



**TX-503**

**AUSTIN/TRAVIS CO.**

**CONTINUUM OF CARE**

**GOVERNANCE**

**CHARTER**

Updated September 2024

# **BACKGROUND**

A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a geographically based group of representatives that carries out the planning responsibilities required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's CoC Program (HUD CoC). These representatives are generally individuals, either by their employment or experience, focused on ending homelessness in the Austin/Travis County area of Texas.

The HEARTH Act, enacted into law on May 20, 2009, consolidated the homeless assistance programs administered by HUD under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act into a single grant program and revised the Emergency Shelter Grants program, renaming it the Emergency Solutions Grant program (ESG). The HEARTH Act also codified into law the CoC planning process, a longstanding part of HUD's application process to assist homeless persons by providing greater community-wide coordination, decision making, and leadership into the Federal Registration under 24 CFR Part 578.

## **THE TX-503 AUSTIN/TRAVIS COUNTY COC**

The TX-503 Austin/Travis County Continuum of Care covers Travis County, the City of Austin, and the City of Pflugerville. Within the geographic area there are more than 50 homelessness assistance programs including emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing.

# DEFINITIONS

## **AFFINITY GROUPS**

Collection of stakeholders, with an established meeting frequency, whose self-determined purpose furthers and supports the strategic work of the Homelessness Response System, yet whose operations are not designated by the HRS Leadership Council. It is recommended that all Affinity Groups have a nominated co-chair structure and be willing to liaise with HRS Leadership Council, as requested.

## **COORDINATED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM**

A centralized or coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake, assessment, and provision of referrals. A centralized or coordinated assessment system covers the geographic area, is easily accessible by individuals and families seeking housing or services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool. Also referred to as Coordinated Entry.

## **COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT**

The Collaborative Applicant is the eligible entity responsible for submitting the CoC application for funding to HUD. They lead the planning and coordination efforts to develop the CoC's application and must ensure that it meets HUD's requirements. The Collaborative Applicant service as the primary point of contact with HUD and is responsible for managing the CoC's grant funds. The Collaborative Applicant is also responsible for coordinating and administering the activities and responsibilities of the CoC as specified in the Governance Charter.

## **COC COMMITTEE**

A standing group of CoC stakeholders, appointed by, and similar in composition and procedural action to the HRS Leadership Council, which is responsible for the oversight and progress of actionable goals delegated by the HRS Leadership Council.

## **COC STAKEHOLDER**

Any individual or representative of an entity who lives or works within the Austin/Travis County Continuum of Care geographic area with a vested interest in ending homelessness.

## **COC WORKGROUP**

A group of CoC stakeholders, reporting to a CoC Committee, organized to work on specific goals and ongoing priorities outlined in the HRS Governance Roadmap. Workgroups consist of CoC stakeholders who have relevant expertise or specialization in a subject matter. Workgroups may be created or disbanded as the needs of the Committee change.

## **CONTINUUM OF CARE (COC) PROGRAM**

The HUD Continuum of Care program is designed to promote community wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; provide funding for organizations to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families; promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream program by homeless individuals and families; and optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families. The Continuum of Care program is the principal focus of this Governance Charter.

## **CONTINUUM OF CARE (COC) PROGRAM NOFO COMPETITION**

The competitive grant provided under 24 CFR 578 for which only the Collaborative Applicant of a CoC may submit an application. Eligible components include Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, Transitional Housing, Joint Transitional and Rapid Rehousing, Supportive Services Only, HMIS, CoC Planning, and Administration.

## **CONTINUUM OF CARE (COC)**

The group organized to carry out the responsibilities required under 24 CFR 578 and that is composed of representatives of organizations, including nonprofit homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans,

and homeless and formerly homeless persons to the extent these groups are represented within the geographic area and are available to participate.

### **EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANTS (ESG)**

The entitlement grant provided under 24 CFR 576 to metropolitan areas and counties to provide assistance to those experiencing homelessness. Eligible components include Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Homelessness Prevention, Rapid Rehousing, HMIS, and Administration.

### **HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (HMIS)**

The electronic database designated by the CoC to comply with the HMIS requirements prescribed by HUD. Data entered into the local database is used to report system-wide performance measures.

### **HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE SYSTEM (HRS)**

The HRS treats homelessness as an emergency to be responded to quickly and effectively. It consists of the local strategies and use of dedication interventions, resources, services, facilities, and processes which ensures homelessness in Austin is rare, brief, and nonrecurring.

### **HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE SYSTEM LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (HRS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL)**

The CoC Board and primary decision-making body for the Austin/Travis County CoC, responsible for leadership and oversight of governance.

### **HMIS LEAD**

The entity designated by the CoC to operate and facilitate to CoC's HMIS database on its behalf.

# **MISSION, PURPOSE, & AUTHORITY**

## **MISSION**

The Austin/Travis County CoC is a stakeholder-led planning body whose mission is to equitably prevent and end homelessness in our community. This goal is achieved by fostering shared responsibility, collaborative planning, and aligning the stakeholders and resources essential to implementing the strategic priorities of Austin's plan to prevent and end homelessness.

## **PUPORSE**

HUD charges communities that receive funds under the CoC Program of the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act (HEARTH Act) with specific responsibilities. This Governance Charter summarizes the responsibilities and authorities for operation and governance of the Austin/Travis Couty CoC under the HEARTH Act or any successor legislation.

## **COMMUNITY WIDE COMMITMENT**

The Austin/Travis County CoC is responsible for the activities and outcomes of the Austin Homelessness Response System, the inter-connected resources, services, facilities, and processes which support individuals from experiencing homelessness to independent stable housing. The CoC's work is guided by the mission of the HRS to equitably end homelessness within our community. As the primary decision-making body for the CoC, the HRS Leadership Council, hereafter referred to as Leadership Council, is responsible for the progress of the mission through the coordinated delegation of tasks and efforts to appropriate CoC Committees and Workgroups.

## **COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT**

Leadership Council has selected the Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) as the Collaborative Applicant and HMIS Lead Agency of the CoC. As such, ECHO is charged by

the CoC with coordinating, supporting, and facilitating the activities of the CoC as outlined in the Collaborative Applicant Memorandum of Understanding and HMIS Memorandum of Understanding.

## **GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION**

The Austin/Travis County CoC is composed of representatives from relevant organizations within its geographic area to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the CoC. Relevant organizations include nonprofit homeless assistance providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, and organizations that serve veterans and homeless individuals with lived expertise.

## **COVERAGE AREA**

The CoC reaffirms its geographic area of responsibility and coverage annually during the CoC NOFO competition and the CoC Registration Process. Leadership Council currently recognizes that its responsibility is to those experiencing homelessness within the City of Austin, City of Pflugerville, and Travis County. To that end, the CoC works closely in the development and reporting of required Consolidated Plans and actions plans for entitlement grant recipients within the geographic area.

## **IMPACT AREAS: PARTNERSHIPS, COORDINATED ENTRY, DATA**

HUD developed the concept of the CoC in 1994 through its annual competition for homelessness assistance grants. The CoC was envisioned as a local network that plans and coordinates funding for services and housing to assist homeless individuals and families. The CoC is designed by the CoC Interim Rule 24 CFR 578 to achieve the following objectives:

- Promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness.
- Provide funding for efforts for rapidly rehousing homeless individuals and families.
- Promote access to and effective use of mainstream programs.
- Optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

In practice, the CoC's authority and responsibility sits at the intersection of the crisis response system, providing basic needs to those experiencing homelessness, and the housing stabilization system, providing various and appropriate pathways from homelessness to independent stable housing. The CoC delegates and oversees the following critical infrastructure activities necessary for the planning, tracking, and facilitation of ending homelessness in the Austin/Travis County area:

**I. Coordinated Entry**

The CoC establishes a community assessment tool and community prioritization standards to ensure households are referred to homelessness interventions appropriate for their needs and choice.

**II. Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS)**

The centralized database of homelessness activities, resources, and recordkeeping enables the community to identify system needs and gaps as well as most strategically invest limited resources and efforts.

**III. Written Standards for Service Delivery**

The established definitions and expectations of homelessness interventions and services to ensure comparable services tailored to the unique needs of the HRS.

**IV. Outcome Goals**

Ensures that projects, regardless of funding sources, meet the community expectation for high performance and equitable outcomes.

**V. Governance**

The CoC established framework for the identification, delegation, design, and implementation of activities,



policies, processes and collaborations to address system issues as they arise.

## **COMMUNITY EXPANSION**

The crisis of homelessness encompasses more than a single community or geographic area. Strategic alignment of efforts and resources beyond the current geographic area may be necessary to impact the sources of homelessness and ensure those experiencing homelessness options for permanent housing to their preferences. To that end, the CoC may enter negotiations with other Continuums of Care to expand its responsibilities, authority, and influence, at the direction of Leadership Council.

# **OVERVIEW OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Austin/Travis County CoC will complete the following activities to ensure that the resources, activities, and coordination of the Homelessness Response System is organized and structured to achieve its goal of fulfilling the mission of the CoC to end homelessness in Austin.

## **OPERATING A COC**

### **I. REGULAR MEETINGS**

Regular and consistent meetings between CoC governance members, providers, funders, stakeholders, and other representatives are critical to the functioning of the HRS. To that end, the CoC will hold bi-annual All Stakeholders Meeting with a published agenda. Leadership Council will hold public meetings for the CoC at least 6 times per year and strive for monthly meetings. Other CoC Committees and Workgroups will establish meeting schedules necessary to carry out their purpose and scope of work.

### **II. INVITATION FOR NEW MEMBERS**

Diverse representation and inclusion of additional stakeholders furthers the CoC goals of racial equity and coordinated system's planning and implementation. To that end, the CoC will issue a public invitation for new

stakeholders from within the CoC’s geographic area at least annually, affirmatively outreaching to organizations and partners with resources dedicated to those experiencing homelessness.

**III. BOARD SELECTION**

The CoC has adopted the Board Selection Policy to ensure Leadership Council is composed of representatives of diverse racial backgrounds, lived experience of homelessness, and across the Homelessness Response System. The CoC will review, update, and approve the selection process at least once every five years. The CoC board must meet all requirements as specified in 24 CFR Part 578.5(b).

**IV. ADDITIONAL COMMITTEES**

The CoC utilizes Committees and Workgroups composed of CoC stakeholders and experts to complete the work of Leadership Council. These groups must operate in accordance with the Governance Charter, Code of Conduct, and Conflict of Interest policy.

**V. GOVERNANCE CHARTER**

In consultation with the Collaborative Applicant and HMIS Lead Agency, the CoC will develop, follow, and update annually this Governance Charter to include all procedures and policies needed to comply with 24 CFR Part 578.5(b) and with HMIS requirements as prescribed by HUD. The CoC will also develop, follow, and update annually a conflict of interest policy for the board, its chair(s), and any person acting on behalf of the board.

**VI. MONITORING**

The HEARTH Act charges CoCs to monitor the performance, compliance, and project outcomes of projects dedicated to serving those experiencing homelessness in the geographic area. The CoC and its Collaborative Applicant provides support, training, and technical assistance to providers within the geographic area.

Furthermore, Leadership Council will identify entities within the CoC to take remedial action in accordance with performance monitoring policies and procedures.

**VII. EVALUATION**

To ensure that the homelessness interventions utilized by the HRS are tailored to the unique conditions of the community, the CoC will establish performance targets as appropriate for subpopulations and homeless intervention program types in consultation with recipients and subrecipients. The establishment of consistent definitions for homeless intervention program types enable consistency in service delivery and system outcomes.

**VIII. COORDINATED ENTRY**

The CoC will establish and operate a coordinated assessment system, in consultation with Emergency Solutions Grant and other program recipients, in compliance with Coordinated Entry Written Standards. The coordinated assessment will provide an initial, comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services and ensure referral to appropriate housing and services.

**IX. WRITTEN STANDARDS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY**

The CoC will establish and consistently follow written standards for providing assistance, in consultation with the recipients of Emergency Solutions Grant program funds. The Austin/Travis County Continuum of Care has developed and adopted Written Standards for Service Delivery for the Homelessness Response System following the requirements of 24 CFR Part 578.7(a)(9).

**COC PROGRAM AND PLANNING OBLIGATIONS**

The CoC is responsible for coordinating the implementation of a housing and service system to prevent and end homelessness within its geographic area. This responsibility includes:

**I. SYSTEM COORDINATION**

The CoC will develop and maintain a plan that includes coordinating the implementation of the HRS providing housing and service systems within its geographic area that meets the needs of the homeless individuals and families. At a minimum, such system encompasses the following: outreach, engagement, and assessment; shelter, housing, and supportive services; and prevention strategies.

**II. POINT IN TIME COUNT (PIT)**

The CoC will, on a biennial basis, plan and conduct a point in time count of homeless persons within the geographic area. This count will include all persons living in a place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans, as well as persons living in emergency shelter and transitional housing projects.

**III. ANNUAL GAPS ANALYSIS**

The Collaborative Applicant will conduct a gaps analysis of the homeless needs and services available within the geographic area. This annual gaps analysis will include various analysis of system performance and outcomes in the preceding year to highlight how well the system is doing in serving people's needs and to make recommendations about system improvement. The report will also be used to inform funding priorities.

**IV. CONSOLIDATED PLANNING**

The coordination, planning, and alignment of efforts to end homelessness across the geographic area is critical to achieving the goal of ending homelessness for the community. To that end, the Collaborative Applicant, as appointed by Leadership Council, actively participates in the development and accuracy of regional Consolidated Plan and action plans for the regions included in the CoC geographic area.

**V. ESG CONSULTATION**

Recognizing that the Emergency Solutions Grant provided funding for critical activities and crisis services for those

experiencing homelessness, the Collaborative Applicant, as appointed by Leadership Council, consults with the state and local ESG recipients within the CoC geographic area for the planning and allocation of funds. The CoC also establishes and supports the shared performance outcomes and monitoring of ESG program recipients and subrecipients.

## **DESIGNATING AND OPERATING HMIS**

The CoC will designate a single Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for the CoC and identify an eligible recipient to fulfill the requirements of the HMIS, including the selection of an HMIS vendor, providing HMIS technical assistance and training, ensuring all HUD required reports are submitted, and maintaining the integrity of data quality. The HMIS Lead Agency ensures all requirements are met to fulfill its responsibilities as outlined in the HMIS Policy and Procedures, the Governance Charter, and other local policies adopted and approved by Leadership Council.

The Austin/Travis County CoC has selected ECHO to fulfill the responsibilities of the HMIS Lead Agency as well as additional responsibilities as outlined in the HMIS Lead Agency Memorandum of Understanding.

## **DESIGNATING THE COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT AND COC PROGRAM PLANNING FUNDS**

The Continuum of Care Program NOFO requires the selection of an eligible recipient to complete the requirements of the CoC Program NOFO, including the completion of the collaborative application detailing community accomplishments and efforts to end homelessness; the priority listing detailed funding recommendations for CoC Program funds; and the completion of the CoC Planning Grant.

Leadership Council has selected ECHO to fulfill the responsibilities of the collaborative applicant as well as additional responsibilities outlined in the Collaborative Applicant Memorandum of Understanding. Leadership Council, or its appointed representative(s), maintains sole responsibility to approve content and submission of the collaborative application, priority listing, and CoC planning grant.

# GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Austin/Travis County CoC recognizes Leadership Council as the CoC Board and primary decision-making body for the geographic area, responsible for achieving the goals and objectives of the community to create and manage the system to prevent and end homelessness. Leadership Council will establish and maintain the strategic vision of the CoC and strive to executively delegate tasks, efforts, and actions to ensure progress of the mission. Leadership Council will utilize the CoC governance structure including Committees and Workgroups to further and align the work of the CoC.

## LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REQUIREMENTS

### I. REPRESENTATION

Leadership Council must be comprised of representatives from relevant organizations and projects serving those experiencing homelessness including subpopulation, persons with substance use disorders; persons with HIV/AIDS; veterans; persons experiencing chronic homelessness; families with children; unaccompanied youth; persons with persistent mental health; victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. One Leadership Council member may represent the interests of more than one homeless subpopulation, and Leadership Council must attempt to ensure a diverse representation of stakeholders to efficiently achieve its responsibilities. See Appendix A for the current HRS Representation.

### II. HOMELESSNESS REPRESENTATION

Leadership Council must meet the minimum requirements outlined in the Selection Policy. That is, Leadership Council will have a minimum of 3 dedicated seats that are reserved for people with lived expertise of homelessness. Leadership Council will strive to recruit beyond the minimum requirements.

### **III. EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION**

The HRS is dedicated to racial equity and building a Leadership Council that is representative of Austin/Travis County, providers, stakeholders within the HRS, and most importantly, individuals and families experiencing homelessness. To that end, 1/3 of Leadership Council will be composed of people who identify as non-white and/or Hispanic.

### **IV. SELECTION POLICY**

Leadership Council has developed and adopted the Leadership Council Selection Policy to maximize diverse representation of HRS stakeholders and individuals with lived experience, and to further the CoC's goal of racial equity. This policy governs the process, frequency, and procedures of selecting the members of the CoC Board, Leadership Council.

### **V. LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OFFICERS**

Leadership Council will select two co-chairs, as outlined in the Leadership Council Selection Policy. Leadership Council Officers, supported by the Collaborative Applicant, are responsible for the finalization of Leadership Council meeting agendas, facilitation of Leadership Council meetings, and calling for votes regarding action items on the agenda.

### **VI. ROADMAP**

Leadership Council will annually develop and adopt a work plan, the HRS Governance Roadmap, hereafter referred to as roadmap, to outline the CoC's main goals and define key strategies, objectives, partnerships, expected outcomes, and action items to make progress on each of these goals, informed by the mission of the CoC. The roadmap identifies the delegated authority of the Committees to establish and enact system policies and processes necessary for system advancement as identified by Leadership Council, as well as the expected deliverables timeline, and project updates quarterly. The roadmap is the guiding

document for HRS priorities and the workplan for the entire CoC Governance.

## **VII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

All governance members including Leadership Council and Committee and Workgroup CoC stakeholders will avoid conflicts of interest and will annually reaffirm their adherence with the CoC Conflict of Interest Policy in writing.

## **COC COMMITTEES AND WORKGROUPS**

The Austin/Travis County CoC will utilize committees and workgroups to fulfill the responsibilities of the CoC, achieve the objectives and goals of the roadmap, develop and adopt system policies and processes, and to align the work of the HRS. In addition, affinity groups may be created by CoC stakeholders to contribute to the work of the HRS but are not recognized as decision-making bodies of the CoC.

### **I. COC COMMITTEES**

#### **a. CREATION**

Leadership Council authorizes the creation and scope of work of all committees as system needs are identified. Leadership Council will delegate issues and responsibilities to existing committees when possible and actively work to limit the number of committees acting within the governance structure to ensure streamlined delegation of work and minimize duplication of work.

#### **b. PURPOSE & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The roadmap identifies the purpose and objective of each committee. It is the responsibility of committees to track system progress, make recommendations to address system needs and gaps, update critical system policies and procedures, and liaise with Leadership Council.

#### **c. COMPOSITION**

Committees will be composed of CoC stakeholders and have no fewer than 7 voting members and no more than 15 voting members. A committee may



not contain two or more voting members from the same agency or entity without Leadership Council approval. Committees are required to maintain at a minimum 1 voting position for the Collaborative Applicant, 1 voting position for Leadership Council, 3 voting positions for individuals with lived experience of homelessness, and 2 voting positions for service providers within the Continuum of Care.

**d. SELECTION PROCESS**

Committee voting members will serve 2-year terms, with the option to elect to serve for a 3-year term. If a committee wishes to seat a voting member past the 3-year term limit, that request must be made in writing, identify the extended term length (2 years or 3 years), and the request must be approved by Leadership Council. The Collaborative Applicant voting seat does not have term limits. Vacant voting seats should be open for the interim of 2 meetings to allow for recruitment and deliberation. Applicants will be elected to vacant seats by a majority vote of the Committee members, with terms ending the last calendar meeting of the year their term expires.

**e. COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP**

Committees will identify two co-chairs to fulfill the responsibilities of Committee Officers, with responsibilities similar to those outlined for Leadership Council Officers, "Leadership Council Requirements" Section V.

**f. WORK PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

Committees must develop a work plan to identify specific activities, responsibilities, and goals as delegated to the committee by the roadmap. The work plan should be approved by Leadership Council. The work plan must clearly identify meeting structure, goals, measurable outcomes for success, timeline for completion, and a list of workgroups with a purpose for each. Committees will report to Leadership Council at least quarterly with progress reports and updated timelines for completion. Any changes to the authority, purpose,

roles and responsibilities of a committee must be requested in writing and authorized by Leadership Council. Committees are authorized to change the purpose and scope of work of their designated workgroups by majority vote of the committee, and these changes must be reported to Leadership Council.

## **II. COC WORKGROUPS**

### **g. CREATION**

Committees authorize the creation and scope of work of all workgroups to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the roadmap and the committee's work plan. Any voting member of a committee may submit a proposal for the creation of a workgroup. Committees will ensure that the number of workgroups acting within the governance structure is streamlined to minimize duplication of work. To that end, committees must identify purpose, scope of work, decision-making authority, and timeline of workgroups upon creation. Workgroups should be disbanded upon completion of assignments.

### **h. PURPOSE & RESPONSIBILITIES**

Workgroups have the option to implement a voting structure in alignment with Governance Charter bylaws and with approval from the oversight committee. Oversight committees have the latitude to implement additional workgroup structure requirements, but at a minimum, oversight committees must ensure there is an appointed workgroup lead to facilitate meetings and liaise with the committee, and that the workgroup meets the requirement to maintain 3 seats for members with lived experience of homelessness. If there are more than 3 members with lived experience of homelessness in a single workgroup, the workgroup lead must work with its oversight committee to identify the 3 members who will be compensated for their participation.

**i. COMPOSITON**

Workgroups will be composed of CoC stakeholders and are required to maintain 3 voting positions for individuals with lived experience of homelessness.

**j. SELECTION PROCESS**

Workgroup voting members will be appointed by the oversight committee and serve on an ad hoc basis to achieve the scope of work.

**k. WORKGROUP LEADERSHIP**

Committees will appoint a workgroup lead as part of the creation and selection process. Workgroup leadership will be responsible for scheduling meetings, finalizing agendas, facilitating meetings, liaising with the oversight committee and Leadership Council as necessary, and adhering to the decision-making structure approved by the oversight committee. To ensure diverse representation, fresh perspective, and to prevent stagnation, no Committee Officers may be appointed to also serve as workgroup lead on a subordinate workgroup of the oversight committee.

**l. DECISION MAKING STRUCTURE**

Workgroups should follow the CoC Rules of Governance including meeting quorum and voting requirements as part of its decision-making structure. Policy changes and workgroup recommendations must be approved by their oversight committee as described by the committee workplan.

**COC RULES OF GOVERNANCE**

**i. MEETING QUORUM & VOTING**

A number equal to a majority of Leadership Council or a Committee will constitute a quorum for the transaction of business decisions at any meeting. Appointed delegates of voting members count towards a meeting quorum. Leadership Council and Committee meetings may be conducted in person and/or virtually.

At all meetings, every effort should be made to reach a consensus of Leadership Council or Committee on business items. Agendas, minutes and other business which do not require discussion or are perfunctory in nature, will be approved using consent voting where no objections signify unanimous approval. The roll call voting method will be used for significant or important decisions where a detailed voting record is needed, including all items identified in the roadmap. Each representative seat will have one vote. No Leadership Council or Committee member shall vote on any item that presents a real or perceived conflict of interest in accordance with the Conflict of Interest policy.

**a. Veto Power of Voting Members with Lived Experience**

The voting members with lived experience of homelessness shall hold collective veto power when all voting members with lived experience of homelessness oppose a decision. In such instances, no vote will be held or enacted. If no voting members with lived experience are present to participate in a vote, the vote will be postponed or moved to email in order to ensure participation by all voting members with lived experience. If some but not all voting members with lived experience are present to participate in a vote, and those present all oppose a decision, the vote will be postponed or moved to email to ensure participation by all members with lived experience. To prevent indefinite delays, if a veto is invoked, the decision must be addressed within a specific timeframe to avoid unnecessary postponements. All requests for postponements and the reasons for delays must be documented and made accessible to all members. This ensures transparency and helps prevent misuse of veto power. If disagreements arise about the use of veto power or the postponement process, a designated mediator or Leadership Council member (not involved in the vote) can resolve the dispute to ensure fair and timely decisions.

**II. CODE OF CONDUCT**

Austin/Travis County CoC business will be conducted in a manner that reflects the highest standards and in

accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. All CoC stakeholders, as members of governance, will act in accordance with and maintain the highest standards of professional integrity, impartiality, diligence, creativity and productivity. CoC stakeholders shall not derive a personal or professional profit or gain, directly or indirectly, due to participation with Leadership Council or HRS Governance.

### **III. MEETING FREQUENCY**

Leadership Council will meet no less frequently than 6 times per year and strive to meet monthly. A 12-month calendar of regularly scheduled meetings will be established and approved during the first meeting of each year. Leadership Council Officers may call a special meeting provided it meets all notice and quorum requirements to address urgent matters.

The leadership of each Committee and Workgroup will establish and determine the frequency of their respective meetings. This frequency will be set based on the needs and priorities of the Committee or Workgroup and may be adjusted as necessary to address evolving demands or issues.

A calendar of scheduled Leadership Council, Committee and Workgroup meetings will be posted on the Collaborative Applicant website.

### **IV. AGENDAS AND MINUTES**

Leadership Council will disseminate meeting agendas, materials, and any proposed motions at least 7 days prior to scheduled meetings. This dissemination will be done via email to Leadership Council members and/or posted on the Collaborative Applicant website. Leadership Council members should submit any proposed changes to agendas or motions in writing to the Leadership Council Officers.

Draft minutes of the meetings will be distributed within 30 days of the meeting's completion, either via email to Leadership Council members or posted on the Collaborative Applicant website.

Upcoming Committee or Workgroup meeting dates will be posted on the Collaborative Applicant website. Agendas and any proposed motions will be disseminated at least 3 days prior to scheduled meetings, either via email or through the website.

Draft minutes of the meetings will be distributed within 7 days of the meeting's completion, either via email to committee/workgroup members or posted on the Collaborative Applicant website.

**v. OPEN MEETINGS**

Attendance at meetings of Leadership Council, Committees, and Workgroups will be open to any interested CoC stakeholder for observation. Stakeholders may attend to observe discussions and proceedings, ensuring transparency and inclusivity in the decision-making process.

**vi. NOTICE OF MEETING**

The calendar of scheduled Leadership Council meetings will be posted on the Collaborative Applicant website.

Special meetings may be called when Leadership Council needs to make decisions outside the regular meeting schedule. Notice of such special meetings will be sent to the full CoC email list at least 24 hours in advance.

Special meetings for Committees and/or Workgroups may be scheduled as needed and agreed upon by a majority of the members.

**vii. ACTION WITHOUT MEETING**

Leadership Council or Committee may take action without convening a meeting, provided that:

- The action falls within its authority.
- The action is approved via email or conference call.

- The action is approved by a 2/3 majority of all then-seated members who are entitled to vote and who meet quorum requirements.
- Leadership Council or Committee provides a clear explanation of the urgency necessitating action without a meeting.

#### **VIII. MEETING ATTENDANCE**

Leadership Council members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled and special meetings as part of their service. Members must inform ECHO staff and Leadership Council Officers in advance if they will miss a meeting or arrive 20 minutes or more late. Arriving 20 minutes or more late will be considered an absence.

In the event of an absence, it is the responsibility of the absent member to contact ECHO staff or Leadership Council Officers to review missed materials and discussion. If a member is absent from 3 or more meetings, the Leadership Council will hold a closed meeting to discuss the absence and consider possible removal.

ECHO staff will track attendance and provide reports to Leadership Council upon request.

Members needing an extended leave of absence but intending to return may nominate a delegate to fulfill their duties. This delegate must be approved by the Leadership Council. If the member does not return, their seat will be vacated, and the Leadership Council will be responsible for finding a replacement. Extensions of a delegate's service time will be at the discretion of Leadership Council.

This attendance policy also applies to Committees and Workgroups.

# APPENDIX A

## Leadership Council Representation

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### Government

The government seat category includes 3 appointed seats with no term limit.

- I. Representative from Travis County
- II. Representative from City of Austin Homeless Strategy Office
- III. Representative from City of Austin Equity Office or Civil Rights Office

### Public Housing Authority

The PHA seat category includes 1 appointed seat with no term limit.

- I. Housing Authority City of Austin (HACA)

### Homeless Response System Providers

The HRS providers seat category includes 2 elected seats with a 2-year minimum – 3-year maximum term limit.

- I. HUD Funded Provider
- II. Non-HUD Funded Provider

### Healthcare and/or Disability

The Healthcare and/or Disability seat category includes 1 elected seat with a 2-year minimum – 3-year maximum term limit.

### Mental Health/Substance Use

The Mental Health/Substance Use seat category includes 1 elected seat with a 2-year minimum – 3-year maximum term limit.

### Education or Workforce Development

The Education or Workforce Development seat category includes 1 elected seat with a 2-year minimum – 3-year maximum term limit.



## **Persons with Lived Expertise of Homelessness**

The PLEH seat category includes 3 elected seats with a 2-year minimum – 3-year maximum term limit.

- I. Elected Representative from Austin Youth Collective
- II. Elected Community Advocate with Lived Experience of Homelessness
- III. Elected Community Advocate with Lived Experience of Homelessness

## **System Partner**

The System Partner seat category includes 3 elected seats with a 2-year minimum – 3-year maximum term limit.