making

The right of decision making / voting is granted to all Active Membership of the NNLC (see Article III, Section 1 of these by-laws for definition of Active Membership), or those who are present by proxy.
SECTION - 1 Voting

Active Membership in attendance at NNLC meetings will be eligible to participate in decision making / voting as follows:

A. There will be one (1) vote per meeting attendee. A meeting attendee shall not cast his/her own vote along with the proxy vote of another Active Member. If a member cannot attend a meeting of the NNLC, she/he shall identify in writing, an alternate person who is not a current Active member of the NNLC, to cast his/her proxy vote.

B. A written proxy must contain the following elements:
   1. Name of NNLC Active Member.
   2. Area, Service Unit and Position of NNLC Active Member.
   3. Date proxy is written.
   4. Signature of NNLC Active Member.
   5. Name, Area, Service Unit, and Position of Proxy designee.
   6. Effective dates of Proxy, not to exceed thirty (30) days.

C. Ex-Officio members of the NNLC shall not be permitted to hold a Written Proxy for an Active NNLC member.

D. Written Proxies shall be presented to the Chair, or designee, at the beginning of the meeting in order to be eligible to participate in the decision making process.

SECTION - 2 Decision Making Process

A. The Revised Roberts Rules of Order will be used to conduct meetings of the NNLC.

B. A majority vote decides the issue.

Article V – Officers

Officers of the NNLC include the Chair, Chair-Elect, Immediate Past-Chair/Parliamentarian, Director’s Executive Council (DEC) Representative and Secretary.

SECTION - 1 Officers / Elections

NNLC officer nominations are submitted by the Active Membership (except as noted in Article III Section 1 of these by-laws) and elections will be held by the end of the calendar year:

A. The Chair-Elect is elected every year.

B. The Secretary is elected every year.

C. The DEC Representative is elected every year. The DEC representative will be an Indian Health Service Nurse Consultant.

D. If a meeting is not scheduled, elections shall be held by electronic mail (e-mail).

E. Nominations shall be made by the Active Membership at the conference call/meeting at least one month prior to elections. If an e-mail vote is required, nominations shall be submitted to the Chair-elect. Nominees shall agree to candidacy for a position prior to official nomination and shall obtain written approval from their Area Director and/or program manager.

F. Voting shall be by secret ballot. If there is a single nominee for an office, election shall be by acclamation. In the event of a tie, the winner shall be determined by lot.
SECTION - 2  Terms

A. Officers shall serve a one-year term.
B. Officers may serve a maximum of two terms consecutively in the same office.

SECTION - 3  Vacancies

Vacancies within Council Officer positions shall be addressed as follows:

A. In the case of resignation, transfer or incapacity of the Chair, the Chair-elect shall complete the term of office beginning immediately.
B. In the case of resignation, transfer or incapacity of the Chair-elect, a new election shall be held immediately.
C. In the case of resignation, transfer or incapacity of the DEC Representative, a new election shall be held immediately.
D. In the case of resignation, transfer or incapacity of the Secretary, the Chair will immediately fill the office by appointing a replacement for the remainder of the term.
E. In the event ALL officer positions become vacant, the IHS Chief Nurse shall coordinate an emergency election to be held immediately.

SECTION - 4  Duties of the Officers

The duties of Council officers are defined as follows:

A. The Chair will preside at all meetings of the Council and will appoint all Ad Hoc Committees/Work Groups needed to conduct business. The Chair will represent the Council at IHS meetings or functions, as appropriate, and sit on IHS committees as assigned/requested.
B. The Chair-elect will assist the Chair, and, in the absence or incapacity of the Chair, will perform all duties and assume all responsibilities of the Chair position. The Chair-elect coordinates the agenda and logistics for meetings and conference calls; assembles recommendations for presentation by the Chair; receives nominations, prepares a slate of candidates for annual election and is responsible for counting ballots.
C. The Immediate-past Chair will remain involved as consultant to the Chair and Chair-elect for a one (1) year period immediately following his/her term as Chair. The Immediate-past Chair also acts as Parliamentarian for all meetings of the Council.
D. The DEC Representative will represent the Council on the DEC, Indian Health Leadership Council (IHLC), and other meetings or functions as appropriate. The DEC Representative shall report to the Chair and shall communicate to the chair and IHS Chief Nurse as appropriate. The Immediate past DEC Representative shall attend the DEC meetings if the current DEC Representative is unable to attend.
E. The Secretary shall assure minutes of all general meetings and conference calls of the Council are taken and shall disseminate the minutes to the membership within two (2) weeks. The Secretary shall serve as historian of documents and shall assure that all subcommittee meeting minutes are compiled in a chronological file. Each subcommittee shall submit a copy of their minutes to the Secretary within 30 days of their meeting. Documents are stored at IHS Headquarters, Division of Nursing Services (DNS).
Article VI – Committees

Active Members of the NNLC shall volunteer or be appointed/elected to represent the membership on NNLC committees. Active Members of the NNLC will also represent the NNLC on committees of IHS as required/requested (i.e. Business Office, Clinicians Information Management Technology Advisory Council (CIMTAC), GPRA, etc.). Committees of the NNLC shall be representative of Indian Health Care Systems and comprised as follows:

SECTION - 1 Standing Committee(s)

The Standing Committee(s) are:

A. Improving Organization Performance Committee (IOPC)
B. By-Laws Committee
C. GPRA/CRS Committee

SECTION - 2 Duties/Functions of the Improving Organization Performance Committee

The IOPC shall develop its own operating rules and elect its own officers. The function, authority and responsibilities of this committee include:

A. Act as the official advisory to NNLC on technical issues regarding performance improvement.

SECTION - 3 Duties of the By-Laws Committee

The By-laws Committee shall consist of the NNLC Chair-Elect, or appointed designee, and two (2) but not more than five (5) at large members from the NNLC Active Membership. The function, authority and responsibilities of this committee include:

A. Review NNLC By-Laws annually to assure content and purpose remain relevant to the Council.
B. Propose amendments to the By-Laws as needed and present to the NNLC no later than one (1) month prior to the meeting at which the rules are to be amended and approved.

SECTION - 4 Ad Hoc Committee(s)

Temporary Ad Hoc Committee(s) or Work Groups shall be appointed by the Chair to accomplish specific, delineated tasks (i.e. strategic imperative work groups):

A. Membership may include non-NNLC members if specific expertise, knowledge, or experience is required or desirable.
B. Assignment will depend on the expertise needed and the willingness/interest of the proposed committee/work group members.

SECTION - 5 Committee Approvals

All policy issues from all committees and work groups shall be brought before the NNLC membership for approval prior to submission to the Agency/Director, unless authorized by the NNLC to do otherwise.

Article VII – Meetings

Council meetings will be conducted as follows:

SECTION - 1 Business may be conducted by telephone conference call or face-to-face meetings dependent upon current budgetary, time, and program constraints.
SECTION - 2 Electronic mail or other communication processes may be utilized to facilitate the work of NNLC, as appropriate

SECTION - 3 A majority vote decides the issue.

SECTION - 4 Time and place for meetings and conference calls shall be decided by the membership.

SECTION - 5 Agenda items for meetings/conference calls shall be solicited by the Chair/Chair-elect/Immediate Past Chair prior to the scheduled event.

SECTION - 6 Meetings/conference calls shall follow the agenda. Meetings will be open to guests with prior approval from NNLC Chair. Guests will be encouraged to participate in discussions. With the approval of the Chair, NNLC reserves the right to conduct closed meetings.

Article VIII – Nursing Issues of Concern

SECTION - 1 Issues of concern coming from the field shall be submitted to the NNLC by any individual, group, Area Council or Area representative throughout the year.

SECTION - 2 All issues for consideration shall be submitted in SBAR (Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation) format. A sample SBAR Template is posted on the NNLC website.

SECTION - 3 NNLC will review and make recommendations on the dispensation of the issue, provide a response within a reasonable timeframe, and if necessary forward to the Chief Nurse.

SECTION - 4 The follow-up response and/or outcome to the issue of concern will be reported via the IHS Nurse Listserv.

Article IX – Miscellaneous

SECTION - 1 The Chairperson may call an NNLC session when necessary.

SECTION - 2 Meetings/conference calls shall be evaluated by the membership using a method recommended by IOPC and approved by the membership.

SECTION - 3 Guests: Personal guests are invited to participate in meetings and conference calls with provision of their own resources. The Chair should be notified in advance of guest participation. Guests shall be encouraged to participate in discussions. However, NNLC reserves the right to enter closed meeting sessions as necessary.

SECTION - 4 The NNLC Chair reserves the right to declare closed meeting sessions.

Article X – Revision

SECTION - 1 By-laws will be amended with the approval of the membership. Date of amendment and signatures of Chair and Secretary shall be required and incorporated into the Bylaws. Secretary shall maintain a record of superseded By-Laws at the IHS DNS office.

SECTION - 2 Proposed amendments shall be distributed to all voting members no later than one (1) month prior to the event at which the By-laws are to be amended.

SECTION - 3 By-laws will be approved by the membership on an annual basis.

SECTION - 4 The revised bylaws will be posted on NNLC website.

[Previous revision – February 12, 2009]