GOVERNANCE CHARTER

Article I: Mission
To make homelessness in West Central Minnesota rare, brief, and one-time.

Article II: Vision
The vision of the CoC is to create and sustain capacity throughout the West Central MN CoC region to consistently facilitate the movement of individuals/families toward permanent housing and successful independent living. Through coordination and cooperation, movement though this system will be accomplished in a smooth, seamless manner, with positive outcomes for homeless individuals.

Article II: Purpose
The purpose of the CoC is to coordinate the Continuum of Care process in West Central Minnesota, serving as the HUD-designated primary decision-making group for the ten contiguous counties of: Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, Wadena, and Wilkin.

The CoC is tasked to:
a. Ensure that the CoC is meeting all of the responsibilities assigned to it by HUD regulations and the HEARTH Act (see below).
b. Be informed and responsive to the needs of the region's homeless population and subpopulations, especially those who are least likely to seek assistance.
c. Facilitate discussion and planning within and beyond the HUD CoC process on policy, program, and social issues related to ending homelessness.
d. To educate and support service and housing best practices and quality performance.
e. Organize people and resources to create, carryout and measure a community-wide plan to end homelessness.

ARTICLE III: RESPONSIBILITIES

HUD has established the following responsibilities for a CoC:
1. Operate a CoC, which must:
    a. Hold meetings of the full membership, with published agendas, at least semiannually.
    b. Publicly invite new membership to join the WC CoC at least annually.
    c. Adopt and follow a written process to select a WC CoC board to act on behalf of the CoC. The process must be reviewed, updated, and approved by the WC CoC membership at least once every 5 years.
    d. Appoint committees, subcommittees, or workgroups as needed to help carry out the goals and responsibilities of the WC CoC.

e. In consultation with the CoC Collaborative Applicant and the HMIS Lead, develop, follow, and update annually a governance charter, which will include all procedures and policies needed to comply with CoC requirements as prescribed by HUD; and a code of conduct and recusal process for the WC CoC, its chair(s), and any person acting on behalf of the board.

f. In consultation with recipients and sub-recipients of CoC and Emergency Solutions Grant (hereinafter referred to as ESG) funding, establish performance targets appropriate for population and program type, monitor recipient and sub-recipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and take action against poor performers.

g. In consultation with recipients of CoC and ESG funds within the geographic area, establish and consistently follow written standards for providing CoC assistance. At a minimum, these written standards must include:

   i. Policies and procedures for evaluating individuals' and families' eligibility for CoC assistance.

   ii. Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive transitional housing assistance.

   iii. Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive rapid re-housing assistance.

   iv. Standards for determining what percentage or amount of rent each program participant must pay while receiving rapid re-housing assistance.

   v. Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive permanent supportive housing assistance.

   vi. When the CoC is designated a high-performing community, policies, and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive Homelessness Prevention Assistance.

2. <u>Designate and operate an Homeless Management Information System (HMIS):</u>
   a. Designate a single HMIS for the geographic.
   b. Designate an eligible applicant to manage the CoC's HMIS, which will be known as the HMIS Lead.
   c. Enter into a MOU with the HMIS Lead.
   d. Review, revise, and approve a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan for the HMIS.
   e. Ensure consistent participation of recipients and sub-recipients of CoC and ESG funding in the HMIS.
   f. Ensure the HMIS is administered in compliance with requirements prescribed by HUD and MN HMIS Policies.
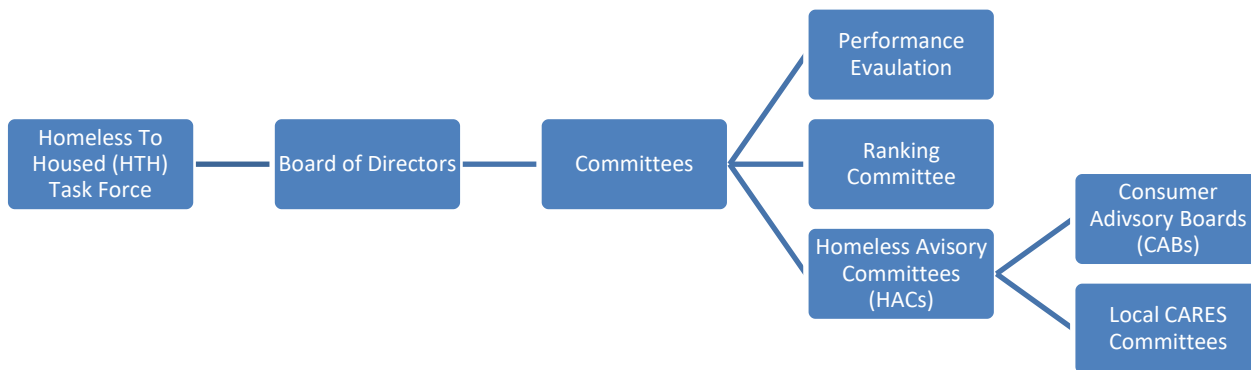
3. <u>Continuum of Care planning:</u>
   Create and update an annual CoC plan that shall include the following:
   a. Coordinating the implementation of a housing and service system within its geographic area that meets the needs of the homeless individuals (including unaccompanied youth) and families. At a minimum, such system encompasses the following: Outreach, engagement, and assessment; Shelter, housing, and supportive services; and Prevention strategies.
   b. Plan and conduct an annual point-in-time sheltered (in collaboration with the State of MN quarterly sheltered count) and unsheltered count within the geographic area in adherence with HUD guidelines.
   c. Conduct and annual gaps analysis of homeless needs and services in WC MN in accordance with HUD guidelines.
   d. Plan to provide information and input to the State of MN Consolidated Plan; and

e.   Coordination with the State of MN ESG program to determine a plan for allocating ESG funds and reporting on and evaluating the performance of ESG recipients and sub-recipients.

ARTICLE IV: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Section 1. Organizational Chart: The CoC organizational structure is designed to engage and foster planning and communication from a broad group of diverse stakeholders from those with resources to those directly affected by homelessness. Flow of communication is intended to be two-way.

```
Homeless To          Board of          Committees  ─┬─ Performance
Housed (HTH)  ────  Directors  ────              │   Evaulation
Task Force                                        │
                                                  ├─ Ranking
                                                  │   Committee        Consumer
                                                  │                ┌── Adivsory Boards
                                                  └─ Homeless Avisory │   (CABs)
                                                     Committees   ──┤
                                                     (HACs)          └── Local CARES
                                                                         Committees
```

Section 2. Organizational Levels
a.   Homeless To Housed (HTH) Task Force:
    i.   The HTH meets 3-4 times annually and is considered the full membership of the CoC.
    ii. The Task Force is responsible for:
        a.   Annually electing Board officers and voting seats
        b.   Approving Governance Charter changes to the mission, policies, and board composition
        c.   Determining the Collaborative Applicant or Unified Funding Agent, if applicable
        d.   Participation in annual CoC Planning and Gaps Analysis
        e.   Reviewing CoC system performance at least annually
    iii. Task Force Membership shall include a broad representation from the region including traditional homeless, social service and low-income housing providers as well as other local and regional stakeholders essential to preventing and ending homelessness. Membership is officially designated by a membership agreement that is solicited at least annually following the annual membership meeting.
    ii. Task Force Member organizations are expected to designate at least one representative to attend all Task Force Meetings and Homeless Advisory Committee Meetings but may designated additional representatives.
b.   Board of Directors:
    i.   The Board of Directors is the official governing body of the Continuum and is authorized to make official decisions of behalf of the CoC other than those listed as duties of the HTH. The board will

conduct business as needed between task force meetings, making subsequent recommendations and reports to the Task Force. The Board is responsible for:

- Annually reviewing the Governance Charter and making changes not related policies or board composition
- Establishing and monitoring an annual Continuum of Care Plan which includes annual performance targets
- Approving a final HUD CoC Grant Ranking
- Assuring the CoC has a Coordinated Entry System that is compliant with HUD
- Appointing Adhoc Committees and Workgroups
- Filling open board positions between annual meetings
- Working with staff and membership to set standards for administering and monitoring CoC and ESG Assistance
- Developing and approving a HMIS Governance Agreement and MOU that ensures HMIS is operated in compliance with HUD requirements and CoC needs
- Approving the HMIS Software and Software Vendor or designating an appropriate entity to act on behalf of the board given the entity does its due diligence to collect and consider feedback from the CoC
- Approving the CoC Collaborative Agent, Fiscal Agent, and/or Unified Funding Agent
- Conducting a review of the CoC Coordinator
- Assuring a quality Collaborative Application is submitted to HUD annually

ii. The Board of Directors shall include representatives of relevant organizations serving homeless persons in the West Central MN region including at least one (1) representative from the following: a homeless or formerly homeless individual, a White Earth Tribal representative, a CoC funded project, and an Emergency Solutions project.

iii. Elected positions shall include: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, 3 Local Homeless Committees Representatives, a Performance Evaluation Chair, and two persons with lived experience, one adult and one youth.

iv. Appointed positions include a Tribal representative and up to two other persons who are representative of desired or required stakeholders not otherwise represented.

v. Other positions include the past chair, a Minnesota Interagency Task Force on Homelessness representative, the CoC Coordinator, Fargo-Moorhead Homeless Coalition, HMIS representative, CARES specialist, and the Collaborative Applicant, all of which are non-voting.

vi. The Chair and Vice Chair position shall have staggered 2-year terms, with the ability to hold 2 terms.

iii. Board of Director members must show a vested interest in the Continuum of Care process by entering into a membership agreement, committing to regular representation at all Board and Task Force Meetings and participation on one of the Homeless Committees.

iv. Sporadic attendance may result in a temporarily loss of voting privileges. Non-attendance can result in an in-activation of membership.

v. The HTH shall strive to have participation from all ten counties represented on the Board of Directors.

vi. Board of Directors are required to sign and abide by the Code of Conduct located on the ~~back of~~ the Homeless to Housed General Membership Agreement.

c. Committees: The HTH will have the following standing committees. These committees are notwithstanding to the changing needs of the CoC and will be reviewed by the Board yearly with necessary changes or additions approved by the Task Force. Ad hoc committees or workgroups may be developed by the Board as needed to handle a specific situation or issue that does not fall within the assigned function of an existing standing committee.

i. <u>Local Homeless Advisory Committees:</u> Each regional homeless committee shall organize their local planning structure to:
   a. Nominate two members to serve on the CoC Board of Directors.
   b. Host and staff quarterly <u>Consumer Advisory Board (CAB)</u> meetings.
   c. Include 1-2 representatives from the CAB to serve on your committee and include a standing agenda item for CAB.
   d. Create a community leader engagement plan and report progress at each committee meeting.
   e. Present data on program outcomes, SPM goals and CES at each committee meeting.
   f. Annual engage stakeholders in CoC-wide survey on system effectiveness, needs and performance structured around access, assessment, and stabilization.
   g. Develop an annual plan that improves system access, assessment, and stabilization services.
   h. Participate in two-way communication with the CoC on system planning, evaluation, performance, and improvements.
      - Share concerns, challenges, accomplishments, and questions on the system with the CoC leadership
      - Identify areas where additional support or training is needed and share with CoC leadership
      - Share CoC opportunities and updates with local membership
      - Support and evaluate utilization and expansion of best practices and adherence to CoC and CARES policies.
      - POTENTIAL: Recruit 2 community champions to enhance local and regional utilization of best practices and compliance.

ii. <u>Ranking Committee:</u> The committee is responsible for reviewing, ranking, and creating a priority listing for the annual local CoC competition and then presenting its recommendation to the WC CoC Board for vote. Committee members will be selected annually, voted on by the board and must not have a conflict of interest with any of the applicants.

iii. <u>Performance Advisory Committee:</u> This committee is responsible for reviewing project and system performance for all homeless programs within the region from prevention to permanent housing, assisting in identifying and responding to underperformance and supporting improved outcomes.

iv. <u>Work Groups and Sub-Committees:</u> The Board may establish work groups or ad hoc committees as it deems necessary. However, only the full CoC membership can designate a standing committee.

d. <u>CoC Staff</u>
   i. <u>Coordinator:</u> A CoC Coordinator is responsible for carrying out the work of the CoC Taskforce, Board, and Committees and help assure all HUD requirements are met. This includes but are not limited to: preparing the annual CoC Collaborative Application, submitting annual data to HUD (System Performance Measures, Housing Inventory Chart, Point-in-Time Count, and Longitudinal System Analysis), facilitating standing meetings of the CoC, coordination with other planning bodies and funders, supporting project compliance and performance, and operating a Coordinated Entry System. The CoC Coordinator shall report directly to the Board.

ii. <u>CARES Staff:</u> CARES staff is responsible for managing the CoCs housing priority list and supporting the training and compliance needs of all Access, Assessment and Housing partners.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS

Section 1. Standing Meetings.
    (a) Meetings shall be held at the call of the Board Chair or Vice Chair.
    (b) Notice of time and place of all meetings shall be delivered personally, by email to all members at least four days prior to the meeting; or by U.S. mail at least 6 business days prior to the meeting.
    (c) The CoC Board shall publish and distribute an annual calendar of all standing meetings. At minimum, the HTH shall meet 3 times each year, the board 6 times each year and the Homeless Advisory Committees and Performance Evaluation Committee 4 times each year.
    (d) Meetings shall be held in accordance with simplified Robert's Rules of Order.
    (e) The Chair and/or Chair Elect shall preside over all meetings when present. The chair shall appoint a member as acting chair in his/her absence.
    (f) Minutes of all meetings shall be distributed to membership following the meeting and voted on at the next standing meeting.

Section 2. Special Meetings.
    (a) A special meeting of the Board or HTH may be called by the Chair, Vice Chair or ¼ of the Board.
    (b) Proper notice shall be given for all special meetings.

Section 3. Electronic or Phone meetings.
    (a) Meetings of the HTH, Board or Committees may be held electronically or by phone provided all persons participating may hear and speak to one another.
    (b) Minutes of meetings shall be distributed to membership and voted on in the same manner as face-to-face meetings.

Section 4. Voting.
    (a) Votes will be limited to one per member agency.
    (b) Agencies applying for a grant or requesting certifications may not vote.
    (c) A quorum for the HTH Board will be met when a majority of active membership is represented.
    (d) A quorum for the Task Force and committees will be met when a majority of members are present.

Section 5. Action without voting.
    (a) Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board or a Committee may be taken without a meeting if a majority of the entitled members individually or collectively consent to such action. Consent(s) and the result of the vote shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the HTH.

Section 6. Annual Meeting.
    (a) Annual meetings of the Task Force shall be held for the purpose of electing Executive Officers and Committee Chairs and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting.
    (b) Annual meetings shall be held as set by the Board not less than ten (10), or more than thirteen (13) months after the annual meeting held the prior year.
    (c) The annual meeting will be open to the public, and to the extent possible, should be held in different locations within the region each year.

ARTICLE VII: OFFICERS

Section 1. Election. At the Annual Meeting, a Chair, Vice Chair, Recording Secretary, Lived Experience Representatives, Performance Evaluation Chair, and Local Homeless Advisory Committee Representatives shall be elected by the Task Force to serve during the year or until the next Annual Meeting.
Section 2. Vacancy. In the event of a vacancy in any of the positions during the year, the vacant position should be filled at the next meeting of the task force or by a majority vote of the Board.
Section 3. Terms. The terms of all elected officers shall be two years. The Chair and Vice Chair shall be restricted to two consecutive terms.
Section 4. **Duties.** The Officers shall act in the way they believe to be in the best interest of the West Central CoC/HTH, and not as representatives of any other agencies/organization/entity.
Section 5. Removal of Officers. Any officer may be removed by ¾ majority of all officers for reason of non-participation, or not acting in the best interest of the Coc/HTH.

ARTICLE IX: OTHER

Section 1. Certificates of Consistency & Letters of Support
  (a) Certificates of Consistency or Letters of Support may be requested by applicants who are members of the continuum.
  (b) The Board will review and vote on requests and the Chair and/or Coordinator will be authorized to sign the requests on behalf of the CoC.
Section 2. Fiscal Agent
  (a) As the CoC is not a registered non-profit but is required to have a Collaborative Applicant or Unified Funding Agent to receive HUD CoC funding, the CoC will designate a Fiscal Agent to serve that role for the CoC.
  (b) The Board is authorized to approve an agency to act as an authorized fiscal agent, Collaborative Applicant or UFA.
  (c) The authorized fiscal agent shall provide the CoC with an annual financial report of CoC income and expenditures.
  (d) Additional financial reports or copies of related contracts must be provided to the HTH or Board upon written request within 15 business days of the request.
  (e) The Fiscal Agent shall retain a non-voting seat on the board.
Section 3. CoC Staff
  (a) The HTH may vote to employee one or more persons to support and coordinate the vision and purpose of the organization. At least one of these positions must be a CoC Coordinator.
  (b) The staff may be sought through a contractual, volunteer, or internship basis.
  (c) The staff may be contracted through the fiscal agent of HTH/West Central CoC or through the State of Minnesota.
  (d) All job descriptions, duties and assignments of the HTH staff/volunteers/interns shall be pre-approved by the Board.
Section 4. Membership Agreement
  (a) The HTH shall annually conduct a membership recruitment to solicit both Task Force and Committee membership.
  (b) A signed membership agreement is required to become an official member of the CoC.
  (c) Membership agreements can be signed at any time during the year. Electronic submission of a membership agreement constitutes a signed agreement.

Section 5. Code of Conduct

    (a) Members of the HTH and Board must sign a Code of Conduct to acknowledge they agree to act in a professional and collaborative manner when participating in CoC meetings or acting on behalf of the CoC.

    (b) Any member having a conflict of interest or a conflict of responsibility on any matter is responsible for disclosing the conflict and shall refrain from voting on such matter.

Article IX: Homeless Response System

Section 1. Geography

CARES is a collaboration with the North Dakota CoC, White Earth Tribe and Fargo-Moorhead Coalition. The CoC has intentionally partnered with these entities to operate a Coordinated Entry that extends beyond our CoC borders to help assure our system has easy access and is client centric for those homeless providers and persons who are homeless who cross state and CoC geographic borders.

Section 2. Stages

CARES is the name of our homeless response system. CoC goals, evaluation and planning are centered around the three stages of CARES: Access, Assessment and Stabilization.

ACCESS	ASSESSMENT	STABILIZATION
The initial point of entry into the homeless response system for persons in a housing crisis where they are **triaged for entry** into the homeless response system and/or **diverted to other resources** including **prevention assistance**.	The stage where households are **assessed** (on history, needs, vulnerabilities, eligibility, and wishes) and subsequently **prioritized** for the most appropriate housing assistance for available units or vouchers.	The Stabilization stage **assesses** and **strengthens housing stability** through provision of support services and linkage to mainstream and community supports and benefits.

Article X: CoC Policies

Below is a list and overview of CoC policies. The full polices are listed as addendums to this document.

Section 1. Policies for the Administration of CoC and ESG assistance

The Board, with broad input from membership, CoC recipients and ESG recipients, is responsible for establishing and updating Policies for the Administration of CoC and ESG Assistance. These policies shall be made available to all members on the CoC website and an annual training on policies shall be made available. The CoC staff and board shall be responsible for monitoring and assuring compliance with ESG and CoC policies.

Section 2. Coordinated Entry Policies/CARES

The CoC Board and CARES Governing Board, with input from CARES Stakeholders, persons with lived experience, and partner agencies, are responsible for reviewing and updating CARES Policies. Policies are available on the CARES and CoC website. Training on policies and process is required of all new partners prior to being listed as a partner and of all partners at least annually. Policies must be in compliance with HUD and State policies. The CoC staff and board shall be responsible for monitoring and assuring compliance with CARES Policies.

Section 3. HMIS Policies
The CoC has given authority to the HMIS Governing Board to establish, review and update HMIS Policies that are compliant with HUD requirements. This authority supports a collaborative process since the Minnesota's HMIS is a statewide system supporting all 10 MN CoCs, as well as state agencies, the MN Tribal Collaborative and other statewide agencies. Current HMIS Policies are available on the CoC and MN HMIS website. Both the CoC and HMIS Regional System Administrator shall be responsible for assuring compliance with HMIS Policies and MOU.

Section 4. Non-Discrimination Policy
The non-discrimination policy was created to support compliance with HUD requirements and to further the desire to promote fair housing, nondiscrimination and equal opportunity, all partner agencies will be trained on vital laws, rules and policies. The CoC staff will be responsible for reviewing compliance and responding as necessary to non-compliance.

Section 5. Reallocation Policy
The reallocation policy was created to assure our CoC can make strategic improvements to our homelessness system through reallocating existing project funding to create new, evidence-informed projects. The CoC Ranking Committee is responsible to reviewing reallocation suggestions and presenting a reallocation plan to the CoC Board.

Section 6. School Engagement and Enrollment Policy
The School Engagement and Enrollment Policy was established to acknowledge the essential roll education plays in a student and family's success and ultimate stabilization. The policy and educational MOU are used to foster improved collaboration and sharing of resources in order to better serve students who are homeless, especially reducing any disruption in attendance due to homelessness.

Section 7. Other Policies
The CoC Board and Task Force may establish other policies to support the mission and vision of the CoC or to remain in compliance with HUD. Other Policies are available on the CoC website and added to the Policies for the Administration of CoC and ESG Assistance when updated.

ATTACHEMENTS

West Central Minnesota Continuum of Care

MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

Working together to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time.

WHEREAS, the West Central Minnesota Continuum of Care Homeless to Housed Task Force, here-in-after known as the HTH, needs active, diverse, and region-wide participation to effectively prepare and carry-out a planning to prevent and end homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the HTH desires participation from members agencies and organizations who are interested and willing to commit to HTH planning in a professional and active manner; and

WHEREAS, _____ (*insert agency or organization name here),* is willing and interested in HTH membership.

THEREFORE, the above-named agency or organization agrees to become a member of the HTH, understanding and agreeing to the following membership polices and the organizational code of conduct.

I. **MEMBER POLICIES**
A. Each Member shall appoint at least one (1) individual to serve as a Member Representative. This member shall be given voting privileges.
B. Additional representatives from any one agency or organization are invited to attend and participate in HTH meetings but only one vote per member agency shall be counted.
C. If the Member Representative is unable to attend an HTH or committee meeting, an alternative representative can be appointed to attend in the member representatives' absence.
D. Members should strive for 100% attendance at quarterly membership meetings and participate in their regional homeless committee (More Than Shelter, Mahube-Otwa Homeless Committee, FM Coalition to End Homelessness or CAPLP Homeless Committee) and other respective local homeless committees.
E. Renewal agencies without consistent representation (having a staff attend less than 3 meetings in the last 12 months) will not have voting privileges until they have attended at least 3 meetings in the last year. New members must attend at least 2 meetings in order to vote. Attendance can either be in person or virtual.
F. Members agree to abide by CoC training requirements and policies (e.g., CoC Governance Charter, ESG & CoC Policies, and CARES Policies).
G. Representatives should come to each meeting prepared to actively participate.
H. Members are expected to abide by the HTH Code of Conduct while participating in organizational meetings or representing the CoC.
I. Members are responsible for notifying the HTH Coordinator of any changes in contact information for their agency or of their Member Representative.

II. **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Commitment and professionalism are vital to creating and maintaining an effective and efficient Continuum of Care (CoC) process that will benefit each member of the HTH, as well as the persons they represent. Both are integral to creating and sustaining a strong and collaborative planning process.

A. Conduct Obligations:
   1. Members should represent their clients, their agencies, and the HTH in a fair, honest, ethical, and respectful manner.
   2. Members should be informed on the purpose of the HTH and its goal to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time, including planning strategies and outcomes.
   3. Members should strive to keep their promises and to avoid unwise or unclear commitments that they are unable to fulfill.
   4. Members are expected to uphold professional standards of conduct, exhibiting respectfulness, fairness, and honesty.
   5. Members should clarify their professional roles and obligations, exercise reasonable judgment, and take precautions to ensure that any potential biases or conflicts of interest do not unjustly affect the CoC process or other members of the HTH.
   6. When conflicts occur among members, they should attempt to resolve these conflicts in a responsible fashion.
   7. Leaders have the extra responsibility of setting an example by their personal performance and attitude.
   8. Members should consult with, refer to, or cooperate with other professionals and institutions to the extent needed to serve the best interests of those they represent.

III. **MEMBER REPRESENTATIVE**

Name	Title/Position	Phone Email	Counties Represented *(circle all that apply)*
Primary Representative:			Becker Clay Grant Pope Douglas Otter Tail Stevens Traverse Wadena Wilkin
Alternative Rep:			Becker Clay Grant Pope Douglas Otter Tail Stevens Traverse Wadena Wilkin
Alternative Rep:			Becker Clay Grant Pope Douglas Otter Tail Stevens Traverse Wadena Wilkin

Please contact the CoC Coordinator if accommodations are required for participation.

IV. **SIGNATURES**

By signing this document, your agency agrees to above policies and code of conduct.

_____   _____

Signature of Member Agency/Organization Authorized Representative   *Date*

APPENDIX B

Minnesota Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

**Memorandum of Understanding for the Governance and Operation of Minnesota's HMIS
Among the 10 Minnesota Continuums of Care, the HMIS Lead Agency,
and the Minnesota HMIS Governing Board**

A. Goals and Objectives

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is intended to confirm agreements between each of the ten Continuums of Care (CoC) in Minnesota, the Institute for Community Alliances (ICA), and the Minnesota HMIS Governing Board (HMIS Governing Board) for the operation of Minnesota's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). As such, each MOU sets forth the general understandings, terms, authority, services, and specific responsibilities of each party relating to key aspects of the governance and operation of the HMIS.

B. Background

By federal mandate, each CoC across the United States is responsible for selecting an HMIS software solution that complies with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) data collection, management, and reporting standards. There are ten regional Continuums of Care in Minnesota, namely: Central, Hennepin County, Northeast, Northwest, Ramsey County, Suburban Metro Area CoC (SMAC), Rochester/Southeast, Southwest, St. Louis County, and West Central. Minnesota's ten CoCs have jointly agreed to operate a statewide HMIS and to provide HMIS oversight through a shared HMIS Governing Board. In addition, each CoC provides funding to support the statewide Minnesota HMIS.

C. Purpose of HMIS

HMIS is used to:

- aggregate data about the extent and nature of homelessness over time;
- produce an unduplicated count of homeless persons;
- understand patterns of service use;
- measure the effectiveness of homeless assistance projects and programs;
- comply with federal data collection and reporting requirements; and
- assist efforts to prevent and end homelessness (Coordinated Entry, case management, reducing duplication of data entry, data sharing, service collaboration, referrals, etc.).

Data produced are used for planning, education, and reporting to funders.

D. Duration

This MOU is effective July 1, 2021 to December 31, 2022.

E. Designations

HMIS Software - WellSky's ServicePoint (aka WellSky Community Services) is designated as the official HMIS software for Minnesota's HMIS.

HMIS Lead and System Administrator - The Institute for Community Alliances (ICA), a non-profit organization based in Des Moines, Iowa, is designated as the official statewide Minnesota HMIS lead agency (LA) and state system administrator (SSA) for all ten Minnesota CoCs.

CoC-ICA MOU v.2021.3   1

F. **Specific Responsibilities of the Parties**
   a. Responsibilities of the ten Continuums of Care:
      i. Formally grant the HMIS Governing Board the authority to:
         1. Designate a single information system as the official HMIS software for the geographic area; and
         2. Designate an HMIS Lead to operate the system.
      ii. Provide for governance of the HMIS Lead, including:
         1. Participation in a shared HMIS Governance structure;
         2. Requiring that the HMIS Lead enter into written HMIS Agency Agreements with each Contributing HMIS Organization (hereinafter referred to as "CHO") requiring the CHO to comply with federal regulations regarding HMIS;
         3. Holding CHOs responsible for failure to comply with regulations, including imposing sanctions, in partnership with the HMIS Governing Board and the HMIS Lead; and
         4. Imposing the participation fee, if any, charged by the HMIS, in partnership with the HMIS Governing Board and the HMIS Lead.
      iii. Maintain documentation in compliance with federal regulations and with the MOU;
      iv. Commit to use the statewide HMIS network and seek HUD and other resources to help fund the collective system;
      v. Support and reinforce HMIS data collection and production of the following reports:
         1. Sheltered Point-in-Time Count;
         2. Housing Inventory Chart;
         3. System Performance Measures (SPMs);
         4. Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA)/Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR);
         5. Annual Performance Reports (APRs); and
         6. Annual Community Needs and Gaps Analysis.
      vi. Fund the system at a level as outlined by the HMIS Finance Committee (a committee of the HMIS Governing Board) in the Funding Policy;
      vii. Develop Minnesota's Quarterly Data Quality plan/process in conjunction with State Agencies, the HMIS Lead Agency, and the HMIS Governing Board; and
      viii. Monitor HMIS data quality of CHOs within the CoC's geographic area in accordance with Minnesota's Quarterly Data Quality plan/process.

   b. Responsibilities of the designated Lead Agency, the Institute for Community Alliances:
      i. Conduct day-to-day operational requirements of the HMIS software and system;
      ii. Generate, develop, refine, make available, and submit reports as required for HUD compliance, including HUD funding application reporting requirements, System Performance Measures, sheltered Point-in-Time count, Housing Inventory Chart, LSA/AHAR, APRs, and other reporting that becomes a requirement by HUD during the timeframe of this MOU;
      iii. Assist the Continuums of Care with design and implementation of their Coordinated Entry System in HMIS;

CoC-ICA MOU v.2021.3   2

iv. Assist the Continuums of Care with implementation of performance measures in HMIS, specifically System Performance Measure reports and data analysis to be used for community planning;

v. Ensure compliance with data transfer requirements for the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) and Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) programs;

vi. Facilitate, monitor, and report to CoCs the participation of all agencies submitting data to HMIS;

vii. Ensure compliance with federal HMIS requirements;

viii. Implement and maintain compliance with written HMIS policies and procedures as approved by the statewide HMIS Governing Board and in accordance with § 580.31 for all CHOs;

ix. Execute a written HMIS Agency Agreement with each participating CHO and ensure the agreement includes: the obligations and authority of the HMIS Lead and CHO, the requirements of the security plan and privacy policy with which the CHO must abide, sanctions for violating the HMIS Agency Agreement, and an agreement that the HMIS Lead and the CHO will process Protected Identifying Information consistent with the agreement;

x. Serve as the applicant to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for CoC grant funds to be used for HMIS activities for the CoC's geographic area, as directed by the CoC and enter into grant agreements with HUD to carry out the HUD-approved HMIS activities;

xi. Support the Quarterly Data Quality monitoring plan/process and train end users, agencies and the CoC to obtain and retain high quality data from all CHOs;

xii. Implement and monitor a security plan, a data quality plan, and a privacy policy on a timeline agreed on by the CoC, HMIS Governing Board and HMIS Lead and in accordance with all HUD rules, notices, and guidance establishing the requirements of these plans. The HMIS Lead, in conjunction with the HMIS Governing Board, must review and update the plans and policy at least annually. During this process, the HMIS Lead must seek and incorporate feedback from the CoCs, State Agencies and other HMIS stakeholders;

xiii. Participate in the design of and follow the HMIS priorities established by the HMIS Governing Board;

xiv. Ensure transparency in resource management, prioritization, and operations. Provide regular reporting on resource management, as directed by the HMIS Governing Board;

xv. Support the use of HMIS by all homeless services providers where applicable;

xvi. Support the broad use of HMIS as a tool to document and end homelessness, and serve those experiencing it;

xvii. Interpret, visualize, and present data to the CoCs and HMIS Governing Board;

xviii. Ensure system performance, including the ongoing availability and accessibility of the HMIS software and system;

xix. Provide HMIS and HMIS-subject related trainings to end users, agencies, coordinators, funders, and planners to ensure access and as needed for the purposes of: service delivery, documentation, coordinated entry, reporting, planning, and compliance, striving for good customer satisfaction in doing so;

xx. Implement a customer feedback and improvement process to promote customer satisfaction;

xxi. Encourage and support using HMIS to its maximum potential, including increasing functionality, incorporating innovations, and ensuring adaptivity, as appropriate; and

xxii. Provide staff support in accordance with the HMIS Budget approved by the HMIS Governing Board.

c. Responsibilities of the HMIS Governing Board:

i. Designate a single information system as the official HMIS software for the geographic area;

ii. Designate and evaluate the performance of an HMIS Lead to operate the system;

iii. In partnership with the Lead Agency, evaluate and monitor the performance of the HMIS software vendor;

iv. Set a vision for HMIS, broader than its use as a required reporting tool, that supports the goal of preventing and ending homelessness;

v. Work with the CoCs to ensure that HMIS has the capacity and quality data to be used for system planning, program monitoring and evaluation;

vi. Develop and annually review, revise, and approve HMIS policies and procedures. These policies and procedures must comply with all applicable federal law and regulations, and applicable state or local governmental requirements. The HMIS Governing Board may not establish local standards for any CHO that contradicts, undermines, or interferes with the implementation of the HMIS standards as prescribed in b. xi. Privacy;

vii. Develop and annually review, revise, and approve a data privacy policy as required by federal regulation. At a minimum, the privacy policy must include data collection limitations; purpose and use limitations; allowable uses and disclosures; openness description; access and correction standards; accountability standards; protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking; and such additional information and standards as may be established by HUD. Every organization with access to protected identifying information must implement procedures to ensure and monitor its compliance with applicable agreements and the requirements of this part, including enforcement of sanctions for noncompliance;

viii. Develop and annually review, revise, and approve a data security policy as required by federal regulation;

ix. Develop Minnesota's Quarterly Data Quality plan/process in conjunction with CoCs, State Agencies, and the HMIS Lead Agency;

x. Develop and implement a plan for monitoring the HMIS to ensure that:

1. CHOs consistently participate in HMIS;
2. HMIS is satisfying the requirements of all regulations and notices issued by HUD;
3. The HMIS Lead is fulfilling the obligations outlined in its HMIS Governance Charter and Agreement with the CoC, including the obligation to enter into written Agency Agreements with each CHO.

xi. Oversee and monitor HMIS funds, functionality, and performance;

xii. Provide directions and guidance on HMIS practices; and

G. Lead Agency Deliverables and Timeframes

Following is an outline of core deliverables. The timeframe listed indicates whether the deliverable is an expectation of on-going operations, effective on the date of agreement, or a deliverable due to begin on a specific date. In addition to these deliverables, the HMIS Governing Board may establish quarterly, annual, or other time-bound priorities for Lead Agency work.

Ongoing Deliverables

Compliance and Oversight	
HMIS Standards: Operate HMIS in compliance current HMIS Technical Standards, HUD HMIS Data Standards and other applicable state or federal laws, assuring providers are trained and monitored on how to be compliant with said standards and laws.	Ongoing
Data Privacy: Operate HMIS in compliance with data privacy and data security regulations/requirements (state, federal, and funder), assuring providers are trained and monitored on how to support compliance.	Ongoing
Adherence to Minnesota HMIS Policies and Procedures: Make recommendations to the HMIS Governing Board on improvements to policies related to compliance, system quality or functionality.	Ongoing
Participation: Review, monitor and report HMIS bed coverage rates to the CoC and the HMIS Governing Board, making recommendations and supporting improved coverage.	Annually with additional reviews as designated by the HMIS Governing Board
Data Quality	
Provide a minimum of quarterly reports to CoCs on data quality. Make recommendations for improvements to data quality and support local agencies, state agencies and CoCs on continuous quality improvement efforts.	Quarterly
Contract with Software Vendor	
Manage contract with WellSky on behalf of the HMIS Governing Board providing regular updates to the Governing Board members	Ongoing
Collaboration and Communication	
Staff and engage in HMIS Governing Board and Committee meetings and attend CoC, and other homelessness-related meetings.	Ongoing
Host and manage the Minnesota HMIS website.	Ongoing
Provide emails to HMIS users and stakeholders regarding compliance, education, awareness and input.	Ongoing
User Training and Support	
Help Desk: Provide System Administrator and analyst staffing of help desk services between hours of 8:30-4:30 workdays AND provide after-hours emergency response to system outages. Requests for help should be responded to within 4 hours.	Ongoing

New User Trainings: Provide an online, self-paced new user training curriculum.	**Ongoing**
Program specific training: Provide customized trainings for specific programs to help ensure all data elements and other funder requirements are understood and reported.	**Ongoing**
Maximize use of HMIS: In accordance with the priorities established by the HMIS Governing Board, support and train on the use of enhanced and customized system functions that enable agencies and CoCs to improve quality of service, assess effectiveness of programs and the overall system, gain efficiencies, reduce duplication of data entry and encourage overall desire to use HMIS as a tool to prevent and end homelessness.	**Ongoing**
Budget	
Provide budget reports that clearly compare fiscal year-to-date actuals (income and expenses), summarized by categories, to original and revised budgets.	**Monthly**
Reporting and Customized System Set-up	
Customized Reports: Respond to and support requests from CoCs, state agencies and CHOs for customized reports. Respond to requests within 10 business days. Follow HMIS Governing Board protocol on prioritization of customized report requests.	**Ongoing**
HUD: Ensure HMIS reports are available for required HUD mandates, performance measures, annual/activity reports (PIT, HIC, SPM, APR, LSA/AHAR) and for data requested during the annual NOFA competition.	**Ongoing**
Coordinated Entry: Support continued improvement of Coordinated Entry processes within HMIS.	**Ongoing**
Modules: Support set-up, training, and customization for HMIS modules into system functioning. Modules will be identified as needed by the HMIS Governing Board.	**Ongoing**
Local System Administration	
State Agency and CoC staff trained and licensed as LSAs will have the ability to run reports and see within their designated and approved tree structure.	**Ongoing**

H. **Performance and Evaluation of Services**

    a. Monthly reports will be provided by ICA to the HMIS Governing Board, the CoCs and the State Agencies. The detailed format and content will be negotiated by the parties, but shall:

        i. clearly articulate the status of deliverables, identifying any relevant information related to responsibilities (issues, delays, challenges, solutions, recommendations, etc.);

        ii. report financial and resource expenditures;

        iii. provide updates on funder or federal policy/regulatory updates and changes;

        iv. provide updates on WellSky and ServicePoint; and

> v. identify system functions or innovations that will improve efficiencies, workflow, data quality, performance, or outcomes.
>
> b. The HMIS Governing Board will evaluate Lead Agency performance annually. If performance is not compliant with the responsibilities and deliverables in this MOU, the HMIS Governing Board reserves the right to renegotiate or not renew this agreement.

I. Payment Standards

Payment standards and dates are covered under individual funder contracts.

J. Period of Agreement and Modification/Termination

This MOU becomes effective July 1, 2021 and shall remain in effect until December 31, 2022.

This MOU can be terminated for non-compliance by either party with a 30 day written notice.

Modification of this MOU can occur at the request and mutual agreement of all three parties.

The signatures of the parties indicate their agreement with the terms and conditions set forth in this document.

West Central Minnesota Continuum of Care MN-508

BY _Carla Solem_ Date_June 22, 2021_

NAME_ Carla Solem_

The Institute for Community Alliances

BY _____ Demetri Vincze Date: 2021.07.06 10:36:03 -05'00'_ Date_7/6/21_

NAME_Demetri Vincze_

Minnesota's HMIS Governing Board

BY _____ Date_7/13/21_

NAME_Joel Salzer_

CoC-ICA MOU v.2021.3   7

HMIS MOU Addendum -MOU Joint Responsibilities

October 28, 2021

This document is intended to further clarify partner responsibilities referenced in the HMIS Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the ten Minnesota Continuums of Care (CoC), the HMIS Governing Board (HGB), and Institute for Community Alliances (ICA). Specifically, this agreement details responsibilities of shared roles listed in the MOU and lists roles and timelines that are not fully clarified in the MOU.

Each partner agrees to the following roles reference in the HMIS MOU:

1. **Contributing HMIS Organizations (hereinafter referred to as "CHOs") agreements and compliance:**
    A. ICA will follow the guidelines for new projects and new agencies to determine what CHOs are eligible for entering into HMIS, vetting requests, communicating, and making final decisions on ambiguous requests with CoCs and the HMIS Policy and Prioritization Committee.
    B. ICA will enter into Agreements with CHOs and provide CoCs with a copy of all signed agreements.
    C. ICA will provide a report to the CoCs each August on project and agency participation in HMIS in coordination with the QDQ workgroup.
    D. ICA shall notify the CoCs of all projects who are removed access to HMIS within the CoC. Similarly, CoCs should notify ICA if an agency should be removed from HMIS.
    E. As part of the quarterly QDQ review, with information provided by ICA, CoCs will verify that CHOs:
        -   have a signed Agency Agreement,
        -   have paid their annual fee,
        -   have reviewed users to assess whether they are up to date,
        -   are compliant with current HUD data privacy and security standards, and
        -   have reviewed users to assure they are current, have regularly used HMIS, and are up to date on required training.
        -   ICA will provide supporting data to help complete this checklist. Documentation of completion of this checklist signed by the CoC shall be kept by the respective CoCs.
    F. CoC Coordinators and ICA will work with CHOs to bring them into compliance as needed.
2. **Commit to use the statewide HMIS network and assure resources are available to fund the system:**
    A. The HMIS Finance committee will collect and review the ICA audit annually. Confirmation and findings of review shall be distributed to CoCs for use with annual ranking and review process.

B. The CoCs and State contributing agencies will follow HMIS policies.

C. All partners agree that a fully funded HMIS is needed to assure compliance with federal funders, support state program funding, and help meet the goal of preventing and ending homelessness in Minnesota. As such, each partner will strive to meet the annual funding formula set by the HMIS Finance Committee.

D. Partners not fulfilling their funding requirement may be subject to limited use of HMIS, including access of ICA reports, staffing support and other technical support.

3. **Assure HUD reports are submitted on time and in an efficient manner using quality data:**

A. In advance of reporting deadlines, ICA will develop project plans in coordination with the CoCs to assure the following reports are submitted in a timely manner with quality data. Reports include Annual Performance Reports (APRs), Point-in-Time Counts (PIT), Housing Inventory Counts (HIC), Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA), System Performance Measures (SPMs), and annual community needs and gaps analysis.

4. **Assure current, clean, and quality data is available to help prevent and end homelessness:**

A. ICA will provide CoCs with a Quarterly Data Quality (QDQ) report that includes both participating and non-participating HMIS providers. ICA and CoCs will follow the annual QDQ Monitoring Plan.

5. **Assure an evaluation the HMIS Lead Agency, Vendor and Policies.**

A. ICA and the HMIS Board shall be responsible for the following system, software and lead agency review:

	How often?	Who initiates?	Responsible to review and approval.	When does it happen?	Communication of results.
Annual contract with software vendor	Annually	ICA	HMIS Governing Board	September	HMIS Communications Committee
Software and software vendor review	Every 3 years	ICA	HMSI Governing Board		
Emergency review for software vendor	As concerns arise	HMIS Governing Board	HMIS Governing Board		
Lead Agency/System Administrator evaluation	Annually	HMIS P&P Committee	HMIS Governing Board	September	Annual meeting

B. Review shall include:

Review	Criteria and or document used for review

Annual contract with software vendor	• Ability to fulfill previous years contract timelines and deliverables • Ability to fulfill new desired contract timelines and deliverables • Cost analysis
Software and software vendor review	*HMIS Software Vendor Capacity Checklist*
Emergency review for software vendor	A significant or consistent lack of delivery, or lack of quality delivery, on contract deliverables, including not adhering to timeline.
Lead Agency (LA)/System Administrator (SA) evaluation	At a minimum: • LA has the technical knowledge and expertise to manage HMIS • LA establishes, communicates, and follows workplan with identified timeline for activities • LA is able to correctly and in a timely manner add, remove, and update users, projects and CHOs • LA is able to provide training for users, projects and CHOs • LA is able assess and conduct HMIS vendor and software performance • LA is able to work with HMIS vendor and MN stakeholders to customize HMIS workflows, projects, and reports. • LA is able to work with HMIS vendor to implement HUD UDE changes by October 1ˢᵗ each year. • LA is able to submit and/or support CoCs in submitting the HIC, PIT, LSA and SPMs annually. • LA is able to monitor and work with HMIS stakeholders to improve HMIS data quality. • LA is able to maintain communication with HMIS stakeholders on system improvements, issues, updates, requirements, and changes. • LA is able to maintain a helpdesk that can troubleshoot and resolve HMIS issues, either internally or in coordination with HMIS vendor • LA is able to host an HMIS website with information and access to current training information, dashboards, governance materials, and policies • LA is able to host user groups at least quarterly • LA is able to help promote use of HMIS as a tool to prevent and end homelessness • LA is able to monitor compliance with HMIS data privacy, security, confidentiality standards. • LA is able to develop and implement a training plan for HMIS end-users that ensures all required HMIS participants have received training and orientation on HMIS, funder, CoC, and HUD policies and protocols related to HMIS.

Signatures of HMIS MOU Partners

Demetri Vincze
_____
Name of Institute for Community Alliances Authorized Representative

Demetri Vincze   12/28/21
Signature of ICA Authorized Representative   Date

Joel Salzer
_____
Name of HMIS Board Chair

[signature]   12/27/21
_____
Signature of HMIS Board Chair   Date

Continuum of Care Authorized Representatives:

Continuum of Care	Name of Authorized Representative	Signature of Authorized Representative	Date
Central	Tim Poland	*[signature]*	11/18/21
Hennepin	Laura DeRosier	*[signature]*	8/25/22
Northeast	Cara Lundquist	*[signature]*	8/25/22
Northwest	Cory Boushee	*[signature]*	08/25/22
Ramsey	Loni Aadalen	*[signature]*	8/25/22
Saint Louis	Courtney Cochran	*[signature]*	08/24/2022
Southeast	Jennifer Prins	*[signature]*	
Southwest	Justin Vorbach	*[signature]*	
Suburban Metro Area	Abby Guilford	*[signature]*	2/23/22
West Central	Carla Solem	*[signature]*	

APPENDIX C

West Central CoC School Engagement Policy
Enrollment and Connection to Services
Approved February 2012

Educational and supportive service needs of families with minor children will be fully assessed with expediency upon entry to the program. School-aged youth will be enrolled in school immediately, working collaboratively with the designated school homeless liaison in the Local Educational Agency (LEA) to ensure that all educational assessments are completed. To the extent feasible, students in homeless situations should be kept in their school of origin (defined as the school the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled), unless it is against the parent's or guardian's wishes. Students in homeless situations must have access to the educational and other services they need to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. Appropriate referrals will be made in the community to address the individual needs of all the children and other family members.

The CoC staff and board shall strive to establish an MOU with all early education and public or private elementary and secondary schools in the region to support this policy.

Student Engagement
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Purpose of Agreement
This agreement is made on _____ (dd/mm/yyyy) and is intended to outline and formalize the partnership between the West Central Minnesota Continuum of Care and the _____ (name of School or educational program). This agreement will be in effect for two years from the date of signing.
The purpose of this MOU is to foster improved collaboration and sharing of resources in order to better serve students who are homeless, especially reducing any disruption in attendance due to homelessness. It is our belief that with improve collaboration and maximized supports, the number of homeless students and families and the length of time a student experiences homelessness will be reduced.
Expectations of Parties
School Districts will provide:
- Transportation to and from school
- Enrollment assistance

- Referrals to CARES for access to prevention, shelter, or supportive housing assistance
- Communication with homeless program case managers on student/family needs and goals
- Information and referrals to annual Point-in-Time Count sites or serve as a site to assure all students are counted and none are duplicated
- Other services (please list):_____

Early Childhood Programs will provide:
- Enrollment Assistance
- Referrals to CARES for access to prevention, shelter or supportive housing assistance
- Communication with homeless program case managers on student/family needs and goals
- Other services (please list):_____

Continuum of Care Housing, Shelter and Prevention Partners will provide:
- Assistance accessing Coordinated Entry
- Access to prevention funding and services
- Assistance accessing mainstream resources such as MFIP, Emergency Assistance, General Assistance
- Coordination/Communication with schools/education programs on student/family needs and goals related to education

Additionally, the Continuum of Care and/or its partners will:
- Invite Homeless School Liaisons to Local Homeless Advisory Committee, Homework Starts with Home, and quarterly CoC meetings.
- Have an annual meeting/training with the Homeless School Liaisons.
- Include Schools and Education Programs in coordination and implementation of the Annual Point in Time Count and Minnesota Tri-Annual Homeless Study (Wilder Study).
- Communicate with Homeless School Liaisons and early childhood staff to assure we are effectively assessing homeless students and families for eligible homeless programs.
- Ensure that the Homeless School Liaisons have information on homeless prevention, mainstream and CARES resources.

Shared Goals and Objectives
1. Students/Families will have increased utilization of mainstream resources
2. Students/Families will have easy access to CARES
3. Students will not miss any school days due to homelessness.

4. Students will graduate from high school.
5. Students will be provided with support to succeed in school.
6. Schools & Educational Programs are part of the community discussion on ending homelessness.
7. Schools, Educational Programs and Homeless Programs will communicate on the needs of students related to housing stability, enrollment, attendance, basic needs, transportation, or other needs related to assuring success in school.
8. Schools, Educational Programs and Homeless Programs will develop and use one standardized Release of Information that is acceptable to all parties.
9. Schools, Educational Programs and Homeless Providers will engage in education, training, professional development, and utilization of best practices around issues pertaining to homeless students and families to increase their knowledge and effectiveness in working with students and families who are homeless.

Signature of Both Parties

_____   _____
Authorized Educational Representative   Continuum of Care Coordinator

_____   _____
Date   Date

APPENDIX D

Family Separation and Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing
Approved November 2015

The West Central MN Continuum of Care believes that families experiencing homelessness should not be separated unless the health and well-being of children are at immediate risk. In addition, a broad definition of family should be used that allows for female headed, male-headed, two parent, same sex parent, LGBT parent, and extended families to be served together with their children. HUD issued regulations that all ESG funded shelters and transitional housing programs are prohibited from denying access to families based on the age of child. Non-compliance may result in the removal of ESG funds. The CoC has expanded this policy to include any shelter or TH program participating in CES. Specific details include:
1. IN GENERAL. —Any project receiving funds to provide emergency shelter, transitional housing, or permanent housing to families with children under age 18 shall not deny admission to any family based on the age of any child under age 18. "
2. EXCEPTION.—Transitional housing projects may target transitional housing resources to families with children of a specific age only if the project sponsor— "(1) operates a transitional housing program that has a primary purpose of implementing an evidence-based practice that requires that housing units be targeted to families with children in a specific age group; and "(2) provides such assurances, as the Secretary shall require, that an equivalent

appropriate alternative living arrangement for the whole family or household unit has been secured.

Trauma and Separation
We acknowledge that people who are homeless have experienced high rates of traumatic events leading to their homelessness or because of their homelessness. Therefore, we do not want to add to the families' trauma by asking parents to separate from their children, and children from their parents while in the midst of a housing crisis that has already rocked the family.

ESG Interim Rule language on family separation:
HUD regulation includes: "(b) Prohibition against involuntary family separation. The age, of a child under age 18 must not be used as a basis for denying any family's admission to an emergency shelter that uses Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding or services and provides shelter to families with children under age 18."

APPENDIX E

CoC Policy on Health and Safety
September 19, 2022

To protect the health and safety of agency staff and the persons they serve, all homeless programs shall develop a health and safety policy that at a minimum includes the following:
1. Crisis Communication plan
2. Plan for the prevention and mitigation of infectious and communicable diseases including but not limited to:
    a. linkage to vaccinations,
    b. sanitation practices: cleaning/disinfecting
    c. Testing: staff and clients/tenants (if fixed site facility)
    d. Use of PPE
    e. Isolation and quarantine: staff and clients (if fixed site facility)
3. Communicable Diseases 101 - Signs and Symptoms, When to Seek Medical Care
4. Violence Against Women Act
    a. Self-certification of homeless status HUD 5283
    b. Emergency Transfer Plan HUD 5383
    c. Data privacy
    d. Lease Addendum (if fixed site housing program) HUD-91067
    e. Notice of Occupancy Rights HUD-5380

Collaboration Agreement among the Ten Minnesota Continuum of Care Regions (CoC) and Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)

Purpose of Agreement

This purpose of this document is to outline the specific ways that the ten Minnesota Continuum of Care (CoC) Regions and Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) collaborate to serve youth experiencing homelessness. The purpose of this non-binding collaborative agreement is to demonstrate interest in sharing resources, expanding collaborative efforts, and implementing systemic supports to better serve students and families who are experiencing homelessness. It is understood that agreements with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are not included in this agreement.

Expectations of Parties

Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) will:

- Annually provide training to CoC Coordinators on how to access and use MDE aggregate public data on youth experiencing homelessness in Districts and Schools.
- Annually provide a list of trainings, offered to District and School Homeless Liaisons, to CoC Coordinators
- Annually provide to District and School Homeless Liaisons, a list of CoC Coordinators with contact information sortable by county; and encourage Liaisons to communicate and collaborate with their CoC.
- Annually provide an Excel spreadsheet of District and School Homeless Liaisons with contact information sortable by CoC region and county to CoC Coordinators.
- At least two times annually, an MDE representative will attend the monthly CoC Coordinator meeting to share information, updates, discuss initiatives, and identify ways to enhance collaboration between MDE and the CoC Coordinator.
- Prior to the annual Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Point in Time (PIT) Count, encourage District and School homeless liaisons to work with their CoC to provide relevant input.
- Bimonthly, solicit contributions to the Homeless Education Newsletter from CoC Coordinators; and, ensure that all CoC Coordinators are subscribed to the bimonthly newsletter.

Each Continuum of Care Coordinators will:

- By October 1 each year, provide MDE a current list of CoC contacts via email.
- By October 1 of each year, provide information on how to become members of a CoC with District and School Homeless Liaisons. As needed, invite MDE and educational entities within the CoC to become members of the CoC.
- As needed, provide clear information about date, time, and agenda of agreed upon collaboration meetings; send meeting notice to mde.homelessEd@state.mn.us .
- Upon request, provide information to MDE and Districts and Schools on the local homeless response system through virtual or in person training sessions.
- When conducted, share with MDE information regarding homeless counts managed by the CoC.
- Upon request, provide educational opportunities to homeless programs within the CoC regions on policies and procedures relevant to serving homeless children and youth; examples include: housing, shelter, prevention, outreach, and support services.

- Regularly promote the use of the district homeless liaison list (provided by MDE) to programs within in the CoC regions.
- As needed, provide MDE with access to CoC trainings and tools and resources.
- Regularly evaluate the CoC services provided in a manner that is in compliance with educational policies and procedures.

General Terms

This agreement shall be reviewed by its respective representatives by August 15 each year following. Terms and conditions set forth will renew on the anniversary date (September 30) unless participating parties agree to changes.

Signatures

I, the Authorized Representative, acknowledge by signing below that I have reviewed and accept this agreement.

Dr. Teresa Taylor, Director, Student Access and Opportunity / _Dr. Teresa Taylor_   09/13/2022
Authorized Representative Name and Signature   Date

Minnesota CoC Regional Coordinators

Tim Poland, Coordinator   / _Tim Poland_   09/10/2022
Authorized Representative Name and Signature   Date

Central CoC

Laura DeRosier, Coordinator   / _Laura DeRosier_   09/12/2022
Authorized Representative Name and Signature   Date

Hennepin County - Minneapolis CoC

Angela Neal, Board Chair   / _Angela Neal_   09/13/2022
Authorized Representative Name and Signature   Date

Northeast CoC

Cory Boushee, Coordinator / *Cory Boushee*   09/12/2022

Authorized Representative Name and Signature   Date

Northwest CoC

Keith Lattimore, Housing Stability Director / *Keith Lattimore*   09/14/2022

Authorized Representative Name and Signature
                        Date

Ramsey County – St. Paul CoC

Laquita Love-Limo, Coordinator / *Laquita Love-Limo*   09/14/2022

Authorized Representative Name and Signature   Date

Suburban Metro Area CoC

Andrew Pietsch, Board Co-Chair / *Andrew Pietsch*   09/12/2022

Authorized Representative Name and Signature   Date

Southeast CoC

Justin Vorbach, Coordinator / *Justin Vorbach*   09/11/2022

Authorized Representative Name and Signature   Date

Southwest CoC

Courtney Cochran, Coordinator /   09/12/2022

Authorized Representative Name and Signature   Date

St. Louis County – Duluth CoC

Carla Solem, Coordinator / *Carla Solem*   09/12/2022

Authorized Representative Name and Signature   Date

West Central CoC

Non-Discrimination Policy
Approved June 2018

Background

The West Central MN Continuum of Care is both required to assure recipients of Federal and state funds comply with applicable civil rights and fair housing laws and requirements. Recipients and subrecipients of CoC Program and ESG Program-funded projects must comply with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of Federal civil rights laws as specified at 24 C.F.R. 5.105(a), including, but not limited to the following:

- Fair Housing Act prohibits discriminatory housing practices based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or familial status; The Minnesota Human Rights Act (Chapter 363A of the Minnesota Statutes) also prohibits discrimination based on marital status, public assistance status, and sexual orientation.

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance,

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance, and

- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits public entities, which includes state and local governments, and special purpose districts, from discriminating against individuals with disabilities in all their services, programs, and activities, which include housing, and housing-related services such as housing search and referral assistance. Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits private entities that own, lease, and operate places of public accommodation, which include shelters, social service establishments, and other public accommodations providing housing, from discriminating on the basis of disability.

In addition, HUD's Equal Access Rule at 24 CFR 5.105(a)(2) prohibits discriminatory eligibility determinations in HUD-assisted or HUD-insured housing programs based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status, including any projects funded by the CoC Program, ESG Program, and HOPWA Program. The CoC Program interim rule also contains a fair housing provision at 24 CFR 578.93. For ESG, see 24 CFR 576.407(a) and (b), and for HOPWA, see 24 CFR 574.603.

The CoC Program interim rule at 24 CFR 578.93(c) also requires recipients of CoC Program funds to affirmatively market their housing and supportive services to eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, or disability who are least likely to apply in the absence of special outreach and maintain records of those marketing activities. Housing assisted by HUD and made available through the CoC must also be made available to individuals and families without regard to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status in accordance with 24 CFR 5.105 (a)(2). Nondiscrimination and affirmative outreach requirements for the ESG program are located at 24 CFR § 576.407(a) and (b).

The CoC Board has determined that the furtherance of fair housing, nondiscrimination and equal opportunity are essential beyond ESG and CoC funded programs and will assure all partner agencies are trained on these vital laws, rules and policies, as well as review and respond to compliance.

Policy

The West Central MN Continuum of Care requires all CoC member agencies and Coordinated Entry partners to provide equal opportunity and equal consideration to all peoples without regard to race, religion, ancestry, national origin, color, creed, sex, age, physical disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or public assistance status.

Delivery of Services

West Central MN Continuum of Care, its member agencies, its recipients of CoC, ESG, or HOPWA funds, and its Coordinated Entry System agents and partners shall not discriminate or treat unequally or unfairly in the delivery of services any person because of race, religion, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, or sex; and will comply with all federal, state, and local anti-discrimination laws.

Affirmative Marketing and Outreach

West Central MN Continuum of Care, its member agencies, its recipients of CoC, ESG, or HOPWA funds, and its Coordinated Entry System agents and partners shall affirmatively market access Coordinated Entry (and as a result to the housing and services available through Coordinated Entry) to eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, or disability who are least likely to apply in the absence of special outreach, and maintain records of those marketing activities.

Obligation to Inform

The West Central MN Continuum of Care, its member agencies, its recipients of CoC, ESG, or HOPWA funds, and its Coordinated Entry System agents and partners shall inform in plain writing all persons seeking services of these policies and the process for filing a nondiscrimination complaint.

Reporting a Nondiscrimination Complaint

At any time during the coordinated entry process, applicants or recipients of housing or services have the right to file a complaint, should they feel that the non-discrimination principle has been violated. Each agency shall provide applicants with the process for filing a complaint. All complaints must be addressed and resolved in a timely and fair manner.

The following three contacts will be provided to address discrimination or grievance related concerns:
- For nondiscrimination complaints, contact the o Department of Housing & Urban Development, Chicago Regional Office: (800) 765-9372 or https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/onlin ecomplaint or Minnesota Department of Human Rights: 651-539-1100 or Toll Free at 1-800-657-3704
- For complaints with Coordinated Entry policies or procedures, contact any Access Site or the CoC Coordinator. Access sites and the CoC Coordinator contact information are located on the CoC website: www.homelesstohoused.com .
- For housing program related complaints, grievances will be directed to the appropriate housing provider for resolution.

Retaliation

Member agencies and its Coordinated Entry System agents and partners shall not retaliate against a person who files a charge of discrimination, participates in a discrimination proceeding, or otherwise opposes an unlawful practice.

West Central Minnesota Continuum of Care
Emergency Transfer Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking

Emergency Transfers

The West Central Minnesota Homeless Continuum of Care is concerned about the safety of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking in all of our homeless programs (herein after referred to HP). In accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA),[1] HP allows tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to request an emergency transfer from the tenant's current unit to another unit. The ability to request a transfer is available regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.[2] The ability of HP to honor such request for tenants currently receiving assistance, however, may depend upon a preliminary determination that the tenant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and on whether HP has another dwelling unit that is available and is safe to offer the tenant for temporary or more permanent occupancy.

This plan identifies tenants who are eligible for an emergency transfer, the documentation needed to request an emergency transfer, confidentiality protections, how an emergency transfer may occur, and guidance to tenants on safety and security. This plan is based on a model emergency transfer plan published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Federal agency that oversees that all Continuum of Care and Emergency Solutions Grantees are in compliance with VAWA. Furthermore, the plan applies to other homeless designated HP funded by the State of MN.

Eligibility for Emergency Transfers

A tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as provided in HUD's regulations at 24 CFR part 5, subpart L is eligible for an emergency transfer, if: the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant remains within the same unit. If the tenant is a victim of sexual assault, the tenant may also be eligible to transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises within the 90-calendar-day period preceding a request for an emergency transfer.

A tenant requesting an emergency transfer must expressly request the transfer in accordance with the procedures described in this plan.

Tenants who are not in good standing may still request an emergency transfer if they meet the eligibility requirements in this section.

Emergency Transfer Request Documentation

To request an emergency transfer, the tenant shall notify any HP's office and submit a written request for a transfer to the program manager. HP will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities. The tenant's written request for an emergency transfer should include either:

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[1] Despite the name of this law, VAWA protection is available to all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

[2] Housing providers cannot discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. HUD-assisted and HUD-insured housing must be made available to all otherwise eligible individuals regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

1. A statement expressing that the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant were to remain in the same dwelling unit assisted under HP's program; OR
2. A statement that the tenant was a sexual assault victim and that the sexual assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period preceding the tenant's request for an emergency transfer.

Confidentiality

HP will keep confidential any information that the tenant submits in requesting an emergency transfer, and information about the emergency transfer, unless the tenant gives HP written permission to release the information on a time limited basis, or disclosure of the information is required by law or required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance from the covered program. This includes keeping confidential the new location of the dwelling unit of the tenant, if one is provided, from the person(s) that committed an act(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against the tenant. See the Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence Against Women Act For All Tenants for more information about HP's responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of information related to incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Emergency Transfer Timing and Availability

HP cannot guarantee that a transfer request will be approved or how long it will take to process a transfer request. HP will, however, act as quickly as possible to move a tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to another unit, subject to availability and safety of a unit. If a tenant reasonably believes a proposed transfer would not be safe, the tenant may request a transfer to a different unit. If a unit is available, the transferred tenant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the unit to which the tenant has been transferred. HP may be unable to transfer a tenant to a particular unit if the tenant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit.

If HP has no safe and available units for which a tenant who needs an emergency is eligible, HP will assist the tenant in identifying other housing providers who may have safe and available units to which the tenant could move. At the tenant's request, HP will also assist tenants in contacting the local organizations offering assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that are attached to this plan.

Safety and Security of Tenants

Pending processing of the transfer and the actual transfer, if it is approved and occurs, the tenant is urged to take all reasonable precautions to be safe.

National Contacts:

- Tenants who are or have been victims of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, or a local domestic violence shelter, for assistance in creating a safety plan. For persons with hearing impairments, that hotline can be accessed by calling 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).
- Tenants who have been victims of sexual assault may call the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network's National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE or visit the online hotline at https://ohl.rainn.org/online/.
- Tenants who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center.

For help within the state at any time, call a 24-Hour hotline:

- Someplace Safe Crisis Line @ **1-800-974-3359** serving Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, Wadena, and Wilkin counties

Appendix I

NOFO Policies

West Central MN CoC Reallocation Process
Updated June 2022

The West Central Minnesota Continuum of Care (CoC) has created this process to guide the CoC in determining if, when and how the CoC should reallocate funds. Reallocating funds is one of the tools our CoC uses to make strategic improvements to our homelessness system. Through reallocation, our CoC can create new, evidence-informed projects by eliminating projects that are underperforming, underutilized, or are more appropriately funded from other sources. While reallocation can be complicated and does not come without risk, it is a necessary part of ensuring that our CoC's homeless assistance system meets the needs of people experiencing homelessness.

What is Reallocation?
Reallocation refers to the process by which our CoC can shift funds in whole or in part from one or more existing CoC- funded projects that are eligible for renewal to create one or more new projects. A project funded through reallocation must be an eligible new or expansion project that serves new participants or provides new services.

What types of projects can be reallocated?
The annual CoC Program Competition Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) dictates what types of projects may be created through reallocation in a given competition. For example, in FY19, eligible project components include Permanent Supportive Housing, Permanent Rapid-Rehousing, Joint Transitional-Rapid Rehousing, HMIS, or Coordinated Entry. New reallocated projects applied for from the agency reallocating funds must include a component change (i.e., TH to PSH or RRH to PSH) or a significant change in the program's population (i.e., youth to single CH).

Identifying Projects for Reallocation
The CoC Board, Performance Evaluation Committee, Ranking Committee, and CoC Staff all assist in identifying projects which may be considered for reallocation. Projects may also choose to offer all or a portion of their renewal funding for reallocation during the CoC Competition on the Intent to Apply form.

Various factors will be considered for identifying projects for reallocation including:
   a. Regional need: Inventory (current and planned service/housing gaps or abundance),

project location, and population/sub-population served.

    b. <u>Program performance</u>: Utilization rate, data quality, system performance outcomes, Annual Performance Report outcomes, service model, coordination with other services, and compliance with coordinated entry (CARES).

    c. <u>Fiscal Management:</u> Spending down of grant funds, audits, fiscal practices, financial reports, cost effectiveness, matching funds

    d. <u>Other system needs:</u> Coordinated entry and HMIS funding needs, potential grant mergers/collaborations, and other funding resources or restrictions (both new and existing).

Underperforming, underutilized, underspent, financially mismanaged, or low-need projects may be targeted for reallocation at any time but are most likely identified following an annual performance review and completed during the CoC competition process. When appropriate, the CoC is dedicated to first working with any underperforming or underutilized project to address deficiencies prior to recommending for reallocation. The CoC feels it is worth the investment to increase the capacity of existing projects and agencies to meet the needs of our region, especially given the rural geography and limited number of providers. Under performing projects will be offered technical assistance and may be required to create a *CoC Retention and Performance Improvement Plan*. Agencies that neglect to create or follow through with a plan or show performance improvement will be considered for reallocation. Plan review may be done on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, or annual basis.

Reallocation Process

1. A project is identified as being either fiscally irresponsible (e.g., consistently, or significantly underspent or mismanaged) or underperforming (e.g., performance outcomes are significantly poor in one or more areas or are low in three or more areas or are repeatedly low without viable correction plan) during a project site visit or performance review.

2. A project is offered to participate in a performance improvement planning process (either a *Retention and Performance Improvement Plan* or combination of technical assistance and a *Retention and Performance Improvement Plan*) unless they have recently completed a plan and performance has not improved to the desired degree.

3. If the identified project is unwilling or unresponsive to the *Retention and Performance Improvement Plan* a project is targeted for reallocation.

4. The CoC will contact the project in person and in writing to notify the project of their pending reallocation, including the reallocation amount, reason for consideration. The CoC will work with the project to develop a transition plan to help assure compliance with other funding commitments and prevent anyone from becoming homeless as a result of the reallocation**.**

West Central Minnesota Continuum of Care
HUD CoC Project Evaluation, Ranking and Review Policy
Updated June 2022

The West Central Minnesota Continuum of Care (CoC) requires an annual project review of all HUD Continuum of Care and Emergency Solutions Grant funded Projects. However, this policy only applies to projects seeking funding under the annual HUD Continuum of Care competition.
This document is designed to inform NOFO ranking and to provide applicants in the competition with clarity regarding how project ranking, tiering and selection occur.

POLICY VALUES
1. Maintain and grow HUD funding in our CoC.
2. Assure projects moving forward in the competition meet CoC and HUD eligibility thresholds.
3. Fund projects that:
    a. engage and support our regional goals to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time,
    b. follow CoC and HUD policies and priorities,
    c. demonstrate positive performance outcomes,
    d. manage resources effectively,
    e. equitably serve clients, and
    f. have strong service models
4. Prioritize quality agencies, programs, and project applications.

IMPORTANT PROJECT APPLICATION DATES & DEADLINES:
Each year, the CoC will publish annual Competition deadlines that include both local and HUD deadlines. Any agency applying for the CoC Competition must comply with the published deadlines or risk point loss and possible ineligibility in the competition. The dates and deadlines will be published on the CoC website and sent out via email through the CoC email list. Projects who do not submit the completed project Application Packet by the CoC deadline will not be eligible to be ranked.

This section applies to the HUD CoC Competition

ELIGIBILITY
To be eligible for inclusion in the CoC Evaluation and Ranking process, all projects must pass all facets of the CoC Application process including:
1. HUD Requirements HUD requires the following to be eligible for funding. Threshold requirements are not curable, except for clarification on documentation for eligibility. Please read the HUD CoC NOFO for a full description of requirements.
    a. Applicant has a DUNS number and a current SAM registration.
    b. Applicant is a nonprofit organization, State or local government, instrument of a State or local government, Public housing agency, Indian Tribe, or Tribally Designated Housing Entity (TDHE).
    c. Applicant enters, or will enter if a new applicant, required project data in HMIS or the CoC approved alternative database if a Victim Service Provider (VSP).
    d. Applicant demonstrates financial and management capacity and experience to successfully carry out the project.
    e. Applicant submits required certifications as required in the NOFO.

     f.   Applicant agrees to only serve persons who are eligible as defined in Hearth Act regulations.

     g.   Project draws down funds from eLOCCS at least quarterly.

2. CoC Requirements:
   a. Has a signed CoC Membership Agreement;
   b. Fills all open beds through CARES, the regional coordinated entry system.
   c. Links households to mainstream services using CARES Receipts and tools.
   d. Documents participant eligibility.
   e. Demonstrates a commitment to data quality and compliance.
   f. Demonstrates an ability to manage funds appropriately. Specifically, CoC funding if a renewal project (e.g., spending report, utilization rate, CARES participation, and audit) or documentation of similar grant administration if a new applicant (audit, list of other grants administered).
   g. Ability to meet CoC utilization and performance standards. If a CoC renewal project has not achieved utilization or performance standards, they have an identified performance improvement plan approved by the CoC. New projects must provide outcomes for other similar projects or otherwise demonstrate ability.
   h. Project is well designed (cost effective, population and project type are appropriate, project policies incorporate CoC core principles, and staffing patter is appropriate).
   i. Promotes and support lived experience engagement including promotion of Consumer Advisory Boards and annual CoC Satisfaction Survey. New projects must demonstrate history, ability, or willingness to engage persons with lived experience if funded.
   j. Compliance with or assurance to complete required CoC trainings.
   k. Adherence to CoC Policies:
      a. CARES Coordinated Entry, including prioritization
      b. School Enrollment and Connection of Services Policy
      c. Family Separation
      d. Written Standards for ESG and CoC Assistance
      e. Violence Against Women Act
3. Project adheres to all local CoC Competition deadlines.
      o Project submits an Intent to Apply and Threshold Assessment by designated deadline
      o Initial and final Project Application submitted in esnaps & via PDF by deadline
   1. Demonstration or commitment to integrate Housing First and Low Barrier Access Principals and Policies into project.
   2. Participation in HMIS (or commitment to participate if a new applicant) unless project is designated as a victim service project (VSP). If a VSP, agree to enter data into a CoC approved equivalent data base. If a new project, certification of willingness to participate; and
   3. Provide Annual Performance Reports to the CoC at least 15 days prior to submission to HUD for pre-review.

GUIDANCE ON REQUIRED RANKING AND TIERS

The CoC will review all projects and rank in either Tier 1 or Tier 2 according to CoC ranking criteria including project quality, past performance and regional need. Tier 1 projects are more likely to be renewed by HUD. Tier 2 projects are conditional and will depend on CoC Score, Project Score and Rank. HUD will award a point value to projects in Tier 2. Projects will be able to straddle Tier 1 and Tier 2, but the portion in Tier 1 must adequately fund the project in the case that funding in Tier 2 is not awarded.

New or Expanded Project Ranking Priority Bonus: The CoC will award bonus points to projects based on project type to help prioritize new or expanded project applications that fill the gaps and needs within the CoC. New or expanded projects will receive bonus points based on the following criteria.

Project Type	Eligibility Type	Priority Bonus	Justification for Priority
New or expanded **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** projects that serve chronically homeless individuals, unaccompanied youth, and families.	Expansion, Reallocation or Bonus	+5	• Sufficient PSH is necessary to continue to prioritize serving most vulnerable. • For singles, CH remains the highest unmet need on the priority list.
New **Supportive Services Only (SSO)** projects for the CoCs <u>Coordinated Entry</u> System.	Bonus or Reallocation	+4 +1 for DV	• CE needs to be sufficiently funded to assure the CoC is compliant with HUD and to help the CoC operate a system that is capable of reaching our goal to end homelessness. • Domestic Violence victims make up anywhere from 15-25% of those on our priority list so dedicated CE staff could address the unique safety and data security needs of this population.
New or expanded **Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)** projects for homeless individuals, unaccompanied youth, and families coming directly from the streets, emergency shelter or fleeing domestic violence.	Expansion, Reallocation or Bonus	+3	• Rapid rehousing continues to have a high unmet need for both singles and families, adulted headed and youth headed household. • New ESG-CR RR beds were funded in 2021.
New **TH-Rapid Rehousing (TH-RRH)** projects that serve youth, families, and individuals.	Bonus or Reallocation	+2	• There is not sufficient shelter coverage in our rural region. • Fixed site TH, with ability to transition to RRH rapidly, helps address need to have immediate access to housing and gain rental history necessary to find scattered site housing. • TH-RRH is more cost effective and client friendly than motel vouchers.
HMIS expansion projects.	Reallocation	+1	• The CoC currently funds HMIS at over the targeted 2.5% of our regions ARD.

SCORING & RANKING PROCESS: HMIS Projects

The CoC recognizes that a quality Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is not only required by HUD but is used as a valuable tool to operate and evaluate our regional homeless response system. However, ranking and scoring HMIS like Supportive Housing Projects is not feasible due to the unique

aspects of our statewide system. Therefore, the CoC will rely on the statewide HMIS Board to annually evaluate our State System

Administrator's performance and provide our CoC will a letter of review and recommendation for renewed funding or reallocation. Furthermore, the CoC recognizes that a robust homeless management information system needs sufficient funding and therefore will assure renewed funding of our system by placing one or more HMIS applications for at least 2.5% of the CoC's ARD at the top of Tier 1 if the request comes from the designated State System Administrator. Requests for over the ARD or 2.5%, whichever is greater, may be placed in Tier 2.

SCORING & RANKING PROCESS: Supportive Housing Projects

The following describes the CoC process to score and rank supportive projects for CoC funding. It should be noted that the CoC uses "scoring", "reallocation", and "ranking" as three distinct steps. Scoring informs, but does not dictate, the final reallocation or tiering (including order of project) decisions. The CoC Ranking Committee may recommend not reallocating a project (in whole or a portion) or placing a project in a different order from how they scored. This strategy may be used to help increase the likelihood more projects are funded.

Scoring criteria: The CoC ranking policies, which guide the scoring, were originally approved by the CoC membership. The CoC Performance Evaluation Committee or other designated committee is responsible for reviewing, updating, and distributing Ranking Criteria to the CoC Board for approval each year. If substantive changes occur, the proposed policy changes will be taken to the CoC full membership for a vote. The process utilizes non-biased, objective criteria based on the HUD ranking tool, established CoC priorities, and project performance. The CoC uses objective HUD (APR, SPM, and eLocs) and HMIS reports (APRs, Ranking, Core, Returns, and CARES), as well as the Project Threshold Assessment and a CoC Ranking Scorecard (that incorporates both an agency self-assessment and required attachments) to score projects. The Ranking Committee may make adjustments to scores based on verification and review of documents presented and special circumstances like natural disasters.

Specifically, ranking incorporates the following seven categories:

1. Financial: Fiscal responsibility, draw downs, resources/leverage, and cost effectiveness of project.
2. Regional Priorities: Regional need for project type and target population/subpopulation based on Coordinated Entry data and annual needs/gaps assessment.
3. HUD Priorities: Project commitment to meeting HUD Priorities
4. Engagement: Agency commitment to engaging in regional planning including membership/participation in the CoC Board and Committees, participation in local homeless committees/coalitions,
5. Policy & Reporting Compliance: Adherence to funder and CoC policies, training, and reporting standards.
6. Project Design & Services: Project incorporates core principals adopted by the CoC including: housing first, low barrier access, trauma informed, motivational interviewing, creative engagement, and client centered care. Principals must be incorporated into education/training, policies, and practices. The project must also demonstrate history or ability to link to mainstream resources and educational services (if serving youth and families).

7. Project Performance: Performance is measured through an HMIS Dashboard or duplicate dashboard (if Victim Service Provider) that includes the following: HUD Annual Performance Report (APR), project utilization rate, and returns to homelessness rate. Performance review also takes into consideration acuity of households served.
8. Data Quality: HMIS and CES Data quality and responsiveness to HMIS/CoC data requests.

Scoring & Ranking Process

1. **Pre-Application**:
   i. The CoC solicits interest and designates a Ranking Committee identified through a public application process with no representatives being accepted from applicant agencies (staff, clients, or board members). Note the Ranking Committee is a subset of the Performance Evaluation Committee.
   ii. The CoC conducts a review and ranking of renewal projects.
   iii. The CoC solicits open invite for new projects via the CoC email list and notice at other regional meetings or public notices.
   iv. The CoC Coordinator follows-up with agencies interested in applying for new or expanded projects.
   v. Within 10 days after the NOFO publication the updated Application Packets and timeline are posted on the CoC website.
   vi. New project ranking process, criteria, submitted pre-applications and timeline are presented at first CoC meeting after the NOFO release. Any proposed updates to the policy in response to the NOFO are presented and voted upon at this time.
   vii. The CoC promotes and hosts an application lab to assist with completing the application in esnaps.
2. **Submission:** New project applicants submit application packet (Score Card, Project Application and required supporting documentation) and renewal projects submit esnaps application to the CoC by deadline to be eligible for ranking (renewal) and inclusion in the CoC Application.
3. **Review and Ranking:**
   i. The CoC Coordinator Collects and organizes the application ranking materials and shares with the ranking committee.
   ii. The committee reviews the application packet (i.e., Score Card, application, and supporting documentation) and scores each application. This includes:
      • Reviewing project eligibility.
      • Validating applicant self-score, noting any discrepancies.
      • Identifying specific concerns or noting questions for the applicant.
      • Assigning a preliminary score and rank to reach project.
   iii. The Ranking Committee meets to collectively review and align scores and ranking. Each project is assigned a score based on the % of eligible points and any adjustments (note adjustments may be made for extenuating circumstances like a change in agency leadership, disaster, etc.)
   iv. CoC Coordinator provides each project with the Committee's recommended score

and rank via email.

v. Projects are given 3-5 days to respond with clarification or corrections. (exact time is posted on annual competition calendar).

vi. If received, updated information is reviewed by the Ranking Committee. Scores may be adjusted if validated (supporting documentation or appropriate clarification is provided). If needed, the CoC Ranking Committee meets to deliberate scores adjustments.

vii. The Committee will recommend 1-3 ranking scenarios to the CoC Board and membership based on project score, CoC priorities and eligible funding. When ties exist, the Committee shall rank the following preferences:

- The project with higher housing stability and the project with the least returns to homelessness shall be ranked first.
- Projects with existing clients shall also be ranked higher if scores are identical or within 1 point.

4. **Vote on Rank:**

i. The CoC Ranking Committee presents final applicant scores and 1-2 Tiering options to the CoC membership. Although rare, members may reject the proposed options and identify another desired option. The membership votes on proposed rank and Tier.

ii. Projects are notified of final Rank, Tier, and inclusion/exclusion in the Collaborative Application. Projects not accepted or Ranked in Tier 2, are also again notified of their ability to appeal to the CoC and HUD.

5. **Public Posting:** The approved Priority Listing placed on CoC website and mailed to CoC mailing list, which includes Project Applicants.

This section applies to projects seeking funding under the annual HUD Rural and Unsheltered SPECIAL competition.

This section is designed to inform the review and ranking deliberations and to provide applicants in the competition with clarity regarding how project ranking, and selection occur.

The CoC membership is responsible for the approval of all CoC policies. The CoC Performance Evaluation Committee or other designated committee is responsible for the development, review, and implementation of this policy. If non-substantive changes occur, the Committee has the discretion to make those edits. If more substantive changes are needed, they will be brought to the CoC Board and or membership. The process utilizes a non-biased process similar to CoC Ranking, which centers around CoC priorities and performance goals, and NOFO priorities and requirements. It should be noted that the CoC uses "scoring" and "ranking" as distinct steps. Scoring informs, but does not dictate, the final funding decision. The CoC Ranking Committee may recommend funding a project (in whole or a portion) or placing a project in a different order from how they scored. This strategy may be used to assure that the final project list on the CoCs Priority Listing align with the CoCs priorities and plan.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for inclusion in the Collaborative Application, all projects must pass all facets of the application process including:

1. Meeting HUD Requirements HUD requires the following to be eligible for funding. Threshold requirements are not curable, except for clarification on documentation for eligibility. Please read the HUD CoC NOFO for a full description of requirements.
    a. Applicant has a DUNS number and a current SAM registration.
    b. Applicant is a nonprofit organization, State or local government, instrument of a State or local government, Public housing agency, Indian Tribe, or Tribally Designated Housing Entity (TDHE).
    c. Applicant enters, or will enter if a new applicant, required project data in HMIS or the CoC approved alternative database if a Victim Service Provider (VSP).
    d. Applicant demonstrates financial and management capacity and experience to successfully carry out the project.
    e. Applicant submits required certifications as required in the NOFO.
    f. Applicant agrees to only serve persons who are eligible as defined in the NOFO and Hearth Act regulations.
    g. Project draws down funds from eLOCCS at least quarterly.
2. CoC Requirements:
    a. Have a signed CoC Membership Agreement.
    b. Participate in CARES, the regional coordinated entry system, following all policies.
    c. Project assures to document participant eligibility.
    d. Project demonstrates a commitment to data quality and compliance.
    e. Project demonstrates an ability to manage funds appropriately.
    f. Ability to meet CoC utilization and performance standards. If a CoC renewal project and not achieved, identify a performance improvement plan approved by the CoC. If a new project, provide outcomes for other similar projects.
    g. Design of project is cost effective, population and project type appropriate, project incorporates CoC core principles, and project is appropriately staffed.
    h. Promote and support lived experience engagement in Consumer Advisory Boards and annual CoC Satisfaction Survey.
    i. Assurance to complete required CoC trainings.
    j. Adherence to CoC Policies:
        i. CARES Coordinated Entry
        ii. School Enrollment and Connection of Services Policy
        iii. Family Separation (TH only)
        iv. Written Standards for ESG and CoC Assistance
        v. Violence Against Women Act
3. Project adheres to all local CoC Competition deadlines.
    a. Project submits an Intent to Apply and Threshold Assessment by designated deadline
    b. Project Application submitted in esnaps and emailed to CoC via PDF by deadlines
4. Commitment to integrate Housing First and Low Barrier Access Principals and Policies into project;
5. Participation or commitment to participate in HMIS or CoC approved equivalent data base.
6. Commitment to provide Performance Reports to the CoC prior to submission to HUD for pre-review.

GUIDANCE ON REQUIRED RANKING

The CoC will review all projects and rank according to CoC ranking criteria including project quality, past performance and regional goals and needs (as defined in the CoC Plan).

SCORING & RANKING PROCESS: HMIS Projects

The CoC recognizes that a quality Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is not only required by HUD but is used as a valuable tool to operate and evaluate our regional homeless response system. However, ranking and scoring HMIS in the same manner as housing or SSO projects is not feasible due to the unique aspects of our statewide system. Therefore, the CoC will review any new HMIS project from our statewide HMIS Administrator on following:

1. <u>Content</u>: The new HMIS request must be for new or expanded HMIS services. The requested services much assist the CoC in achieving or measuring our plan and help the requested housing or SSO projects achieve, report, and assess their project goals.
2. <u>Budget</u>: The budget is consistent with previously approve statewide system costs and the funding request supports the CoCs commitment to allocate at least 2.5% of HUD funding to HMIS. Requests above 2.5% will either be reduced or forwarded to the CoC Board for further discussion if the request fits into the annual CoC plan. Consideration will be given to if the added request is needed to help carry out CoC goals or support other project applications.

SCORING & RANKING PROCESS: Housing and Supportive Services Projects

Housing projects are ranked using an objective Project Threshold Assessment and a CoC Ranking Scorecard that incorporates both an agency self-assessment and required attachments.

<u>Scoring criteria:</u> Specifically, ranking incorporates the following categories:

1. <u>Financial:</u> Fiscal responsibility, resources/leverage, and cost effectiveness of project.
2. <u>Regional Priorities:</u> Regional need for project type and target population.
3. <u>HUD Priorities:</u> Project commitment to meeting HUD Priorities.
4. <u>Engagement:</u> Demonstration that the project is committed to engaging in regional planning.
5. <u>Policy & Reporting Compliance:</u> Adherence to funder and CoC policies and standards.
6. <u>Project Design:</u> Project incorporates core principals adopted by the CoC including: housing first, low barrier access, trauma informed, motivational interviewing, creative engagement, and client centered care. Principals must be incorporated into education/training, policies, and practices. The project must also demonstrate ability to link to mainstream resources and educational services (if serving youth and families).
7. <u>Data Use and Plan:</u> Demonstrate projects ability to use data to measure and report on performance.

Scoring & Ranking Process

1. **Pre-Application**:
    a. The CoC solicits interest and designates a Ranking Committee identified through a public application process with no representatives being accepted from applicant agencies (staff or board members).
    b. The CoC solicits Pre-application and Project Threshold Assessments to renewal applicants and an open invite for new projects via the CoC email list and notice

at other regional meetings or public notices.

    c. The CoC Coordinator follows-up with agencies interested in applying for new or expanded projects.

    d. Application Packets and timeline are posted on the CoC website.

    e. The CoC Coordinator reviews pre-applications for eligibility and invites eligible agencies to submit applications

    f. The CoC promotes and hosts an application lab to assist with completing the application in esnaps.

2. **Submission:** Project applicants submit application packet (Score Card, Project Application and required supporting documentation) to the CoC by deadline to be eligible for ranking.

3. **Review and Ranking:**

    a. The CoC Coordinator Collects and organizes the application ranking materials and shares with the ranking committee.

    b. The committee reviews the application packet (Score Card, application, and supporting documentation) and scores each application. This includes:

        1. Reviewing project eligibility.

        2. Validating applicant self-score, noting any discrepancies.

        3. Identifying specific concerns or noting questions for the applicant.

        4. Assigning a preliminary score and rank to reach project.

    c. The Ranking Committee meets to collectively review and align scores and ranking. Each project is assigned a score based on the % of eligible points and any adjustments (note adjustments may be made for extenuating circumstances like a change in agency leadership, disaster, etc.)

    d. CoC Coordinator provides each project with the Committee's recommended score and rank via email.

    e. Projects are given 3-5 days to respond with clarification or corrections. (exact time is posted on annual competition calendar).

    f. If received, updated information is reviewed by the Ranking Committee. Scores may be adjusted if validated (supporting documentation or appropriate clarification is provided). If needed, the CoC Ranking Committee meets to deliberate scores adjustments.

    g. The Committee will recommend 1-3 ranking scenarios to the CoC Board and membership based on project score, CoC priorities and eligible funding.

4. **Vote on Rank:**

    a. The CoC Ranking Committee presents final applicant scores and 1-2 Tiering options to the CoC membership. Although rare, members may reject the proposed options and identify another desired option. The membership votes on proposed rank.

    b. Projects are notified of final Rank and inclusion/exclusion in the Collaborative Application. Projects not accepted or Ranked are also again notified of their ability to appeal to the CoC and HUD.

5. **Public Posting:** The approved Priority Listing placed on CoC website and mailed to CoC mailing list, which includes Project Applicants.

APPENDIX J

Policies for the Administration of ESG & CoC Assistance

APPENDIX K

CARES POLICIES