

## Who is the State Coalition Leader?

### Defining the Role

#### *Overview for State Coalitions*

The “state coalition leader” is the national Jump\$Start Coalition’s designation for our **primary point of contact** at an affiliated state coalition. The state coalition leader may be the organization’s top elected official (president or chair); may be a paid or volunteer administrator; or can be anyone you choose. In any case, the person designated as “state coalition leader” should serve a functional—rather than honorary—role.

**Can there be more than one state coalition leader?** Yes, that’s up to you. However, please note that in some cases, national Jump\$Start will need a single point of contact and you’ll need to work out on your end who that should be. If there is only one state coalition leader – and that’s what national Jump\$Start recommends – consider designating an alternate or backup.

Ideally, a state coalition leader is someone who can **delegate, motivate, and coordinate**. State coalition leaders who “burn out” are often the ones who tried to take on too many of the responsibilities themselves—and often as a volunteer. Not only is that not fair to a volunteer, but it is inconsistent with the nature of a coalition formed on the principles of collaboration and shared commitment. Take a look at your Bylaws, which may already divide some of the responsibilities (such as financial management for the Treasurer and recordkeeping for the Secretary). If you don’t have staff or committees already established, consider creating specific officer positions for other board members to handle specific roles. (Example: communications officer, membership officer, fundraising officer.)

The state coalition leader:

- Meets periodically with national Jump\$Start staff and fellow state coalition leaders – usually by conference call or video call – to hear and share updates.
- Is invited to attend the annual state coalition leaders meeting in Washington, DC in April and attend national Jump\$Start’s annual awards dinner.
- Receives communications from national Jump\$Start staff on a variety of activities and events, most of which can be shared with the rest of the coalition (or board).
- May receive referrals from national Jump\$Start for potential partners, supporters, media interviews, and other opportunities.
- Carries out the duties designated by the state coalition itself.

While the state coalition leader is national Jump\$Start’s primary point of contact, his/her general commitment is to the goals of the state coalition.

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