

Wake County Continuum of Care

Governance Charter

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Article I. Purpose and Duration

Section I. Purpose

The purpose of the Wake County CoC is to create a collaborative, inclusive, community-based process and approach to plan for and manage homeless assistance resources and programs effectively and efficiently to end homelessness in the jurisdiction as specified in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), 24 CFR Part 578, Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act: Continuum of Care Program. The Governance Charter identifies the composition, roles, responsibilities, committees, and processes involved in the planning and programming of the Wake County CoC. Additionally, the Wake County CoC serves as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recognized decision making body for the Continuum of Care Rule 24 CFR 578, Subpart B, entitled “Establishing and Operating a Continuum of Care.”

Section II. Duration

HUD regulations (24 CFR part 578.7(5)) require CoCs to review and update their governance charters annually. The Wake County CoC will review, update, and approve this governance charter at least annually. Amendment of the charter requires a vote of the Wake County CoC membership at a regularly scheduled membership meeting.

Article II. Mission, Vision, and Values

Section I: Mission

The Wake County CoC plans, develops, and implements comprehensive and coordinated strategies across funding sources and systems to address homelessness in Wake County.

Section II: Vision

The vision of the Wake County CoC is to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. We will achieve this vision through our shared values and actions.

Section III: Values

Housing First: We recognize that housing is a human right and will not require pre-conditions for access to housing.

Trauma-Informed: We will use trauma-informed practices in how we work together and serve people experiencing homelessness.

Equity and Justice: We work to eliminate discrimination so that race, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation are not predictors of who becomes homeless or predictors of outcomes within the homeless system. We are committed to re-envisioning just systems to prevent and end homelessness.

Leadership by People with Lived Experience: We will be accountable to people experiencing homelessness and ensure there are meaningful and accessible ways to participate in shaping decisions.

Transparency: We believe in being transparent with people experiencing homelessness and our community.

Efficiency: We implement efficient systems that help people experiencing homelessness get housing as quickly as possible because every day a person spends unhoused is a day too many.

Collaboration: We know working together is better than working alone.

Client-Driven: We believe that people experiencing homelessness are experts in their own lives and that service providers' role is to support strengths and overcome barriers.

Article III: CoC Membership

Section I: Definition

Organizations and unaffiliated individuals residing or working within Wake County may be members of the CoC. The Wake County CoC will actively recruit for a broad and inclusive membership including, but not limited to persons with lived experience of homelessness, nonprofit homeless assistance providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations working to reduce homelessness, local governments, businesses, funders, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health and substance use agencies, healthcare providers, universities, affordable housing developers, landlords, and criminal justice providers.

Section II: Voting

The following levels of membership exist:

- Non-Voting Members

- Voting Members

Non-Voting Members

Any person or organization who attends at least one meeting per calendar year is considered a Non-Voting Member in good standing of the Wake County Continuum of Care. Non-Voting Members may choose to receive information from the Wake County CoC including, but not limited to, meeting notices, Continuum of Care meeting minutes, and Continuum of Care reports. To remain in good standing, Non-Voting Members must attend at least one meeting per calendar year to maintain their membership.

Voting Members

In order to become a voting member of the Wake County CoC, an individual or representative of an agency must be a member of the Wake County CoC in good standing, be located or provide services in the CoC's geographic area, and complete a Wake County CoC Voting Member Application Form. Each application will be reviewed and approved by the Continuum of Care Membership Committee following CoC-approved application standards. Once the application form has been approved and the attendance requirements met, the Collaborative Applicant will notify the person/agency of their voting status. There is no minimum or maximum number of voting members on the Wake County CoC.

Organization Voting Members

An agency/organization may apply to receive voting status after attendance at one Continuum of Care meeting. An agency/organization may identify two (2) persons who may vote on behalf of the agency/organization. Only one (1) representative of an agency/organization may cast a vote on each action. If neither representative can attend a duly called meeting, the organization may, with prior notice to the Collaborative Applicant, designate a proxy. Designations of proxies to conduct business should be

rare. If a Continuum of Care voting member is unable to routinely conduct business, the agency/organization should seek to assign representation to another individual.

Voting members must attend at least 75% of CoC meetings in a calendar year to remain active as voting members.

Individual Voting Members

An individual who does not work for or represent an agency/organization may be an individual member. An individual may apply to become a voting member after attendance at one Continuum of Care meeting.

In the case that individual members make up more than 40% of the total CoC membership of both organization and individual voting members present for a vote, the total votes of the individual members will be proportionally weighted so that they do not count for more than 40% of the total CoC membership's vote on any proposed action.

Section III: Membership Duties

Duties shall include:

- Advise CoC Board on policies via committee participation
- Recommend funding priorities to the CoC Board
- Vote on CoC governing issues such as revisions to the CoC charter

Section IV: Meetings and Communications

The Wake County CoC Governing Board will call meetings of the full Wake County CoC membership at least twice annually. The Collaborative Applicant will announce the date, time, and location of the CoC meetings at least ten business days in advance. Agendas shall be published on the CoC website at least ten business days in advance of the meetings. Results of actions taken at a CoC meeting shall be published on the website within 14 days. The CoC Membership will receive information about CoC goals, plans, and operations via a variety of means including a newsletter, notices, agendas, and minutes of committee and CoC Board meetings, all posted on the CoC website.

Section V: Recruitment

The Wake County CoC will publish and appropriately disseminate, in conjunction with the Collaborative Applicant, an open invitation at least annually for persons within the Wake County CoC area to join as new CoC members. Recruitment efforts will be documented by the Collaborative Applicant.

Article IV. CoC Board

Section I. CoC Governance Model

The Governing Board is the policy-setting and decision-making body for the CoC, which is responsible to the CoC membership to fulfill its HUD-defined responsibilities as defined in this charter. The board is responsible for overseeing the planning, coordination of resources, and evaluation of results for the community. The board is empowered to create standing committees and ad-hoc working groups to achieve community goals. The board will look to recommendations from its committees and workgroups to develop sound policies and practices that meet the needs of the community.

Section II. Roles and Responsibilities of the Board

The responsibilities required of the CoC by HUD in the Interim Rule and local requirements are assigned to the Governing Board as outlined below:

- Engage community leaders to develop and implement comprehensive strategies to reduce and end homelessness in Wake.
- Assess the performance of the CoC; identify gaps; develop and implement strategies to address gaps and improve the overall CoC performance, including implementation of best practices.
- Consult with the Collaborative Applicant and HMIS Lead to develop, follow, and update the Governance Charter as needed.
- Recommend to the CoC membership for a vote, any amendments as they arise.
- Receive recommendations on the recipient and sub-recipient performance targets appropriate for population and program type, along with performance and outcomes of ESG and CoC programs.
- Approve the CoC HMIS data privacy plan, data security plan, and data quality plan.
- Establish priorities that align with local and federal policies for recommending projects for CoC related grant funding.
- Coordinate with the Collaborative Applicant on any other funding related to CoC activities or funding.
- Call meetings of the full CoC membership at least semiannually.
- Appoint committees and workgroups to facilitate the work of the CoC.

Section III: Size and Membership of the Wake County CoC Governing Board

The Board will consist of no more than 22, and no fewer than 15 members, all of whom will have one vote. In keeping with the CoC's values, the CoC will work to ensure diversity in experience and representation on the board regarding racial and ethnic diversity, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, history with the criminal justice system, income, and education. No single organization may hold more than 1 seat on the Board. The following seats represent stakeholders that are either appointed, nominated, or elected:

Four (4) jurisdictional/public housing organizations will have permanent seats with representatives to appointed by their organizations:

- City of Raleigh Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) entitlement jurisdiction
- Wake County Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) entitlement jurisdiction
- City of Raleigh Housing Authority
- Wake County Housing Authority

Six (6) System Partners will be nominated by the Board Nominating Committee:

- Up to six System Partner Representatives, such as but not limited to representatives from school districts, medical providers, mainstream benefits or service providers, faith representatives, business representatives, criminal justice, and court systems.

- If any of the permanent members named in the section above choose to not join as CoC Board members, additional System Partner spots may be designated.

Six (6) members will be elected by CoC organization members to represent the following homeless system service providers:

- Domestic Violence
- Coordinated Access/Day Programs
- Shelter
- Permanent Housing
- Two flexible seats

Four (4-6) members who are currently or formerly experiencing homelessness will be elected by people with lived experience. Board Members who represent homeless or formerly homeless individuals will not count toward an organization's total unless they hold management positions within those agencies.

Section IV: Process for Board Member Selection

The CoC is committed to a diverse and inclusive Board in terms of race, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, and other factors. The Membership / Nominating Committee will be charged with monitoring diversity of the Board and undertaking efforts to recruit a diverse membership. All members of the Wake County CoC Governing Board will demonstrate a professional interest in, or personal commitment to, addressing and alleviating the impacts of homelessness on the people of the community.

Section V: Terms of Office

The members of the Wake County CoC Governing Board shall serve two-year staggered terms so that the Board membership does not turn over all at once. The Governing Board will have two officers, who will be selected by the members of the Board for two-year terms. Any member of the Board may serve as an officer. Board officers may serve up to two consecutive terms.

Section VI: Meeting Frequency

The Governing Board will decide how frequently to meet, but, in no event, shall the Board meet less frequently than every other month to conduct the business of the CoC. The Governing Board shall establish a published meeting schedule of regularly scheduled meetings before the start of each calendar year. The first Governing Board seated under this Charter shall establish a regular meeting schedule at its first meeting. Meeting schedules and agendas will be posted on the CoC website by the Collaborative Applicant. Agendas will be published at least 10 days in advance of a Board meeting.

Section VII: Vacancy, Removal, and Resignation

In the event of an Elected Seat vacancy, the members of the Wake County CoC Governing Board will elect a successor to hold the vacant seat for the remainder of the term of the person vacating the seat. At the end of the term, a regular election will be held as described in this charter. In the event of an Appointed Seat vacancy, the Appointed Entity must appoint an individual designee to fill the vacant seat.

Members of the Wake County CoC Governing Board may remove a Board member (nominated or appointed) who is absent for two (2) regularly scheduled Board meetings in any twelve-month period. Unexcused absences from special meetings will generally not be considered in this calculation but may be

included as appropriate. Absences are considered excused if the CoC Board Chair is notified within 8 hours of the meeting via phone, e-mail, or letter.

Wake County CoC Governing Board members (elected or appointed) may also be removed by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the Wake County CoC Governing Board then-seated for cause including but not limited to:

- Failure to perform Board duties
- Failure to comply with this Charter and/or applicable policies
- Engaging in conduct that constitutes a conflict of interest
- Engaging in behavior that causes harm to the reputation of the Continuum

Such seats will then be filled through the process described above under vacancies.

Unless otherwise provided by a written agreement, any member of the Wake County CoC Governing Board may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chair. Any such resignations will take effect at the time specified within the written notice or if the time is not specified in the written notice it will take effect upon its acceptance by the Wake County CoC Governing Board.

Section VIII: Voting and Quorums

A meeting quorum will consist of 50% +1 of the sitting CoC Governing Board members. Attendance at a meeting is defined as in person or via telephone/video when available. Votes may also be held and confirmed by the same quorum via email, for time-sensitive situations.

Section IX: Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest/Recusal Process for Continuum of Care Board

No member may participate in or influence discussions or resulting decisions concerning the award of a grant or other financial benefits to the organization that the member represents or to themselves as individuals. Therefore, any individual participating in or influencing decision making must identify actual or perceived conflicts of interest as they arise and comply with the letter and spirit of this policy. Disclosure should occur at the earliest possible time and if possible, prior to the discussion of any such issue. Individuals with a conflict of interest should recuse themselves from discussion and voting on any issue in which they may have a conflict. A Conflict of Interest Policy will be approved by the Continuum of Care annually.

Written disclosure statements will be reviewed and signed by each member upon joining the board, any time conflicts of interest change, and annually. Members will not be permitted to participate in any discussion or vote until the statement is on file. All voting members shall have the right to recuse themselves from voting on the matter without providing an excuse.

Article V: Committees

Section I: Standing Committees

The work of the CoC is extensive, and there are many responsibilities that a single entity, cannot effectively manage on its own. Therefore, the CoC, through its Board, will establish committees (on-going) and time-limited workgroups to facilitate the work of the CoC. Each committee and workgroup will have a clear purpose, publish agendas and minutes, and communicate its findings, recommendations, and concerns to the Board. In establishing committees, the Board will include categories of expertise and/or stakeholder groups it desires to include on each committee. The Membership Committee of the Raleigh-Wake CoC will be charged with seeking individuals to fill these slots and then presenting the names and qualifications to the Board, which will vote to approve them. Committee membership should reflect the diversity of the community. To the extent feasible, persons with lived experience and at least

one Board member should be part of every committee. Committees will be open to persons (CoC members, Collaborative Applicant staff, and others) who have expertise and interest in the subject matter of the committee, as well as persons with lived experiences. Committees may elect a chair, subject to ratification by the Board, except for the Membership/ Nominating Committee, which will be chaired by the Vice-Chair of the Governing Board.

Standing committees shall include but not be limited to:

Executive Committee (new)

The Executive Committee will be composed of the CoC Governance Board Chair and the Chair of each the Governance Committees. The Executive Committee is responsible for ensuring that members and committees are fulfilling their responsibilities in compliance with governing documents (especially the conflict of interest policy), funder requirements, and legal statutes. It sets the agenda for CoC Governing Board meetings and CoC meetings. The Executive Committee will receive the written grievances for the Collaborative Applicant and appoint a workgroup to review and respond to the grievance within 15 business days of the grievance. The Executive Committee also convenes ad hoc committees for specific tasks and/or special issues, such as convening an annual Written Standards Workgroup comprised of members from multiple committees to review and update CoC written standards.

Funding Review (new)

The Funding Review Committee reviews and ranks project applications for the CoC Program and other approved funding for recommendation to the CoC Governing Board. Collaborative Applicant staff and this committee will work together to develop fair and transparent processes and recommend the scoring and ranking criteria for projects eligible for funding under the CoC Program. Scoring and review committee members are approved by the CoC Governing Board. Homeless services agencies receiving or requesting CoC funding are prohibited from participating in this committee.

Nominations (new)

The Nominations committee engages in recruitment activities to engage as many and diverse stakeholders in the CoC as possible, including recruitment for participating and membership on CoC Governing Board and the CoC committees. This committee works in collaboration with CoC Governing Board to develop any qualifications for membership in CoC entities as deemed necessary.

House Wake! Committee (Coordinated Assessment System aka CAS) (new)

The committee for the House Wake! Coordinated Assessment System provides macro-level oversight of the coordinated assessment system. The committee, in coordination with the Coordinated Assessment (Centralized Intake) administering agency, troubleshoots issues and makes recommendations to the CoC Governing Board and the full CoC membership on any macro-level changes for system improvement, such as significant changes to policy and prioritization of people experiencing homelessness. This committee must include representation from the CoC Collaborative Applicant.

Data Advisory Committee (new)

The Data Advisory Committee identifies needs for HMIS training and reviews HMIS reports to be submitted to funders such as HUD or ESG jurisdictions. This committee is also responsible for reporting periodically on the status of data completeness and other data quality measures. The members on the data advisory committee regularly review data policies and procedures and provide recommendations on how system-wide data performance can be improved. In collaboration with the HMIS Lead, the committee will

ensure the completion of the Annual Gaps Analysis and complete system and project-level performance evaluation and data monitoring.

Racial Equity (new)

The Racial Equity committee evaluates the Wake County CoC policies and data related to racial equity. The purpose of this committee is to ensure that equal access to safe and affordable services and housing is the norm for African Americans, American Indians, and Latinx peoples. This committee will also monitor the extent that these populations are overrepresented in the homelessness system, recommends policy changes based on data and best practices, creates, and supports system partnerships, and develops plans and processes to assess whether the CoC's policies and resource allocation decisions are positively impacting inequities among homeless individuals and families in the community.

Lived Experience Committee (new)

The Lived Experience committee will provide the consumers' perspective to committees, workgroups, and the Board.

Article VI: Collaborative Applicant

Section I: Selection Process

Once the Governing Board is in place, the CoC Board will develop a process to select and approve a Collaborative Applicant for a five-year term with the understanding that a Collaborative Applicant may be selected more frequently if there are performance concerns.

Section II: Role

The Continuum of Care must designate a legal entity that is also a Continuum of Care Program eligible applicant to serve as the Collaborative Applicant. The Collaborative Applicant is responsible for collecting and combining the required application information from all Continuum of Care Program funded projects within the geographic area. The Collaborative Applicant is also responsible for submitting the annual application to HUD for Continuum of Care Program funding and to apply for Continuum of Care Planning dollars. These and any additional responsibilities are documented in the Continuum of Care Collaborative Applicant Memorandum of Understanding.

Before the submission of the annual application to HUD for Continuum of Care Program funding, the Collaborative Applicant must submit a final draft of the application to the CoC Governing Board for approval. Depending on the timing of the submission to HUD, the CoC Governing Board and Collaborative Applicant will create a timeline for submission to the Continuum of Care. The Collaborative Applicant in Wake County will also provide staff and leadership to the various committees and workgroups that constitute the CoC.

Section III: Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Collaborative Applicant include:

- Propose revisions to this governance charter, to ensure compliance with all procedures and policies needed to comply with HUD requirements and with HMIS requirements, including a code of conduct and recusal policy for the Wake County CoC Governing Board members and any person acting on behalf of the Wake County CoC Governing Board.

- In consultation with recipients of Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds within the CoC's geographic area, establish and operate either a centralized or coordinated access system that provides an initial, comprehensive assessment to ensure prioritization and matching of the needs of individuals and families to housing and services.
- In consultation with recipients of ESG funds within the CoC, draft written standards for the CoC Governing Board approval and providing for CoC assistance.
- Monitor the performance of CoC and ESG recipients and sub-recipients.
- Report the outcomes of ESG and CoC projects to HUD and the CoC Governing Board, at least annually.
- Facilitate on-going coordination among CoC components.
- Strategize to maximize efficiency in service provision.
- Coordinate training of staff implementing CoC projects.
- Identify best practices to implement in the CoC and educate CoC member agencies about best practices.
- Share information with the CoC Governing Board to facilitate effective leadership of the CoC.
- Coordinate the implementation of a housing and service system within the CoC's geographic area that meets the needs of homeless individuals and families. At a minimum, such a system encompasses the following:
 - Outreach, engagement, and assessment
 - Shelter, housing, and supportive services
 - Prevention strategies
- Plan for and conduct, at least annually, a point-in-time count of homeless persons within the CoC geographic area that meets HUD requirements, including a housing inventory of shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing reserved for homeless persons, in general, and chronically homeless persons and veterans, specifically, as HUD requires.
- Conduct an annual gaps analysis of the needs of homeless people, as compared to available housing and services within the CoC geographic area.
- Provide the information required to complete the Consolidated Plan(s) within the CoC geographic area.
- Consult with State and local government ESG recipients within the CoC geographic area on the plan for allocating ESG funds and reporting on and evaluating the performance of ESG recipients and sub-recipients
- Develop a proposed plan for the Wake County CoC Governing Board regarding public education on homelessness, advocacy at the state or local level related to housing and homelessness, and policy recommendations to state or local governments in the CoC region.

- Design, operate and follow a collaborative process for the development of a CoC application to HUD.
- Submit the final application in response to the CoC Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).
- On behalf of the Governing Board, holding meetings of the full CoC membership, with published agendas at least semiannually.
- Staffing CoC committees and workgroups, including preparation of agendas and minutes, meeting materials and communications, maintaining records, and distribution lists.
- Assisting the CoC, through its committees and workgroups, to develop performance targets and evaluate performance.

Section IV: Evaluation

The Governing Board will hold the Collaborative Applicant accountable for performance through a Memorandum of Understanding that is reviewed and updated annually. Any member of the Governing Board with a conflict of interest shall not participate in the annual review of the Collaborative Applicant. Only the Collaborative Applicant will be eligible to apply for CoC planning funds through the CoC grant process. These funds will be used, as directed by the Governing Board, to provide dedicated staff and resources, and to undertake planning projects, to support the work of the CoC.

Article VII: HMIS Lead Agency

Section I: Selection Process

With the adoption of this Governance Charter, the Governing Board, through its Data Advisory Committee, will become responsible for guiding the CoC's selection of an HMIS Lead Agency and for monitoring HMIS operations in the CoC's geographic area. The Committee will keep the Governing Board apprised of HMIS concerns and will make recommendations to the Board concerning issues of policy and participation. The Data Advisory Committee will develop a process to select and approve a new HMIS Lead, as applicable, given the CoC's participation in a multi-jurisdiction HMIS.

Section II: Roles and Responsibilities

The Raleigh Wake CoC is part of a multi-CoC HMIS implementation in North Carolina which has contracted with the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness to carry out a significant portion of the HMIS Lead responsibilities. The multi-CoC implementation has a North Carolina HMIS Governance Committee which includes representation from the member CoCs, including Wake County.

The Raleigh Wake Partnership to End and Prevent Homelessness serves as the local System Administrator for the HMIS in the Wake County CoC and currently represents the CoC on the NC HMIS Governance Committee.

The HMIS Lead and the local System Administrator:

- Ensure that projects are meeting national data quality objectives
- Ensure that the CoC has an HMIS data privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan
- Document compliance project rules and record requirements
- Ensure that the HMIS is administered in compliance with HUD requirements

- Ensure consistent participation by CoC and ESG recipients in HMIS
- Ensure that the CoC has a successful and operational HMIS
- Coordinate efforts to encourage non-HUD funded projects to participate

Section IV: Evaluation

The Governing Board will hold the HMIS Lead Agency accountable for performance via the monitoring work performed by the Data Advisory Committee and its HMIS Subcommittee (if created). There will be an annual review of the HMIS Lead Agency.