

## GOVERNANCE CHARTER OF THE ATLANTA HOMELESS CONTINUUM-OF-CARE

### Purpose

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The Atlanta Homeless Continuum-of-Care (AHCoc) serves the needs of vulnerable homeless and potentially homeless populations in the City of Atlanta. The AHCoc sets system-wide policies, develops and implements standards and provides planning oversight to support the goal of ending homelessness. The AHCoc functions as the recognized authority for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Homeless Assistance Continuum-of-Care (CoC) funding for the City of Atlanta.

The AHCoc's purposes include:

- Promoting community-wide planning and implementation to end homelessness
- Coordinating providers, State and Local Government to re-house homeless individuals and families
- Accessing resources, including the application for funding in the annual HUD Homeless Assistance Continuum-of-Care Grants competition and leveraging mainstream resources
- Driving performance across system
- Ensuring compliance with HUD regulations and assigned Continuum-of-Care responsibilities, including alignment with Federal and local priorities

*Governance:* The AHCoc is governed by the Atlanta Homeless Continuum-of-Care Governing Council (the Governing Council), a voluntary policymaking body chartered by the City of Atlanta and approved by the AHCoc membership, to sanction the decisions of the AHCoc, in accordance with all applicable laws.

*Membership:* The AHCoc membership is a voluntary association of representatives of leadership, service and advocacy organizations related to Atlanta's homeless population, or individuals who live or work in the City of Atlanta that are homeless, formerly homeless and/or who demonstrate a personal commitment to ending homelessness in the City of Atlanta. These members commit to the goals of the AHCoc, as set by the Governing Council.

## Responsibilities

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The Governing Council works with the membership to fulfill the following responsibilities, which include Coe planning, Coe operations and HMIS management:

- Promote a comprehensive housing and services system that maximizes the effective delivery of solutions to the vulnerable homeless and potentially homeless, including
  - Assessing gaps in the housing and services system, including conducting at minimum, biennial Point-in-Time (PIT) Homeless Count;
  - Approving the Strategic Plan, and monitoring and adjusting strategy accordingly throughout implementation;
  - Coordinating the housing and services system with the Federal Government, State of Georgia, City of Atlanta, Fulton and DeKalb Counties, jurisdictional Housing Authorities, the Regional Commission on Homelessness, HUD Emergency Solutions Grants, HUD consolidated planning efforts, and other similar entities in the Atlanta Metro region; and
  - Supporting public and private resourcing for the goals within the overarching plan to end homelessness
  
- Ensure AHCoC is meeting all of the operational responsibilities assigned to it by HUD regulations, including:
  - Setting AHCoC agenda, structuring AHCoC committees and written decision-making process as needed, engaging AHCoC members via meetings and annual invitation to new members, and annually approving a governance charter;
  - Establishing local funding priorities, homeless policies and standards, and performance measurements for both overall system and AHCoC and ESG recipient programs;
  - Overseeing system and individual agency performance, including engaging with non-performers to manage system-wide impact, and reporting outcomes of ESG and AHCoC programs to HUD;
  - Establishing operational coordination programs, including but not limited to a Coordinated Assessment system;

- Designating the collaborative applicant and overseeing /approving HUD annual Notice of Funds Available (NOFA) process;
- Contracting with 501(c)3 for AHCoC operational implementation via a performance-based contract with an annual assessment of performance; and
- Designating and operating a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in compliance with HUD requirements, including designating an HMIS lead, ensuring consistent participation in HMIS, and establishing HMIS policies and procedures, privacy plan, security plan and data quality plan

The Continuum-of-Care membership conducts its work via committees structured by the Governing Council, to recommend decisions to the Governing Council for approval. The committees will:

- Propose policies, standards and system-wide procedural decisions that improve NOFA outcomes for application;
- Recommend and support implementation as needed of funding priorities, policy standards, HMIS standards, performance standards;
- Participate in the development and support the implementation of the Strategic Plan; and
- Ratify Governing Council elected positions

## **Governing Council**

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**Authority:** The Governing Council has the authority to act on behalf of the Continuum-of-Care., including the designation of the AHCoC collaborative applicant, administrative and fiscal agent(s) and HMIS lead. It is not a legal entity. Its authority is granted by HUD mandate, City of Atlanta ordinance and ratification of elected positions by the AHCoC membership.

**Responsibilities:** Governing Council members shall act in the best interest of the goal of ending homelessness in Atlanta.

**Composition:** The Governing Council composition intends to maximize coordination of resources meaningful to ending homelessness, and shall align to HUD priorities. It shall be no smaller than 13 and no larger than 19 voting members, including:

- Voting ex-officio representatives appointed by virtue of office, from
  - Federal Government (1);
  - State Government agencies (2);
  - Fulton County (1);
  - City of Atlanta Council (2);
  - City of Atlanta administration (1); and
  - Atlanta Housing Authority (1)
  
- Up to 11 at-large members from key stakeholder organizations in AHCoC, including but not limited to:
  - a business and/or foundation community;
  - a regional planning body;
  - a civic and/or faith leader with expertise in homeless services provision;
  - a behavioral health and/or healthcare services provider;
  - a chronic homeless services provider;
  - a homeless services provider that is a recipient of HUD's Emergency Solutions Grants program;
  - an organization with expertise in workforce or employment;
  - a homeless or formerly homeless person;
  - Atlanta Public Schools, and
  - a human services agency.

Additionally, the Board Chair and Executive Director from the 501(c)3 will be ex-officio non-voting members of the Governing Council.

**Terms:** Terms of service for at-large members shall be three years. At-large Governing Council members may serve up to two terms, at which time they must rotate off the Council for at least one year. A person serving as an officer at the time his/her second 3-year term comes to an end, however, may serve the full 2-year term of office to which he/she was elected. Ex-officio members do not have term limits.

**Election:** At-large members are nominated by the Governing Council and then ratified by the Mayor of the City of Atlanta, followed by final ratification by the Continuum-of-Care membership.

**Eligibility:** Governing Council members shall be members of the AHCoC.

**Vacancies:** Vacancies shall be filled by nomination by the Governing Council in the same manner as original appointments. Such appointment shall be for the remainder of the un-expired term.

**Inaugural Council:** The inaugural Governing Council was appointed by the Mayor of the City of Atlanta in January 2014. By January 2015, the inaugural Council will propose an elected slate of Governing Council members, divided into 3 classes, to serve initial terms of one, two and three years. Terms of office for at-large members thereafter will be three years.

**Officers:** The officers of the Governing Council shall consist of up to 4 officers, with at minimum, a Chair and a Secretary.

- The Chair is responsible for scheduling meetings and setting and presiding over the meeting agendas. The Chair shall execute all papers, documents and instruments to be executed by the AHCoC.
- The Secretary shall keep accurate records of the acts and proceedings of all meetings and votes of the Governing Council and AHCoC, or designate another person to do so at each meeting. The Secretary shall have general charge of all records and shall keep or cause to be kept all such records.

The Governing Council shall recommend its Chair from the at-large members of the Governing Council. The Mayor of the City of Atlanta will then appoint the Chair, subject to any approval requirements of the City of Atlanta Council. The Governing Council shall elect the Secretary. Each officer shall hold office for a term of up to two years. All officers shall hold office until their successors have been elected and qualified. Officers may serve up to two consecutive terms. No person may hold more than one office.

**Meetings/Quorum:** The Governing Council shall meet no less than four times per year to conduct its regular business. The presence of not less than one-half of the current membership of the Governing Council is requisite and shall constitute a quorum of all meetings of the Governing Council. Ex-officio members may send voting delegates; if a delegate is needed for a meeting, the official member must inform the Chair so that no conflicts of interest can be assured. Roberts Rules of Order will be used to conduct meetings.

**Voting:** All votes shall be by voice or ballot at the will of the majority of those in attendance at a meeting with a quorum represented. Electronic voting outside of meetings is also allowed, if vote responses represent a quorum. No member may vote on any item that presents a real or perceived conflict-of-interest.

**Conflict of Interest and Prohibitions:** Any Governing Council member having a conflict of interest or a conflict of responsibility on any matter shall make known the conflict and refrain from voting on such matter. Governing Council members will sign a Conflict of Interest policy annually. Additionally, contracts between Governing Council members (or affiliate(s)) and any HUD funded agencies must be disclosed and ratified by two-thirds majority vote of the Governing Council.

**Compensation:** The Governing Council shall not receive any compensation for service other than approved reimbursable expenses.

**Resignation / Removal:** Any member may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chair. Any such resignations shall take effect at the time specified within the written notice. A member may be removed by two-thirds vote of the Governing Council if:

- The member is absent and unexcused from two or more meetings of the Governing Council in a twelve month period; or
- For cause, such as but not limited to, failure to disclose a conflict of interest, if before any meeting of the Governing Council at which a vote on removal will be made, the Governing Council member in question is given electronic or written notification of the Governing Council's intention to discuss his/her case and is given the opportunity to be heard at the meeting of the Governing Council

### **Committees, Work Groups and Advisory Groups**

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On an annual basis, the Governing Council will establish committees, work groups or advisory groups as it deems necessary to accomplish the work of the AHCoC. Inaugural committees may include: Ranking & Review, HMIS, Policy Standards, Performance Standards, Coordinated Intake & Assessment, Strategic Plan, and Nominating/Governance. The Governing Council will set terms of committee assignments, including chair or process for selecting chair, goals, procedures and anticipated outcomes. There will be an annual process for committee assignments, which will include the ability to self-nominate or volunteer.

**Relationship to AHCoC:** Only AHCoC members may serve on a committee. Committees should seek to leverage the full AHCoC for input wherever possible, and may call special meetings of the AHCoC for this purpose.

**Specific Committee Requirements:**

- No HUD-funded provider, or affiliate of, may sit on the Ranking & Review Committee or any other committee associated with decisions for which the provider, or affiliate of, has any financial interest.
- Members of any committees that vote on funding or financial matters shall sign an annual Conflict-of-Interest policy annually.
- The Strategic Planning Committee shall be chaired by a member of the Governing Council.
- The Nominating/Governance Committee should consist of 50% Governing Council members and 50% non-Governing Council members. The Committee chair shall be a member of the Governing Council and shall not have a vote except in the case of tie.

**AHCoC Membership**

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**Composition:** The AHCoC composition intends to broadly represent community stakeholders who are engaged in or committed to ending homelessness in the City of Atlanta, and shall align to HUD priorities. Members should broadly include homeless service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, educational institutions, social service and health providers, affordable housing developers, community organizations, homeless and formerly homeless individuals, individuals committed to ending homelessness, and others who meet such reasonable additional qualifications, if any, established by the Governing Council. All Continuum-of-Care and Emergency Solution grantees are required to be members.

**Membership:** All members (voting or non-voting) will be required to sign a form to commit to the goals of the AHCoC, as set by the Governing Council.

There are two types of membership, voting organization and non-voting.

- Voting organization membership is open to any organization with a current HMIS account or certified domestic violence agency; these organizations must have operations within the City of Atlanta. Each voting organization shall designate one individual that will serve as its official voting delegate, who shall have attended at least one AHCoC meeting and one AHCoC committee meeting in the previous 12 months to any vote
- Non-voting membership includes any organization or person who lives or works in the City of Atlanta that is committed to the goals and priorities of the AHCoC. Note that any person employed by a voting organizational member may also join the AHCoC as a non-voting individual member.

**Recruitment:** The AHCoC or its designee will publish and appropriately disseminate an open invitation at least annually for persons who live or work within the City of Atlanta to join as new members.

**Meetings:** The AHCoC full membership will meet at least twice annually as a full body. These meetings will include discussion and input from the membership. Meetings will be announced publicly, utilizing one or more of the following: the City of Atlanta website, the 501(c)3 website, the AHCoC listserv.

**Qualifications:** Members will be required to sign a form to commit to the goals of the AHCoC, as set by the Governing Council.

**Voting:** Consensus of the group as a whole is considered to be the most useful and healthy means of making a decision. However, in the event that a consensus is not forthcoming, the following voting regulations will be called upon: majority vote, where all voting organizations have one vote; a quorum will be represented by a presence of 25% of the voting members; votes may also occur through a proxy for a voting organization.

## **Other**

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AHCoC charter shall be approved by the AHCoC annually.

The charter may be amended by 2/3 majority vote of the Governing Council.

The process for selecting the Governing Council must be reviewed, updated and approved at least once every 5 years.