

INTRODUCTION

Determining how an Enhanced Collaborative Model (ECM) task force is configured is a critical step in its development, day-to-day functioning, and long-term sustainability. Configuration shapes how effectively the task force can carry out its responsibilities, from case response to system-building efforts. A well-defined configuration creates stability, facilitates coordination, and helps maximize collaboration.

ECM task forces configure themselves in different ways based on local context, priorities, relationships, resources, and capacity. Every jurisdiction is different, and even long-established task forces regularly revisit and revise their configuration to respond to emerging needs and challenges.

Factors such as size and longevity influence task force configuration but are not the only considerations. And while there is no single “correct” setup, certain patterns have emerged across ECM task forces. The following highlights common configurations, along with key considerations and practical guidance to support effective design.



TIP: Keep it Simple, Functional and Flexible

- Do not overcomplicate – configuration should serve the mission, not create red tape.
- Use visual tools (like a simple organizational chart) to clarify roles.
- Revisit the configuration regularly to make sure it still fits the task force’s current needs.
- Expect configuration to change over time. Reconfiguration is normal and appropriate when it is informed by the group’s needs and goals.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

While the most effective ECM task force configuration is the one that best supports collaboration, increased victim identification, survivor safety, accountability, and sustainability in a jurisdiction, all ECM Task Force setups share certain key characteristics:



Clear Leadership and Membership

The task force has defined co-leads or a leadership team, clearly identified members and partners.



Defined Committees or Workgroups

Each has a specific purpose, goals and deliverables (e.g., “The Victim Services Committee strengthens victim services coordination”).



Operational Clarity

Agendas, timelines, decision-making processes, and meeting expectations are understood and documented.



Structural Flexibility

The task force can adapt roles, add partners, or shift resources in response to emerging needs.



Purpose-Driven Design

Every component, whether the full task force or a subcommittee, has a defined purpose supporting the mission.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR DETERMINING CONFIGURATION

- **Purpose and Scope of the Work:** Configuration should serve a clear purpose. Ensure both the overall organizational framework and any committees or work groups that directly support the task force’s current priorities and intended outcomes.
- **Current Work Demands:** What work needs to happen right now? Consider whether the task force is primarily focused on case response, coordination, systems change, training or multiple priorities. Then design the structure to support that work.
- **Partner Capacity and Meaningful Engagement:** How many partners can realistically engage in a meaningful way? Ensure committees and workgroups are formed based on demonstrated need and sized to allow for active participation and progress, not just representation.
- **Coordination and Infrastructure Capacity:** How much coordination and infrastructure can be supported and sustained? Consider staffing, funding, administrative support, and partner bandwidth to ensure the structure is manageable over time.
- **Flexibility and Sustainability:** Configuration should be adaptable as membership, resources, or priorities change. Avoid overdesigning; a simpler structure that can evolve is more effective and sustainable.



REMEMBER: The “right” configuration is the one that supports effective collaboration, focuses on survivor wellbeing and support, and sustainability – not the one that looks the most complex on paper. A well-functioning small task force can be just as effective – and aligned with the ECM – as a large, highly structured one.

COMMON CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

CHALLENGE	SOLUTION
Lack of clarity or duplication of roles.	Document responsibilities and use onboarding materials to reinforce them.
Overreliance on one person (e.g., Coordinator/Director).	Build a leadership team and distribute responsibilities.
Committees with no purpose or deliverables.	Sunset or reassign inactive committees. Require a mission statement and a work plan.
Failure to adapt.	Build in regular reviews to shift structure as your membership, cases, or goals evolve.
Inconsistent integration of new members or partners.	Create a formal onboarding process and integrate them into the structure intentionally.

CONFIGURATIONS AT-A-GLANCE

As noted above, there is no single “correct” setup, however certain patterns have emerged across ECM task forces. The four configurations described below represent common organizational structures for an Enhanced Collaborative Model Task Force. Note – they are all distinct and not stages to “advance through” or benchmarks of success. An ECM task force may remain in one configuration long term, blend features of multiple models, or intentionally shift structures as its scope of work, membership, or environment changes.

CONFIGURATIONS AT-A-GLANCE



Composition: Grant partners and a small group of other agencies primarily engaged in direct case response (e.g., law enforcement, prosecutors, victim service providers).



Works well when:

- A task force is new or re-forming
- Capacity and staffing are limited
- The primary focus is on immediate response vs systems development



How work happens/is organized:

Most collaboration occurs around active cases, referrals, and immediate problem-solving. The task force may meet regularly but does not rely on standing committees or extensive infrastructure.

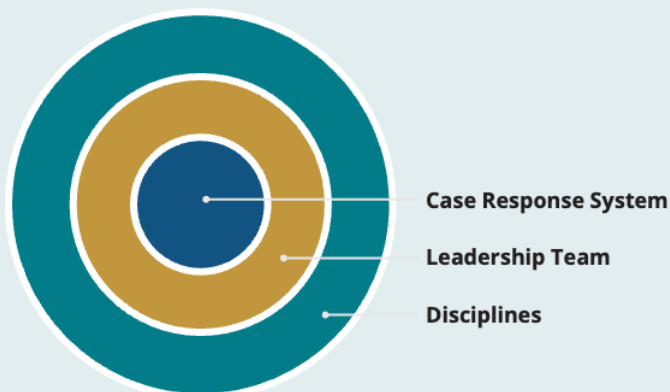


Leadership & decision-making:

Leadership is often informal, with decisions and coordination made collaboratively and driven by case needs rather than a standing leadership body.



Key considerations: This model can be highly responsive but may rely heavily on relationships and individual availability. Sustainability often requires intentionally adding structure over time – but only if the scope of work expands.



Composition: A defined leadership team (often including grant partners and key disciplines), supported by a coordinator/director, with additional partners engaged as needed.



Works well when:

- Clear accountability & coordination are needed
- The task force is transitioning from informal collaboration to a more sustained effort



How work happens/is organized:

The leadership team provides strategic direction, sets priorities, and oversees task force activities (eg: case review and protocol development)



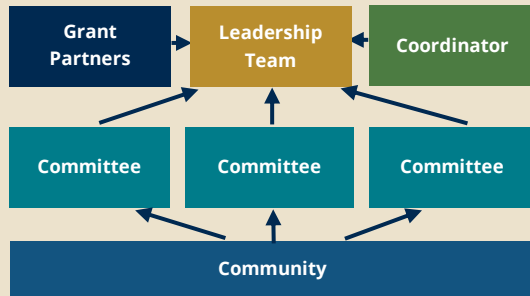
Leadership and decision-making:

Decision-making authority is clearly defined, with opportunities for partner input depending on the issue.



Key considerations: This structure brings clarity and efficiency but requires transparency and intentional inclusion of a range of discipline perspectives to ensure decisions reflect multidisciplinary expertise and individuals who have survived trafficking and avoid concentrating influence too narrowly.

CONFIGURATIONS AT-A-GLANCE



Composition: Multiple committees organized around function (e.g., victim services, data, outreach), supported by a leadership team and coordinator/director.



Works well when:

- The task force has a variety of partners and activities
- Multiple priorities must be addressed simultaneously
- Member capacity allows for deeper engagement in specific areas



How work happens/is organized:

Committees are the primary drivers of task force work. Members participate in areas aligned with their expertise, allowing more focused engagement.

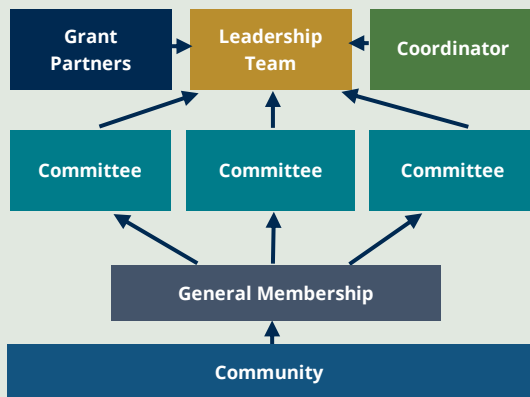


Leadership & decision-making:

The leadership team provides overall direction, while committees drive implementation and recommendations.



Key considerations: Committees allow people to engage meaningfully without attending every meeting, but they require clear scopes, communication pathways, and accountability to avoid silos.



Composition: A broad general membership body, a leadership team, standing committees, and a coordinator/director serving as the connective tissue.



Works well when:

- The task force is large, regional, or long-standing
- Broad representation and community engagement are priorities
- The task force addresses systems-level challenges



How work happens/is organized:

General membership meetings focus on shared learning, coordination, and transparency, while committees and leadership teams handle detailed planning and implementation work.



Leadership and decision-making:

Decision-making roles are clearly delineated, with intentional, structured pathways for input from general membership.



Key considerations: This structure supports transparency and inclusion but requires strong facilitation and communication to avoid meeting fatigue or disengagement.