§ 561. Advisory council. 1. There shall be within the justice center an advisory council consisting of no less than fifteen members to be appointed by the governor, with the advice and consent of the senate. Members shall be appointed on the basis of their professional and personal knowledge in the care and treatment of and in the provision of services, supports, and advocacy to and on behalf of service recipients, as defined in subdivision nine of section four hundred eighty-eight of the social services law, and individuals with disabilities, or their active interest in the system of services for such service recipients or individuals with disabilities. In making such appointments, the governor shall endeavor to ensure the overall membership of the council adequately reflects the programs and services within the justice center's jurisdiction and that at least one-half of the members are individuals or parents or relatives of individuals who are or have participated in or are or have been recipients of programs and services within the justice center's jurisdiction. The council shall include but shall not be limited to:

(a) members of boards of visitors appointed pursuant to articles seven and thirteen of the mental hygiene law;

(b) consumer representatives, including current or former service recipients of an applicable facility or provider agency;

(c) parents, relatives or guardians of such service recipients;

(d) providers of services to vulnerable persons;

(e) directors of facilities, community services or members of community services boards;

(f) current and former consumers of services for individuals with physical disabilities;

(g) members of organizations that advocate on behalf of vulnerable persons and individuals with disabilities; and

(h) an employee of a facility or provider agency as defined in subdivision four of section four hundred eighty-eight of the social services law.

2. Members shall be appointed for terms of three years provided, however, that of the members first appointed, one-third shall be appointed for one-year terms and one-third shall be appointed for two-year terms. A member may be removed by the governor for good cause

after notice and an opportunity to be heard on the charges. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as original appointments for the remainder of any unexpired term.

3. The governor shall designate one member of the council as its chair to serve as such at the pleasure of the governor.

4. Council members shall not receive compensation, but each member shall be entitled to receive his or her reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in connection with his or her services as a member within the amounts appropriated therefor.

5. The council shall have an executive secretary designated by the executive director of the justice center. The executive director may also assign such other employees of the justice center as the council may from time to time require to assist it in the performance of its duties.

6. The council shall advise and assist the justice center in developing policies, proposed regulations, plans and programs to carry out its functions, powers and duties pursuant to this section. The council may consider any matter related to improving the quality of life of citizens of the state who have disabilities and shall advise the justice center on any such matter.

7. The council shall meet at least four times a year. The council shall meet at the request of its chair or the executive director of the justice center.