



# **VERMONT COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS**

**-GOVERNANCE CHARTER –**

**-WRITTEN STANDARDS –**

**- POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL-**

**Approved 9/17/2019**

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## VERMONT COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

# GOVERNANCE CHARTER

## ARTICLE I. MISSION

The Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (hereafter referred to as the Coalition), acting as the primary decision-making body of the Vermont Balance of State Continuum of Care, shall have a mission to:

Supports the work of local CoCs; connects them to a broader network of stakeholders; administers federal funds; and advocates for funding and policy changes so that people living in Vermont have a safe, stable, affordable home and if homelessness occurs it is a brief and rare occurrence during which everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

The Coalition will achieve this mission by:

- ❖ Creating a network of organizations, service providers, advocates, consumers, concerned citizens and policy makers committed to ending homelessness.
- ❖ Fostering communication and building local Continua and developing collaborative partnerships.
- ❖ Ensuring that all Vermonters, particularly low and moderate income persons, people with disabilities, homeless people, elders, families with children and others, have safe, adequate, physically accessible and affordable housing.
- ❖ Encouraging resident participation and control in their housing.
- ❖ Advocating for the preservation of existing housing, protection of renters, and the development of new, perpetually affordable low and moderate income housing.
- ❖ Promoting the recognition of housing as a basic right for all Vermonters through education of the public and elected officials.
- ❖ Acting as a catalyst in the exploration and development of innovative means of preserving and increasing Vermont's affordable housing stock.

## ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. **Eligibility.** Membership shall be open to all interested individuals and organizations. All members are invited to be voting members of their local Continuum of Care and of the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness.

Section 2. **Dues.** All members will be requested to pay annual dues established by the Coalition. Each member shall pay dues each year to remain in good standing with voting rights in the Coalition. In no way should dues be considered a prerequisite for participation or voting at the local Continuum of Care level. The CoC Board has the authority to waive dues in cases of financial hardship and to establish a dues structure that considers member organization operating budgets. Homeless/formerly homeless individuals are not required to pay dues.

No part of the assets or income of the Coalition may be distributed for the financial benefits of the officers, members, board representatives or volunteers, except as noted below for consumer assistance. Upon the dissolution of this Coalition, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes as agreed upon by the Steering Committee.

All Coalition expenditures must be reviewed and approved by the Board. The following activities are eligible expenses:

- Monthly Coalition meeting space rental
- Annual membership in the Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition
- Trainings for the Coalition
- Events sponsored by the Coalition (including but not limited to the annual homeless vigil)
- Annual HUD Continuum of Care grant application preparation
- Consumer assistance for Coalition-approved expenses associated with conferences and/or trainings
- A monthly stipend (amount to be determined by the Coalition Board) paid to two consumer Board Representatives

Section 3. **Fiscal Year.** The Coalition shall observe a July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> fiscal year.

Section 4. **Resignations.** Members in good standing may submit resignations in writing to the Secretary.

## ARTICLE III. MEETINGS

Section 1. **Full Membership Meetings.** A meeting of the full membership of the Coalition shall be held no fewer than twice per year, in addition to the Annual Meeting. A membership meeting may be held concurrent with a Board meeting. All membership meetings are open to the public.

Section 2. **Board Meetings.** Regular Board meetings shall be held on the third Tuesday of each month with no fewer than 10 meetings per year. All meetings are open to the full membership. As a preliminary goal, meeting agendas will incorporate the following topics each quarter:

1st Quarter: Hold Annual Meeting, including elections. Set annual goals and propose changes to the standing rules. Approve an annual budget.

2nd Quarter: Discuss and vote on Legislative priorities. Plan and implement annual homeless vigil. Prepare for Point-In-Time count.

3rd Quarter: Conduct the Point-In-Time count, gaps analysis, housing inventory, and review/revise the Coalition's goals.

4th Quarter: Complete HUD funding application and project prioritizing.

Section 3. **Annual Meeting.** Annual meetings of the full membership of the Coalition will be held the third Tuesday of July.

Section 4. **Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Board or Membership may be called with three (3) days notice by the Co-Chairs or by a majority vote of the Board, and may also be called upon written request of ten members.

Section 5. **Quorum.** Twenty-five percent (25%) of the members shall constitute a quorum for membership meetings. A quorum of the Board shall consist of a majority of the filled seats.

Section 6. **Notice.** Except in the case of Special Meetings, all meeting information and agendas shall be noticed to the membership at least one week in advance.

## ARTICLE IV. GOVERNING BOARD

Section 1. **Board Composition and Nominations.** The Governing Board shall be comprised of four (4) Officers and up to twenty-five (25) representatives who are members in good standing. The following Officers and Representatives shall be nominated as stated here:

Officer or Representative	Nominating Body
A. Two Co-Chairs	A. By the Membership Committee
B. One Secretary	B. By the Membership Committee
C. One Treasurer	C. By the Membership Committee
D. One representative for each Local Continuum of Care (12 in total)	D. By each respective Local Continuum of Care
E. One representative for youth	E. By the Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs
F. One representative for victims of domestic/sexual violence	F. By the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
G. One representatives for veterans	G. By the Veteran's Committee

H. Up to two (2) representatives who are self-identified as currently or previously experiencing homelessness	H. By the Membership Committee
I. Two representatives for the Vermont Agency of Human Services, including one representative from the Department of Mental Health	I. By the Vermont Agency of Human Services
J. One representative for Housing Partners	J. By the Housing Partners, including the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, and the Department for Housing and Community Development
K. One representative for the Vermont State Housing authority	K. By the Vermont State Housing Authority
L. One representative for the HMIS Lead Agency	L. By the HMIS Lead Agency
M. Up to three representatives at large	M. By the membership at large

In all cases, nominations shall be permitted from the floor.

To the extent possible, the composition of the Board should reflect the fact that the Coalition is a statewide organization and comprised of varying types of organizations and stakeholders, such as: nonprofit homeless assistance providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, and other organizations that serve veterans and homeless and formerly homeless individuals.

**Section 2. Board Duties and Power.** The Board shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Coalition. The Board shall be subject to the Governance Charter of the Coalition, and none of its acts shall conflict with action taken by the Coalition. Coalition members who serve on the Board represent the greater good of the Coalition and not necessarily the interests of one specific organization.

The Board may designate Committees or Officers to undertake specific work for the Coalition. Board representatives may be removed from office by a majority vote of the membership at a meeting warned for that purpose.

Board representatives may appoint alternates to attend in their place through written prior notice to the Co-Chairs.

## ARTICLE V. VOTING

Section 1. **Motions.** Each item requiring Coalition approval will be formally voted on by the Board. A motion will be made by a representative of the Board, it will be seconded and a full vote will be taken with the outcomes reflected in the minutes. Warned votes may also be conducted in between regular meetings through the use of written communication or online tools. Each representative will be entitled to one vote. Votes are determined by a majority of Board representatives present.

Section 2. **Notice.** To the extent possible, votes will be warned as part of the notice for a meeting. For unwarned or unanticipated motions, a vote may be tabled and warned for action at the next meeting upon request by any member.

Section 3. **Votes by the Membership.** The Board may vote to take a motion to the full membership for a vote. In these cases, the vote will be warned as part of a membership meeting notice. Each member in good standing will be eligible to vote. Votes will be determined by a majority of members present.

Section 4. **Eligible Voters.** When voting on Balance of State Continuum of Care items, the Chittenden Continuum of Care is not eligible to participate. As appropriate, this shall be duly noted in the meeting minutes.

## ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS

Section 1. **Officers and Duties.** The officers shall be 2 Co-Chairs, Secretary and Treasurer. The Officers may also be representatives. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by this Governance Charter.

The Co-Chairs shall be responsible for chairing and convening all full membership meetings of the Coalition and Board Meetings. The Secretary shall assure that minutes are taken and distributed for all meetings and be responsible for keeping the attendance and membership records of the Coalition. The Treasurer shall maintain the financial records of the Coalition and report to the membership at the regular meetings on the financial condition of the Coalition.

Section 2. **Terms of Office.** Co-Chairs shall serve a two year staggered term. The Secretary and Treasurer shall serve a one year term and can serve consecutive terms with no limit. Terms shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected.

Section 2. **Nominations.** The Membership Committee (described in Article VII) shall nominate candidates for the election at the annual meeting. Additional nominations shall be permitted from the floor.

Section 3. **Elections.** Officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting. Elections shall be by ballot for any position with more than one nominee.

Section 5. **Vacancies.** A vacancy in any other office shall be filled by the Board, with inclusion in the meeting notice.

## ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

Section 1. **Special Committees.** Special committees shall be appointed by the Co-Chairs as directed by the Board.

Section 2. **Committee Composition and Reports.** It is required that at least one Board representative actively participate in each committee formed under the Coalition. All committees shall provide reports of their activities at regular Board meetings. As appropriate, it is the intention of the Coalition that all Committees operate in a manner which is open, fair and transparent.

Section 3. **Committees List.** The following have been approved by the CoC Board:

- A. **Membership Committee.** This committee will annually coordinate nominations for the election of Board representatives and officers. The committee shall also conduct membership outreach through the Coalitions website, mailing list, and in-person. Annually, mailing list registrants will be invited to become voting members of the Coalition and their local Continuum of Care. The Membership Committee shall aim to promote participation statewide and from the full diversity of organizations and stakeholders working to end homelessness.
- B. **Legislative Committee.** This committee shall exist to initially deliberate over any advocacy and/or legislative matters for consideration by the larger group. Recommendations to support or not support issues should be brought to a vote by the full Coalition.
- C. **HUD Continuum of Care Funding Committee (“NOFA Committee”).** The committee shall be comprised of Coalition members with experience and willingness to work on the federal grant.
- D. **Point-In-Time Committee.** This committee plans and supports implementation of the annual Point-In-Time Count of the Homeless, including related reports and activities such as the Housing Inventory Chart of Homeless Beds and needs analysis.
- E. **HMIS Advisory Board.** This committee serves to inform and advise the Coalition and the HMIS Lead Agency on the Vermont Balance of State Continuum of Care HMIS implementation, including: utilization, compliance, budget, security and privacy, data quality, and HMIS activities. This charge of this committee is fully outlined in the HMIS

Governance Charter. This committee will improve efficiency and opportunity for the homeless that the Coalition serves.

- F. **Coordinated Entry Committee.** This committee plans and supports the implementation of coordinated entry and assessment across the Balance of State Continuum of Care, including ongoing evaluation of coordinated entry processes and support for local Continua of Care.
- G. **Veterans Committee.** This committee is comprised of homeless veteran provider agencies working together to address veteran-specific housing needs throughout the state. A primary focus of the committee is to end veterans' homelessness as part of a national federal initiative involving three federal partners; Health and Human Services (HHS), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), United States Interagency Council on Homeless (USICH), and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA).
- H. **Strategic Planning Committee.** This committee develops and recommends strategic objectives, goals and plans to the CoC to prevent and end homelessness. In order to develop and follow through with the aforementioned, the committee utilizes data to understand the nature and extent of homelessness, coordinated with other statewide efforts, monitors progress towards goals, operationalizes planning grant activities, and works to ensure long-term capacity of the CoC.
- I. **Youth Committee.** This committee is comprised of youth provider and housing agencies working together to address youth and youth adult specific housing needs throughout the state. The primary focus of the committee is to ensure that every community has the capacity to identify and engage youth at risk of experiencing homelessness and intervene to prevent loss; reduce barriers to emergency crisis services; and increase short, medium and long term housing supports appropriate for the unique populations needs through data collection and analysis, implementation of system changes strategies, and develop a shared understanding of evidence-informed practices to address youth homelessness.

## ARTICLE VIII. LOCAL CONTINUUM OF CARE

Section 1. **Local Continuum of Care.** The following local continua are recognized by the Coalition:

- 1. Franklin – Grand Isle Continuum of Care
  - Covering all of Franklin County
  - Covering all of Grand Isle County
- 2. Orleans Continuum of Care

- Covering all of Orleans County
  - Covering the Essex County towns of: Norton, Canaan, Warrens Gore, Avery's Gore, Averill, Lemington, Lewis, Bloomfield, Brighton, Ferdinand, Brunswick, and Maidstone.
3. Chittenden Continuum of Care
- Covering all of Chittenden
4. Lamoille Continuum of Care
- Covering all of Lamoille County
  - Covering the Caledonia County town of Hardwick
5. Caledonia Continuum of Care
- Covering all of Caledonia County, except the town of Hardwick
  - Covering the Essex County towns of East Haven, Granby, Guildhall, Lunenburg, Victory, and Concord
6. Washington Continuum of Care
- Covering all of Washington County
7. Addison Continuum of Care
- Covering all of Addison County
8. Orange and Windsor North Continuum of Care
- Covering all of Orange County
  - Covering Windsor County towns of Bethel, Rochester, Stockbridge, Barnard, Hartford, Hartland, Norwich, Pomfret, Royalton, Sharon, Bridgewater, and Woodstock.
9. Rutland Continuum of Care
- Covering all of Rutland County
10. Southern Windsor – Windham Continuum of Care
- Covering the Windsor County towns of Andover, Baltimore, Cavendish, Chester, Ludlow, Plymouth, Reading Springfield, Weathersfield, Weston, West Windsor, and Windsor.
  - Covering the Windham County towns of Grafton, Londonderry, Rockingham, and Windham.
11. Bennington Continuum of Care
- Covering all of Bennington County
12. South Windham Continuum of Care
- Covering the Windham County towns of Stratton, Jamaica, Townshend, Athens, Westminster, Brookline, Wardsboro, Newfane, Putney, Somerset, Dover, Dummerston, Wilmington, Marlboro, Brattleboro, Whitingham, Halifax, Guilford, and Vernon.

Section 2. **Continuum of Care Responsibilities.** Each Continuum pledges to the following:

1. To nominate a Board representative who is responsible for relaying information between the regional Continuum and the statewide Coalition and for voting on its behalf.
2. To organize and facilitate regular regional meetings, including outreach to encourage participation in the meetings. Regular meetings shall be held no less than once every two months.
3. To the greatest extent possible, actively reach out to and include varying types of organizations and stakeholders in its activities, such as: nonprofit homeless assistance providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, and other organizations that serve veterans and homeless and formerly homeless individuals.
4. To take minutes of each meeting, utilizing the forms provided, and to maintain the minutes should the Coalition need to provide evidence of activities. The Chair of the local Continuum of Care (or designee) is responsible for these minutes and must maintain for at least three (3) years. The Coalition's website may be used to post and archive local meeting minutes and information.
5. To facilitate documentation of regional efforts to provide housing and services.
6. To coordinate within their local region Homeless Day activities, and assist in organizing Homeless Day activities through the Coalition.
7. To coordinate region wide homeless data collection efforts consistent with statewide homeless efforts as needed for planning and reporting.
8. To organize regional prioritization of projects to be presented at the statewide Coalition, and to provide updates for the Coalition.
9. To work toward the coordination of regional and statewide housing and services.
10. To encourage participation in the Continuum of Care planning process by people who have direct experience with homelessness.
11. To coordinate the regional response to State and Federal applications for homeless funding.
12. To participate in ad hoc committees as needed.

13. To ensure all children are enrolled in schools and connected to appropriate services within the community.

## ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

This Governance Charter may be amended or repealed at any meeting of the members by a two-thirds vote of the Coalition with notice or a nine-tenths vote without notice.

## ARTICLE X: POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL

All policy documents formally approved by the Coalition, including but not limited to Memoranda of Agreement and other approved policies, are to be considered with this Governance Charter as well as the Balance of State Continuum of Care Policy & Procedures Manual.

## ARTICLE XI: NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Coalition that no person shall be discriminated against because of their race, sex, age, marital status, religious creed, color, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or because they have minor children, or receive public assistance. The organization shall be operated in an open and democratic fashion and shall not discriminate against anyone because they are a member of one of the above groups.

## Revisions

ADOPTED: JANUARY 17, 2006

Revised: June 20, 2006 (Article VI/Section 1)

Revised: November 21, 2006 (Article I, Article II/Section 2, Article IV/Section 1, Article V/Section 2, Article VII/ new Section 4 and 5)

Revised: February 20, 2007 (Article VII/Section 5)

Revised: May 20, 2008 (Article II/Section 2; Article III/Section 4; Article VII/Sections 1, 2, 3)/Section /Sections 1/Section

Revised: October 18, 2011 (Article VIII/Section 2/number 12)

Revised: September 17, 2012 (Article VI/Section 1)

Revised: January 21, 2014 (Article 1; Article VI/Section 1)

Revised: August 20, 2015 (Major Reorganization and Revisions)

Revised: July 16, 2016 (increase number of members at large on CoC Board)

Revised: July 28, 2017 (addition of Strategic Planning & Veterans Committee; new slots created on board for Officer positions; decrease number of members at large)

Revised: September 17, 2019 (Updated Mission & Addition of the Youth Committee)

## Signatures

CoC Co-Chair (Print Name): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CoC Co-Chair (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_

CoC Co-Chair (Print Name): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CoC Co-Chair (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_



**VERMONT BALANCE OF STATE CONTINUUM OF CARE**

**CONTINUUM OF CARE PROGRAM**

**WRITTEN STANDARDS**

**September 2019**

CoC Co-Chair (print name): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CoC Co-Chair (signature): \_\_\_\_\_

CoC Co-Chair (print name): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CoC Co-Chair (signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Adopted on September 17, 2019

## Introduction

These standards are a reference for all Continuum of Care Program (CoC) recipients and subrecipients regarding the established community-wide expectations. They clarify the VT BoS CoC's priorities and outline the current minimum standards for all CoC Program funded projects within the CoC's geography. All projects receiving CoC Program funding are required to abide by these written standards. The CoC strongly encourages projects that do not receive CoC Program funding to accept and utilize these standards.

The Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) project written standards can be found at: [Office of Economic Opportunity Website](#)

These standards are to be reviewed regularly in order to ensure the system of providing assistance is transparent, ensure priorities are clear to all recipients, and use the CoC's limited resources strategically.

## All Project Types

1. Projects must have written policies and procedures and consistently apply them to all participants.
2. Projects must serve eligible participants and keep written documentation of eligibility criteria and decisions.
3. Community Partnership
  - a. Projects must coordinate with other targeted homeless services within the CoC.
  - b. Projects must coordinate with mainstream resources in the CoC including housing, social services, employment, education and youth and young adult programs for which participants may be eligible.
4. Educational Services for Children and Youth
  - a. Projects serving families with children and youth must demonstrate that they are:
    - i. Establishing policies and practices that are consistent with the education subtitle of McKinney-Vento Act and other laws relating to education and related services to homeless people (e.g. Head Start, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Higher Education Act), including:
      1. Informing homeless families and youth and young adults of their eligibility for McKinney Vento education services during the intake process;
      2. Not requiring that children enroll in new schools as a condition of entry;
      3. Not establish program requirements that prohibit children from remaining in their school of origin; and
      4. Develop relationships with colleges to access Higher Education Services specifically for homeless youth and young adults (Higher Education Act).
    - b. Projects serving families with children and youth must designate a staff person to ensure that minors are enrolled in school and connected to services in the community including programs such as:
      - i. Head Start
      - ii. Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and
      - iii. McKinney-Vento education services.

The designated staff person should participate in service planning where there are extensive or significant unmet educational needs.

- 5. Assistance with accessing Mainstream Benefits, including health insurance access

- a. Case managers/housing specialists shall systematically assist participants in completing applications for mainstream benefits.
  - b. Projects shall supply transportation assistance either directly or through referral to participants to attend mainstream benefit appointments, employment training, or jobs.
  - c. Projects shall have staff systematically follow-up to ensure mainstream benefits are received by participants.
  - d. Projects are required to provide support and assist eligible participants to apply for healthcare options available through the Affordable Care Act and other funding sources.
6. Nondiscrimination Requirements
- a. CoCs, recipients and subrecipients must continue to comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of Federal civil rights laws, including, but not limited to, the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and Titles II or III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as applicable.
7. Coordinated Entry System (CES)
- a. All CoC projects must participate in the CoC's Coordinated Entry System (CES). All admissions for CoC Program funded projects will be originated by a referral from the CES. See Coordinated Entry policy and procedure manual for details.
8. Data and Reporting
- a. Projects must participate in the CoC's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or submit data from a comparable database if they are a designated victim services provider. Participation includes compliance with HUD HMIS Data and Technical Standards with support from HMIS lead agency.
  - b. Projects must submit an Annual Performance Report (APR) to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the CoC each year.
  - c. Projects must respond to requests from the HMIS Lead or CoC to improve data quality and support the annual submission of CoC System Performance Measure and Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR)..
9. Project Recordkeeping Requirements for Recipients and Subrecipients
- a. Projects will follow applicable record keeping requirements in 24 CFR 578.103.
  - b. Homeless Documentation
    - i. Recipients must maintain and follow written intake procedures to ensure compliance with the definition of chronically homeless<sup>1</sup> and homeless<sup>2</sup> for their CoC project. These procedures establish the order of priority for obtaining evidence as:
      - 1. Third-party documentation;
      - 2. Intake worker observations; and
      - 3. Certification from the person seeking assistance.
      - 4. NOTE: Records contained in an HMIS or comparable database used by victim service or legal service providers are acceptable evidence of third-party documentation and intake worker observations if the HMIS retains an auditable history of all entries,

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4847/hearth-defining-chronically-homeless-final-rule/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/1928/hearth-defining-homeless-final-rule/>

including the person who entered the data, the date of entry, and the change made; and if the HMIS prevents overrides or changes of the dates entries are made.

- c. Disability Documentation, if applicable to project eligibility, must be obtained from a qualified third party who is licensed by Vermont to diagnose and treat the condition being documented. Intake staff-recorded observation of disability that within 45 days of the date of application for assistance is confirmed by a licensed professional as stated above is also acceptable. *NOTE: Use of the option to document disability after program admission must be used cautiously due to possible financial impact if documentation is not obtained as expected.*
- d. Property Standards
  - i. Housing Quality Standard (HQS) compliance documentation must be present for all CoC Program projects receiving leasing, rental assistance and operating assistance.
  - ii. Environmental Review<sup>3</sup> compliance documentation must be present for all projects.
  - iii. Lead Based Paint Visual Assessment for all residential properties built before 1978 where a child under the age of six or a pregnant woman is, or will be, living in the unit must be present.

### Homeless Prevention Projects

- 10. The VT BOS CoC partners with the Agency of Human Services, Office of Economic Opportunity, who is the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) recipient. Please see the Emergency Solutions Grant Written Standards for homeless prevention guidelines.

### Emergency Shelter Projects

- 11. The VT BOS CoC partners with the Agency of Human Services, Office of Economic Opportunity, who is the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) recipient. Please see the Emergency Solutions Grant Written Standards for emergency shelter guidelines.

### CoC Transitional Housing Projects

CoC Transitional Housing (TH) is designed to provide individuals and families experiencing homelessness with interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing.

#### Eligibility Criteria

- Participants must meet the applicable HUD definition of homelessness<sup>4</sup>

#### Minimum Standards of Assistance

- 12. Participant length of stay cannot exceed 24 months<sup>5</sup>.
- 13. Project staff must provide assistance to participants to transition to permanent housing.
- 14. An appropriate level of support services must be provided throughout the duration of stay in transitional housing.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4045/coc-program-environmental-review-flow-chart/>

<sup>4</sup> Homeless definition standards can be found in the project rule, local RFPs, and NOFA documents as applicable.

<sup>5</sup> A homeless individual or family may remain in transitional housing for a period longer than 24 months, if permanent housing for the individual or family has not been located or if the individual or family requires additional time to prepare for independent living. However, HUD may discontinue assistance for a transitional housing project if more than half of the homeless individuals or families remain in that project longer than 24 months. (CoC Program Interim Rule, 578.79, <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2033/hearth-coc-program-interim-rule/>)

15. Project participants in transitional housing must enter into a lease agreement for a term of at least one month. The lease must be automatically renewable upon expiration, except on prior notice by either party, up to a maximum term of 24 months<sup>6</sup>.
16. Termination of Housing
  - a. Terminations may only occur in the most severe cases after a project has examined all extenuating circumstances regarding violations.
  - b. The project staff will work closely with participant and other housing providers to assess other viable housing options.
17. All CoC TH programs are required to incorporate Housing First Principles whenever possible.

### Rapid Re-Housing Projects

Rapid Re-Housing is available to help those who are literally homeless be quickly and permanently housed. Rapid Re-Housing Projects (RRH) provide housing relocation and stabilization services and short or medium term rental assistance as needed to help a homeless individual or family move as quickly as possible to permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing. Please note that Rapid Re-Housing funds are available through both CoC Program and ESG.

#### *Eligibility Criteria (CoC)*

- Participants must meet the applicable HUD definition of homelessness.
- Participants lack identifiable financial resources and/or support networks.

#### *Minimum Standards of Assistance (CoC)*

18. Admission priority will be provided to families and individuals experiencing homelessness with the most urgent need, as determined by the CES prioritization policy for RRH projects.
19. Projects may provide rental assistance to eligible participants for up to 24 months.
20. Each project will establish a policy and procedure to determine the percentage or amount of rent each program participant must pay.
21. Each project will establish a policy regarding any limits in the amount of rental assistance a participant may receive.
22. Housing First Principles must be followed by all RRH projects.

#### *Eligibility Criteria and Minimum Standards of Assistance (ESG)*

23. The VT BOS partners with the Agency of Human Services, Office of Economic Opportunity, who is the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) recipient. Please see the Emergency Solutions Grant Written Standards for ESG funded RRH guidelines.

### Permanent Supportive Housing Projects

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is permanent housing with indefinite leasing or rental assistance paired with supportive services to assist individuals experiencing homelessness who also have a disability or families with an adult or child member with a disability achieve housing stability.

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<sup>6</sup> See previous footnote on extension of TH stays.

## *Eligibility Criteria*

- Participants must meet the applicable HUD definition of homelessness<sup>7</sup>
- PSH can only provide assistance to individuals with disabilities and families in which at least one adult or child has a disability.

## *Minimum Standards of Assistance*

24. Admission priority will be provided to families and individuals experiencing homelessness with the most urgent need, as determined by the CES prioritization policy for PSH projects.
25. No Designated Length of Stay - Program participants will be provided housing without a designated length of stay that permits them to live as independently as possible.
26. Lease Agreement - The program participant must be the tenant on a lease for a term of at least one year that is renewable and is terminable only for cause. The lease must be renewable for terms that are a minimum of one month long.
27. Supportive Services
  - a. Supportive services will be designed to meet the needs of program participants and must be made available to the program participants.
  - b. Supportive services to enable program participants to live as independently as possible must be provided throughout the duration of their time in the project.
  - c. Supportive service participation will not be required as a condition to maintain housing.
  - d. Projects will conduct an annual review of individual participants' service need and offer additional services if necessary.
  - e. Projects will conduct an annual review of the service needs of the project and should adjust services accordingly<sup>8</sup>. Unmet needs will be identified and brought to the local and Balance of State CoC meeting for discussion.
28. Housing Units
  - a. Two individuals in a shared housing situation will have their own lease and their own bedroom unless the two individuals are presented together as a household.
29. Termination of Housing
  - a. Terminations may only occur in the most severe cases after a project has examined all extenuating circumstances regarding violations.
  - b. Termination of occupancy of housing may only occur in cases of noncompliance with the lease or failure of tenant to carry out obligations under landlord and tenant law.
  - c. Legal court eviction proceedings will be used in order to terminate tenancy from a housing unit.
  - d. Participants may not be terminated involuntarily from housing for refusal to participate in services or for violating program rules that are not related to lease compliance.
  - e. Provider will work closely with participant and other housing providers to assess other viable housing options if termination is unavoidable.

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<sup>7</sup> Homeless definition standards can be found in the project rule, local RFPs, and NOFA documents as applicable.

<sup>8</sup> CoC Program Interim Rule, 578.53 (a) (2) <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2033/hearth-coc-program-interim-rule/>

30. Housing First Principles will be incorporated into all PSH projects.
- a. Housing First is a programmatic and systems approach that centers on providing people experiencing homelessness with housing quickly and then providing services as needed.
  - b. Separation of Housing and Treatment: Housing is not contingent on compliance with services – participants are expected to comply with a standard lease agreement and are provided with services and supports to help maintain housing and prevent eviction.
  - c. Participants have choice from available housing options in an integrated community setting.

## Prioritization of Housing Resources

These standards establish the community-wide expectations of how resources are to be targeted with the community separate from meeting eligibility requirements, and specific to prioritizing assistance according to highest needs and greatest barriers towards obtaining and maintaining housing on their own. The VT BOS CoC has adopted HUD Notice CPD-16-11: Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Other Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing<sup>9</sup>. Standards for compliance with the notice are listed below in PSH Availability section.

### *Minimum Standards of Assistance*

31. Recipients and subrecipients must exercise due diligence when conducting outreach and assessment to ensure that persons are prioritized for assistance based on the project specific criteria contained in these standards.
32. Documentation standards for showing outreach due diligence include:
- a. Written project intake procedures showing the adoption of the written standards.
  - b. Documentation of the process and results used to determine the severity of service needs.
  - c. Documentation of the determination that no higher prioritized population members were present or willing to accept the project bed including:
    - i. Written evidence of outreach efforts to locate eligible persons
    - ii. Specific numbers of eligible participants that refused assistance
    - iii. Attempts to engage person who refused assistance.
33. PSH Availability for Dedicated or Prioritized Beds – See VCEH Coordinated Entry Permanent Supportive Housing [Policy](#) for prioritization standards
34. PSH Availability for Non-Dedicated or Non-Prioritized Beds - See VCEH Coordinated Entry Permanent Supportive Housing [Policy](#) for prioritization standards

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5108/notice-cpd-16-11-prioritizing-persons-experiencing-chronic-homelessness-and-other-vulnerable-homeless-persons-in-psh/>



## VERMONT COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS (VCEH - VT BOS CoC – VT-501)

### BALANCE OF STATE CONTINUUM OF CARE

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

HUD Continuum of Care # and Name: <b>VT 500 - Vermont Balance of State CoC</b>	
VT BoS CoC Primary Decision-Making Body: <b>Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH)</b>	
Policy/Procedure: <b>CoC Program Project Monitoring</b>	
VT BoS CoC approved/revised: 9/12/2018, 9/17/2019	

### Purpose

The Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (Vermont Balance of State CoC (or VT BoSCoC) is committed to monitoring Continuum of Care (CoC) Program funded projects. Monitoring how housing and services projects are performing provides VT BoSCoC with the information needed to improve the way resources are allocated and services are delivered. Monitoring is critical to being accountable in our efforts to end and prevent homelessness. It should also improve the continuum of care for individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of becoming homeless.

This policy will establish who will be responsible for monitoring CoC Program-funded projects, how often monitoring will occur, what data sources will be used to report performance, how outcomes will be measured, and resources provided to underperforming projects. It will also ensure the CoC has accurate and timely information about the projects, organizations, services and processes that play key roles in making homelessness in Vermont rare and brief.

## Principles

- This is not a once a year or periodic exercise but an on-going process of feedback, adjustments and communication.
- The goals are project compliance and success and to assist recipients and subrecipients in carrying out their project.
- Accomplishments, successful techniques and best practices should be recognized. By operating under the basic belief that a team approach to problems solving is in the best interest, we will work together to explore options and develop mutually agreeable solutions.
- We operate in an environment of mutual respect and treating all persons fairly.
- Effective communications is a key factor in facilitating a good relationship and positive outcomes; we are committed to keeping lines of communication open.

## Policy

Monitoring of projects receiving Continuum of Care funding is a multi-layer process.

- Recipients and subrecipients should monitor themselves internally
- Recipients monitor subrecipients
- The CoC monitors recipients and recipients can include subrecipients as necessary
- HUD monitors recipients as needed

The Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care Program Interim Rule 24 CFR Part 578 requires that the CoC consult with recipients and subrecipients to establish performance targets appropriate for population and project type, monitor recipient and subrecipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and take action against poor performance. This policy was developed to ensure a procedure for on-going evaluation and monitoring of projects recommended for CoC Program-funding in the VTBoSCoC.<sup>10</sup> The MOA between VSHA, AHS and ICA include duties related to the CoC function and includes Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH) (VT BoSCoC) as the responsible entity for monitoring.

The policy also serves to assist recipients and subrecipients in improving project performance, increasing their organizational capacity and technical compliance with the CoC Program. Lastly, this policy will assist the VTBoSCoC in providing recommendations and information to funding agencies to include but not limited to: US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and State of Vermont Office of Economic Opportunities (OEO). The VTBoSCoC and the State of Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity, the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) ESG recipient, consult on funding priorities, recipient and subrecipient reporting and evaluation, coordinated entry and HMIS for the ESG Program.

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<sup>10</sup> 578.7 (a) (6)

## *Levels of Monitoring*

### Self-Monitoring

Recipients and subrecipients should institute regular self-monitoring to check for compliance with all requirements. Self-monitoring should include monitoring for performance and assessing compliance with policies, including file review to verify appropriate documentation is being maintained. Self-monitoring can identify potential issues and allow the recipient or subrecipient to make corrections proactively in advance of external monitoring. Recipients and subrecipients may request assistance from the CoC and/or a peer project to resolve any self-identified issues.

### Subrecipient Monitoring by Recipient

Recipients are required to monitor subrecipients at least annually for compliance with the CoC Program and subrecipient agreement terms. Recipients are required to establish a programmatic and financial monitoring plan of subrecipients that includes regular desktop review and onsite monitoring in accordance with OMB Uniform Guidance and HUD CoC Regulations. Recipients must keep documentation of subrecipient monitoring, including any findings and required corrective actions. Recipients may impose the same types of remedial actions and sanctions on subrecipients as HUD can impose on recipients.

### Recipient Monitoring by CoC

The VTBoSCoC will monitor CoC Program-funded projects to ensure compliance with both federal and local goals. A CoC Monitoring Workgroup will be established and will consist of **members to be determined and voted on by the VT BoS CoC**. Monitoring will include project performance, project compliance, and system level performance.

### PSH, RRH, Transitional Housing, SSO (non-CE) Project Monitoring

Project monitoring for compliance and performance for permanent supportive housing (PSH), rapid rehousing (RRH), transitional housing (TH), joint TH-RRH, supportive services only (non-CE) will be assessed once a year offsite and will occur in the beginning of the calendar year when possible. The **VT BoS CoC** will maintain electronic and/or paper records of monitoring visits for at least 5 years.

Projects that do not meet the established threshold, and/or meet fewer than half of the performance standards, will be considered “projects of concern” and will be required to develop a 12-month action plan for improving performance in the substandard area(s). Projects of concern will be required to provide at least semi-annual progress updates to the CoC Monitoring Workgroup on their project’s progress toward implementing their 12-month action plans, which may include in-person or phone meetings. The CoC Monitoring Workgroup will assess performance at the end of the 12-month period and determine if the projects are improving in the target areas, as well as assess performance in meeting local, state, and federal goals. If the CoC Monitoring Workgroup determines that project performance has not improved sufficiently then the project will be recommended to the CoC to be considered for possible funding reallocation or project repurposing during the annual HUD McKinneyVento CoC Program NOFA.

## Coordinated Entry System Monitoring

As part of its CE Policies and Procedures, VCEH has established an evaluation policy for review of how effective CE implementation is achieving the goals of CE. The VCEH CE Committee reviews and presents an evaluation of CE to the VCEH Board as laid out in the CE Policies and Procedures. CE Project Policies and Procedures are developed by the CE Committee and approved by the VCEH Board. The CE Committee provides an annual report to the VCEH (CoC) Board on CE performance. The Office of Economic Opportunity, as the CE SSO Recipient, conducts monitoring of CE project subrecipients.

## HMIS Monitoring

The Data Quality Subcommittee will develop a formal evaluation and monitoring process for HMIS. HMIS monitoring will be implemented by edits to the existing Memorandum of Agreement currently in place for VTBoSCoC. The process might include agency satisfaction surveys, ability and accuracy of mandated HUD reports, ability to provide reports for CoC planning as agreed upon in contract, and other measures as determined applicable.

## CoC Monitoring Workgroup

The CoC Monitoring Workgroup provides oversight of CoC Program project monitoring and provides recommendations, training and assistance to the VCEH (VTBoSCoC) Board on CoC Program policy, requirements and performance. It will oversee the processes and methodologies used to monitor projects that intend to apply for renewal CoC Program funds through the CoC.

The workgroup will be selected by nominations from the CoC and will include at least 3 people. The workgroup will use two tools to score PSH, RRH, TH, Joint TH-RRH and SSO (non-CE) projects: the Monitoring and Evaluation Form and the Monitoring Threshold Tool. The Monitoring and Evaluation

Form will be completed by the CoC Program project recipient and reviewed by the CoC Monitoring Workgroup. The workgroup will use the Monitoring Threshold Tool to designate an acceptable or unacceptable answer to each question.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Monitoring Workgroup

The overall responsibility for the monitoring of recipients receiving CoC Program funds remains with the VT BoSCoC Board but is designated in this policy to the monitoring workgroup. This group is charged with monitoring and evaluating all CoC funded projects to ensure compliance with project requirements, ensure projects are meeting performance measures set by the CoC, and take action against poor performers. The specific responsibilities are outlined above.

### Project Ranking Committee

The Committee is provided with information about the performance of CoC Program-funded projects. Along with this information, this committee is responsible to review project applications and propose funding and ranking to the CoC.

### Collaborative Applicant

The Collaborative Applicant's, as named in the governance charter, prime responsibility is to assemble

VT BoSCoC's consolidated application which includes a ranking process for of projects. As such, the Collaborative Applicant will also take the lead on desktop monitoring, working with the HMIS Lead Agency to provide data for the Ranking Committee as well as for the annual report card. The Collaborative Applicant will support the execution of monitoring process unless another entity is designated.

### Recipients

Recipients, who are directly contracted with HUD, will be responsible to report on the progress of their CoC Program-funded projects at least annually and are responsible to respond to monitoring requests as appropriate. A recipient will also be responsible to respond to corrective actions.

### Monitoring Timeline

1. All projects will be monitored annually during the beginning of the calendar year.
2. The project monitoring schedule will be kept by the VT BoS CoC Collaborative Applicant and be made available as requested by projects and interested parties.
3. A project will have 14 calendar days to respond in writing to the monitoring workgroup request.
4. The CoC Monitoring Workgroup will have 30 calendar days to review and request additional information from projects.
5. The projects will have 14 calendar days to submit additional information requested by the CoC Monitoring Workgroup.

### Project Performance and Compliance Criteria

Annually, the Ranking Committee is provided with information about the performance of funded projects as determined on the renewal scoring tool approved by the CoC each year. This process and tool includes objective criteria, past performance data that improves participant outcomes and CoC's system performance including but not limited to:

- utilization rates, housing outcome measures,
- income and benefit links,
- serving vulnerable populations,
- participation in CoC systems,
- financial management,
- cost effectiveness,
- target populations and
- implementation of best practices.

### Desktop Monitoring Materials

As part of the desktop monitoring each recipient will be provided a checklist requesting documentation which may include but is not limited to: executed grant agreement and amendments, any Memorandum of Understanding with subrecipients, debarment documentation subrecipients, any monitoring of subrecipients,

submitted Project Application, documentation of timely Annual Performance Report submittals, LOCCS drawdown history, written CoC Program Policies and Procedures to include intake/screening, personnel policies/procedures, termination policy, grievance policy, privacy/confidentiality policy, drug-free workplace policy, domestic violence policy, policy identifying the involvement of those with lived experience, environmental review, compliance with fair housing requirements, financial policies, procurement policies, conflict of interest policy, documentation of match, grant expenditures and quarterly draw requests.

### System-level Performance Monitoring

System wide performance measures currently include the following: Length of Time Persons Remain Homeless; Returns to Homelessness; Number of Homeless Persons; Employment and Income Growth for Homeless Persons in CoC projects; Number of Persons who Become Homeless for the First Time; Successful Placement from Street Outreach and successful Placement in or Retention of Permanent Housing. The VT BoSCoC will review these system level performance measures at least annually with information provided by the HMIS Lead. The VT BoSCoC will consider other system-level performance measures.

In addition to reviewing data, performance, and outcomes, the VT BoSCoC needs to build agreement and formalize the ways we include and engage, as well as gather and utilize feedback from, the individuals, families and communities we serve. Once there is general agreement, appropriate ways to track and evaluate the impact as well as the effectiveness, efficiency and appropriateness of efforts and activities will need to be developed and implemented. This can also include an annual satisfaction survey to members and community partners.

### Concerns/Deficiency/Noncompliance Notifications

Where an issue is identified that is in non-compliance with CoC Program rules or CoC Standards or is a possible trouble area, the information should include the condition, criteria, cause, effect, and required corrective action.

- a. The condition describes what was wrong or what the problem was.
- b. The criteria cite the regulatory or statutory requirements that were not met.
- c. The corrective action identifies the action(s) needed to resolve the problem, if applicable.

The monitoring letter should also provide timelines for response and corrections as noted above.

### Actions for Identified Issues

Recipients will be provided with technical assistance towards resolution and improvement. It is the general policy of VT BoSCoC to allow at least one full grant cycle for resolution and improvement before any changes to funding are recommended, except in the case of extreme non-compliance.

### Tools Used in Monitoring:

The following tools will be utilized for the monitoring as described in this policy. Each tool will be provided to the recipient.


- Project Monitoring Form
- System-level performance monitoring
- System-level annual report card
- Coordinated Entry System Monitoring

The CoC will review and approve of these tools before implementation.

### Monitoring Procedure for PSH, RRH, TH, Joint TH-RRH and SSO (non-CE)

The roles and responsibilities of the CoC Monitoring Workgroup are as follows:

1. Develop and refine the Monitoring and Evaluation Form, and the methodology used to monitor and evaluate ongoing project performance.
2. Determine an annual threshold score for determining which projects may be considered “projects of concern” and require additional monitoring during the year.
3. Present the Monitoring and Evaluation Form and annual threshold score for approval by the VTBoSCoC Board prior to the start of the annual monitoring review.
4. Once approved the Monitoring and Evaluation Form is provided to all project types noted above who are currently receiving CoC Program funds, along with a request for the project’s most recent APR and any relevant policies.
  - a. Send the notice of the monitoring and requirements for completion via e-mail to the contact person of record and chief executive officer of the CoC Program project recipient.
5. Review all monitoring returns and determine if each project has adequately responded to each of the monitoring questions.
  - a. If workgroup members think that an answer is acceptable they will assign a "1" to the corresponding box in the Monitoring Threshold Tool table.
  - b. If workgroup members think that an answer is not acceptable, they will assign a "0" to that box
  - c. The CoC Monitoring Workgroup will create written criteria and submit for approval to the VTBoSCoC Board to make it clear when to assign a 1 or 0.
6. Notify projects by email of their deficiencies within 30 days of submission deadline and provide 14 days to respond with additional information.
  - a. The email address used will be the email written on the front of the Monitoring and Evaluation Form with a copy to the project organization’s Executive Director.
  - b. Projects will be given one opportunity to correct or amend their monitoring returns in order to address any deficiencies identified by the Workgroup.
  - c. The Workgroup will then meet again to decide if any new information provided adequately answers the question or addresses the deficiency, and will amend the table accordingly.
  - d. Within 14 days, the Workgroup will provide the project recipient a final monitoring report, including specific information on areas of strengths, noted deficiencies, an offer of training and/or technical assistance to support improvement, and a request for an action plan.
7. Provide a one-year probationary period for projects that fail to meet the threshold
  - a. Projects will be required to demonstrate improvement and submit an action plan and provide progress updates on implementation at least semi-annually.
  - b. The CoC Monitoring Workgroup will offer and/or refer agencies to appropriate technical assistance and training as available.
  - c. Deficiencies may be addressed through staff training and/or project policy changes.
8. Provide all monitoring results to the VTBoSCoC Board and CoC Project Ranking Committee.

HUD Continuum of Care # and Name: <b>VT 500 - Vermont Balance of State CoC</b>	
VT BoS CoC Primary Decision-Making Body: <b>Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH)</b>	
Policy/Procedure: <b>CoC Program Project Ranking</b>	
VT BoS CoC approved/revised: <b>12/20/13; 10/20/2015; 7/19/16, 7/28/17, 7/18/18, 7/22/2019)</b>	

### Purpose:

Policy and procedure to guide the CoC Project Ranking Committee and Collaborative Applicant in activities required to review and prioritize CoC Program applications submitted in response to the annual Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care Program (CoC). This process defines methods to ensure the scoring and ranking of CoC Program applications are conducted in a fair, transparent, and unbiased manner.

### Ranking Committee:

A CoC Project Ranking Committee will be developed and maintained to review renewal and new CoC Program project applications. The CoC Project Ranking Committee membership will include a person familiar with CoC Program requirements and the community's homeless system who are not competing for funding or affiliated with an organization who is competing for funding (i.e., Provider Agency Board Member). Each year the CoC Project Ranking Committee members will sign a statement of confidentiality and certify they have no conflict of interest in the regard to any discussions or determinations of specific project applications and/or applicants. Members will be recruited annually and approved by the VCEH Board after their eligibility is verified by the CoC.

The following list is the current Committee membership approved by the VCEH CoC Board:

- **Good Samaritan Haven** (Rob Farrell)
- **U.S. Dept. of Veteran Affairs-WRJ** (Jason Brill or Designee)
- **United Ways of Vermont** (MaryEllen Mendl or Designee)
- **VT Dept. of Housing & Community Development** (Shaun Gilpin or Designee)
- **VT Housing and Conservation Board** (Jen Hollar or Designee)
- **VT Housing and Finance Agency** (Andrea Tieso or Designee)

### Ranking Process:

The CoC will implement goals for each HUD CoC NOFA application cycle which maximize competitiveness of the CoCs Consolidated Application in consideration of local CoC priorities. Local CoCs will be included in making initial funding priorities recommendations. Prior to each year's project ranking meeting the full CoC or its designee will review, approved and publish the current CoC priorities and scoring criteria.

The CoC Project Ranking Committee will meet to review each CoC Program project application against the approved scoring criteria established in the CoC Project Rating Tool(s) which will include: minimum grant threshold requirements, objective scoring criteria, performance data and established CoC priorities. These combined factors will inform the CoC Project Ranking Committee in the determination of a CoC project ranking list and, if applicable, any necessary funding reductions to one or more projects.

The CoC Project Ranking Committee may consider application adjustments and propose changes to project scope or budget for such issues as HUD incentives, bonus funding, program requirements, geographic distribution, identified community needs, etc. The CoC Project Ranking Committee determines the rank and funding levels of all CoC projects considering all available and objective information.

**Minimum Threshold Requirements:** eligible population for project type, eligible costs for project type, eligible applicant, minimum match; utilization of the VT BoS CoC HMIS implementation (VTHMIS) or comparable system for victim service providers; all project referrals must come from the CoC Coordinated Entry; and Housing First practices.

### Project Scoring Tool:

Each year the CoC Project Scoring Tool will be reviewed and any proposed edits will be presented to the CoC Board or its designee for approval. The final tool will be posted to the CoC website for public access. The tool will also be distributed to all members and stakeholders via the CoC's listserv which is open to the public.

The following elements will be present in all project ranking tools for applications proposing to serve participants:

- Severity of Needs and Vulnerability of Populations Served
- Project Performance and Monitoring Results
- Housing Type and Cost Effectiveness
- Target Population and HMIS Data Quality

*The sources of information to complete the ranking tool may include but are not limited to: HUD Priorities; Vermont HMIS (Wellsky-ServicePoint); Comparable Databases for victim service providers (e.g. Osniium); Project Monitoring Results; Annual Performance Reports (APR); Project Participant Performance; Match Documentation; Bed/Unit Utilization; HMIS Data Quality reports; LOCCS drawdown reports/Expenditure of Funds; Annual CoC PIT counts and other needs-based reports; HUD Fair Market Rent (FMR) amounts; HUD Preliminary Pro Rata Need (PPRN); CoC Project Applications; Request for Proposals (RFP); and local/regional CoC priorities.*

## Project Ranking Order for FFY 2018 projects:

- Upon review of CoC continued need and Applicant performance, **Homeless Management Information System** (HMIS) renewal project applications will be reviewed for threshold criteria and will be placed as the second to last full project in Tier 1. New HMIS project applications will be ranked in order of need as determined by the CoC.
- Upon review of CoC continued need and Applicant performance, **Supportive Services Only Coordinated Entry** (SSO-CE) renewal project applications will be reviewed for threshold criteria and will be placed as the last full project in Tier 1. New SSO-CE project applications will be ranked in order of need as determined by the CoC.
- New project applications for reallocation, expansion and Bonus funds will be placed in Tier 2, unless a renewal project is ranked low enough to be placed into Tier 2 due to poor performance.\*
- New DV Bonus applications will be placed after new reallocation/expansion and Bonus projects.

Reallocation Process: See VCEH/VT BoS “Reallocating CoC Projects Policy” for both voluntary and involuntary reallocation.

## VCEH/VT BoS CoC and HUD Policy Priorities

1. Create a Systemic Homeless Response
  - a. Coordinate System Planning
  - b. Encourage and support participation from persons with lived homeless experiences
  - c. Ensure equal and fair access to all CoC Program-funded projects
  - d. Promote participant choice, privacy and dignity
  - e. Implement and operate an effective Coordinated Entry process
  - f. Measure System Performance
  - g. Develop and operate the delivery of homeless assistance in an open, inclusive and transparent manner
2. Strategic Allocation of Resources
  - a. Comprehensive and regular reviews of CoC project quality, performance and cost effectiveness
  - b. Integration of persons with disabilities
  - c. Optimize self-sufficiency of households experiencing homelessness by maximizing the use of mainstream and other community-based resources (housing, employment/income, non-cash benefits)
3. Ending Chronic Homelessness
4. Ending Family & Youth Homelessness
5. Ending Veteran Homelessness
6. Implement Low Barrier Practices (CoC Program participants will not be screened out based on the following):
  - a. Having too little or no income
  - b. Active or history of substance use (illegal substances are prohibited in all federally assisted units)
  - c. Having a criminal record with exceptions for state-mandated restrictions
  - d. History of victimization (e.g. domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and/or stalking)

7. Implement a Housing First Approach (CoC Program participants will not be terminated for the following reasons):
  - a. Failure to participate in supportive services
  - b. Failure to make progress on a service plan
  - c. Loss of income or failure to improve income
  - d. Any other activity not covered in a lease agreement typically found for unassisted persons in the project's geographic area
8. Quickly house and rehouse persons experiencing homelessness
9. Develop and maintain relationships with property owners/managers and landlords
10. Prioritize CoC Program funds to serve populations based upon severity of needs and vulnerability
  - a. Individuals and families experiencing chronic homelessness
  - b. Persons with one or more disabling conditions of long duration
  - c. Persons fleeing and/or with a history of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and/or stalking
  - d. Households with children under 18 years of age
  - e. Unaccompanied youth and young adults
  - f. Households with low or no income
  - g. Current or past substance use
  - h. Criminal histories

Project Determinations and Appeals Process:

Applications which do not meet the minimum threshold requirements will not be included in the CoC Consolidated Application submitted to HUD.

If the CoC receives more Requests for Proposals than can be supported with available CoC funding, the CoC Ranking Committee will rank the grants in order of an agreed upon priority as approved by VCEH.

New projects that have not yet begun or completed their grant term will be held harmless and ranked in Tier 1, unless determined otherwise by the CoC Ranking Committee due to special circumstances (i.e. non-compliance of HUD regulations and/or CoC policies, violation of state/federal laws, withdrawal, etc.).


The Collaborative Applicant will send formal notification of a preliminary determination made by the CoC Project Ranking Committee to each project applicant along with: individual project ranking summary, individual project ranking number, and any potential budget reduction or increase).

The Collaborative Applicant will provide all appeals to the CoC Project Ranking Committee to make a final determination that will be sent to the CoC for a review, vote (minus any and all voting members with a bias or conflict of interest) and posting to CoC website.

Click on the links below to read the NEW Project and the RENEWAL Project Scoring Tools:

[FFY2019 VT BoS CoC NEW Project Scoring Tool](#)

[FFY2019 VT BoS CoC RENEWAL Project Scoring Tool](#)

HUD Continuum of Care # and Name: <b>VT 501 - Vermont Balance of State CoC</b>	
VT BoS CoC Primary Decision-Making Body: <b>Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH)</b>	
Policy/Procedure: <b>Code of Conduct</b>	
VT BoS CoC approved/revised: 1/15/13, 1/21/14 and 10/20/15, 7/28/2017, 9/17/2019	

The following Code of Conduct has been adopted in order to provide a foundation of ethics for the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH), the Vermont Balance of State Continuum of Care.

The VCEH prohibits the solicitation and acceptance of gifts, gratuities or any item of monetary value by any of its officers, voting members or employees, hereinafter referred to as Agents, for their personal benefit. Any gift offered as a result of the intended recipient's position with the VCEH shall be declined.

The VCEH requires impartiality in the performance of official duties, and prohibits any activity representing a conflict of interest. Agents shall not act on a matter if a reasonable person who knew the circumstances of the situation could legitimately question the impartiality of such action. In such an event of a conflict of interest, a CoC voting member will recuse themselves.

The VCEH prohibits the misuse of position. Agents shall not use their position with the VCEH for their own personal gain or for the benefit of family or friends or their specific agency.


Agents shall put forth honest and diligent effort in the performance of their duties.

Agents shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Continuum without prior approval of the VCEH Steering Committee.

Agents shall disclose any violation of this Code, or any other waste, fraud, abuse, or corruption related to the VCEH, to the Steering Committee and to any other appropriate authority.

Agents shall at all times act in a manner which promotes adherence to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all persons, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, or disability.

Violation of any portion of this code will be subject to disciplinary action, which could include immediate termination of an agent's position with the VCEH.

HUD Continuum of Care # and Name: <b>VT 501 - Vermont Balance of State CoC</b>	
VT BoS CoC Primary Decision-Making Body: <b>Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH)</b>	
Policy/Procedure: <b>Education of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Policy</b>	
VT BoS CoC approved/revised: <b>10/20/15, 7/28/2017, 9/17/2019</b>	

In compliance with federal law, it is the policy of the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH), acting as the primary decision-making group of the Vermont Balance of State Continuum of Care, to support all homeless children & youth, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, in accessing free, appropriate education.

The educational needs of homeless children and youth, and their families, will be supported within the VT BoS CoC through the development of community collaborations between homeless providers and local homeless education liaisons that address the following:

- Identification
- Enrollment
- Transportation
- Trainings conducted by to homeless providers and others
- Coordination
- Student Rights
- Parent Rights
- Dispute Resolution

The Vermont's Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program and local homeless education liaisons will support the VT BoS CoC, local CoCs, and all HUD CoC Program recipients, subrecipients and related service providers to:

1. Each agency will designate a staff person(s) to ensure that the children are enrolled in school and receive educational services, as appropriate to their individual needs.
2. Each agency will maintain policies and practices that are consistent with the laws related to providing education services to individuals and families.

## Definitions

- School of origin - The school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.
- Enrollment - Attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

### **Definition of the Term “Homeless Children and Youth”**


The term “homeless children and youth” is defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as:

- Children who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.
- Children and youth who are sharing the housing of others, with or without their parents, due to loss of housing (doubled up).
- Children living in motels or hotels or trailer home due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Children living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- Unaccompanied youth includes youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
- Migratory children and youth who are living in a situation described above.
- Children awaiting foster care placement.

### **Vermont's Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program**

Contact VEHCYP to find out more about education laws and resources to ensure homeless children and youth are connected to schools at the following website: <http://education.vermont.gov/homeless-children-and-youth>

- Vermont Homeless Education Liaison Contact List
- Vermont Homeless Education Liaison Toolbox
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act
- National Resources

HUD Continuum of Care # and Name: <b>VT 501 - Vermont Balance of State CoC</b>	
VT BoS CoC Primary Decision-Making Body: <b>Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH)</b>	
Policy/Procedure: <b>Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Monitoring</b>	
Memorandum of Agreement Excerpt <i>(Signed by VT BoS CoC/ESG Recipient/Collaborative Applicant: December 2013)</i>	

VCEH will “participate in the development of performance standards for Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) projects and evaluate overall ESG program outcomes.” (Page 40)

VCEH will “consult with the Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), Emergency Solutions (ESG) grantee, on: the plan for allocating ESG program funds; ESG performance standards; and overall outcomes of ESG-funded activities.” (Page 41)

**VERMONT COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS (VT-500)  
AND CHITTENDEN COUNTY HOMELESS ALLIANCE (VT-501)**

**AUGUST 2018**

## Emergency Transfer Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking

### Emergency Transfers

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) provides housing protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking in federally-funded housing programs. Your rental assistance is funded in full or in part by a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) grant. The CoC Program promotes communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness by providing funding for efforts by nonprofit providers and state and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families. In Vermont, there are two regional HUD-recognized CoCs: the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH)/VT-500 and the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)/VT501. A program funded through a VCEH or CCHA application to HUD for a CoC grant sponsored your rental assistance. Because your rental assistance is funded with this federal grant, your rental agreement and program participation with [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] must comply with federal laws, including the Violence Against Women Act.

[INSERT PROGRAM NAME] and Vermont's CoCs are concerned about the safety of tenants, and that concern extends to tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. In accordance with VAWA, tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking may request an emergency transfer from the tenant's current rental unit to another rental unit while maintaining eligibility for CoC-funded rental assistance. The ability to request a transfer is available regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.<sup>11</sup>

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.

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<sup>11</sup> 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.

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the federal agency that monitors CoC grant recipients' compliance with VAWA.

## 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 C.F.R. 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 six (6) month 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 [INSERT PROGRAM NAME]. While an oral request is acceptable to initiate the process, transfers cannot be approved without a written request from the tenant. [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities. The tenant's written request for an emergency transfer should include either:

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 with CoC-funded rental assistance; OR
2. A statement that the tenant was a sexual assault victim and that the sexual assault occurred on the premises during the six (6) month period preceding the tenant's request for an emergency transfer; OR
3. A completed Form HUD-5383 (Emergency Transfer Request).

## CONFIDENTIALITY

[INSERT PROGRAM NAME] shall keep strictly confidential any information and documents submitted by the tenant or the tenant's representative to request an emergency transfer. [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] shall keep strictly confidential any information and documents related to the emergency transfer, including, for example: the location of the victim's emergency shelter, the name and location of the storage facility used by the victim, the address of the tenant's new dwelling unit, and so forth. [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] is only permitted to release information if: (1) the victim provides written authorization to release the information on a time limited basis; (2) the disclosure of the information is required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance from the CoC-funded rental assistance program; or (3) the disclosure is otherwise

required by law. Please refer to the Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence Against Women Act for more information about [INSERT PROGRAM NAME'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

If a tenant requests an emergency transfer, [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] shall immediately review the transfer request during normal business hours and advise the program participant of the determination. If the request is approved, [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] will offer to refer the tenant to a local agency providing services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking (a Network agency) for ongoing housing search case management and supportive services. [INSERT PROGRAM NAME], in collaboration with the local Network agency if the tenant has consented to such a referral, will act as quickly as possible to transfer a tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to safe temporary or permanent housing, subject to availability and safety of a unit.

A tenant may choose to remain in the assisted rental unit pending transfer to alternative, safe permanent housing.

A tenant may choose to vacate the assisted rental unit immediately pending transfer to alternative, safe permanent housing, or the tenant may choose to remain in the assisted rental unit pending completion of the transfer. If the tenant chooses to vacate immediately, [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] shall refer the tenant to the local Network agency for emergency shelter or to the appropriate District Office of the Vermont Department for Children and Families for emergency housing. Such referrals shall be considered "constructive eviction" pursuant to Economic Services Division Rules 2821(F) or 2621(E).

If a tenant reasonably believes, based on their personal knowledge, a proposed alternative rental unit would not be safe, the tenant may request a transfer to another location. The tenant must establish eligibility for the alternative rental unit. Once transferred, the tenant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the unit to which the tenant has been transferred.

If the tenant wishes to move to a different HUD-designated Continuum of Care geographic area, the tenant may do so even if [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] cannot meet all of the CoC Program regulatory requirements of 24 C.F.R. Part 578, so long as [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] is able to meet all statutory requirements of the CoC Program at 42 U.S.C. §§ 11381 *et seq.*, either directly or through a third-party contract or agreement. If the tenant's rental assistance is term-limited, [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] shall refer the tenant to the new jurisdiction's CoC for Coordinated Entry assessment and assistance securing alternative housing. [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] shall continue CoC-funded rental assistance in the new jurisdiction until the end of the original term. If the tenant's rental assistance is in the form of permanent supportive housing, [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] shall refer the tenant to the new jurisdiction's CoC for Coordinated

Entry assessment, referral to an appropriate sponsor agency, assistance securing alternative housing, and to the appropriate managing agent for CoC-funded permanent supportive housing in the new jurisdiction. Until the

managing agent and sponsor agency are able to offer services to the tenant, [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] shall continue to provide rental assistance to the tenant in the new jurisdiction.

The requirement to transfer a victim continues until the transfer is complete, the victim no longer receives housing assistance through [INSERT PROGRAM NAME], or the victim withdraws the request for the emergency transfer by notice in writing to [INSERT PROGRAM NAME].

Once a victim vacates the assisted rental unit pursuant to an approved emergency transfer request, the rental agreement assisted unit terminates in accordance with the CoC Lease Addendum. [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] shall notify the landlord of the same. [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] may terminate CoC-funded rental assistance payments as of the end of the month the tenant vacates the rental unit, or [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] may opt to terminate rental assistance no later than 30 days after the tenant vacates. The landlord may seek possession of the rental unit from remaining household members, or may choose to create a new rental agreement with the remaining household members.

If there is damage to the rental unit due to an incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] shall reimburse the landlord with CoC grant funds in an amount not to exceed one month's rent for damages and one month's rent for vacancy costs (if applicable), to be paid at the time the participant exits the housing unit.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY OF TENANTS

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

Local agencies serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault are available to help throughout Vermont. Please see the attached listing of member organizations of the Vermont Network.

Vermont Legal Aid, Inc., is available to provide legal advice and/or representation and may be reached at **1-800-889-2047**.

National organizations are also available to help:

- National Domestic Violence Hotline: **1-800-799-7233** (1-800-787-3224 (TTY)).
- National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center: <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>.
- National Sexual Assault Hotline (RAINN): **1-800-656-4673**, or visit the online hotline at <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>.

**Attachments:** Vermont Network Member Organizations

Form HUD-5383

Click on the links below to read the Emergency Transfer Plan supporting documents:

[VAWA Client Release of Information](#)

[VAWA Emergency Transfer Request](#)

[VAWA Notice of Rights for Tenants](#)

[VAWA Property Owner Rights](#)

[VAWA Self-Certification Form 5382](#)

[CoC Program – Lease Addendum](#)

*“To receive additional forms/attachments, please go the VCEH website or email the VT BoS CoC applicant (VT State Housing Authority) at [daniel@vsha.org](mailto:daniel@vsha.org).”*

## Vermont Continuum of Care Statewide Policy:

(VT Balance of State and Burlington/Chittenden Continua of Care)

### Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity: Affirmative Marketing and Outreach

Approved by the VT Coalition to End Homelessness on: 2018. Effective Date: 2018.

Approved by the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance on: 2018. Effective Date: 2018.

#### Regulatory Citations

- 24 § 578.93 (c)
- 24 § 578.103 (a) (14)
- 24 § 576.407 (b)
- 24 § 576.500 (S) (1)
- 24 CFR 5.105 (a)(2)
  - CPD Notice-1701
  - Executive Order 13166

[All are available here : Interim Rule](#)

#### Background

The CoC Program interim rule at 24 CFR 578.93(c) requires recipients of CoC Program funds to affirmatively further fair housing and market their housing and supportive services to eligible persons regardless of race, national origin, color, 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 according to 24 § 578.103 (a) (14).

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). Affirmative outreach requirements for the ESG program are located at 24 CFR § 576.407(b) and its record keeping requirements at 24 § 576.500 (S)(1).

#### Definitions

##### **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing**

“means taking meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics. Specifically, affirmatively furthering fair housing means taking meaningful actions that, taken together, address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns,

transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws. The duty to affirmatively further fair housing extends to all of a program participant's activities and programs relating to housing and urban development."

### Meaningful Actions

"means significant actions that are designed and can be reasonably expected to achieve a material positive change that affirmatively furthers fair housing by, for example, increasing fair housing choice or decreasing disparities in access to opportunity." [Specific Requirements for CoC Funded Programs](#)

- 24 § 578.93 (c) *Affirmatively furthering fair housing*. A recipient must implement its programs in a manner that affirmatively furthers fair housing, which means that the recipient must:
  - 1) *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;
  - 2) Where a recipient encounters a condition or action that impedes fair housing choice for current or prospective program participants, provide such information to the jurisdiction that provided the certification of consistency with the Consolidated Plan; and
  - 3) Provide program participants with information on rights and remedies available under applicable federal, State and local fair housing and civil rights laws.
- 24 § 578.103 (a) (14) *Recordkeeping requirements*. Recipients and subrecipients must maintain copies of their marketing, outreach, and other materials used to inform eligible persons of the program to document compliance with the requirements in § 578.93(c).

### Requirements for ESG Funded Programs

- 24 § 576.407 (b) *Affirmative outreach*. The recipient or subrecipient must:
  - Make known that use of the facilities, assistance, and services are available to all on a nondiscriminatory basis;
  - If it is unlikely that the procedures that the recipient or subrecipient intends to use to make known the availability of the facilities, assistance, and services will reach persons of any particular race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, familial status, or disability who may qualify for those facilities and services, the recipient or subrecipient must establish additional procedures that ensure that those persons are made aware of the facilities, assistance, and

services;

- Take appropriate steps to ensure effective communication with persons with disabilities including, but not limited to, adopting procedures that will make available to interested persons information concerning the location of assistance, services, and facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities; and
- Consistent with Title VI and Executive Order 13166, recipients and subrecipients are also required to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs and activities for limited English proficiency (LEP) persons. • 24 § 576.500 (S)(1) Other Federal requirements. The recipient and its subrecipients must document their compliance with the Federal requirements in § 576.407, as applicable, including: (1) Records demonstrating compliance with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements under § 576.407(a), including data concerning race, ethnicity, disability status, sex, and family characteristics of persons and households who are applicants for, or program participants in, any program or activity funded in whole or in part with ESG funds and the affirmative outreach requirements in § 576.407(b).

#### Requirements for both CoC and ESG Funded Programs

24 CFR 5.105 (a)(2) - Equal access to HUD-assisted or insured housing. (i) Eligibility for HUD- assisted or insured housing. A determination of eligibility for housing that is assisted by HUD or subject to a mortgage insured by the Federal Housing Administration shall be made in accordance with the eligibility requirements provided for such program by HUD, and such housing shall be made available without regard to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

#### Affirmative Outreach and Marketing strategies

CoC and ESG funded programs must develop in writing, implement and document procedures used to market services to eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, familial status, or disability who are least likely to apply in the absence of special outreach. Specific strategies or procedures may include but are not limited:

- **Partnerships** - creating partnerships or referral relationships with diverse community based agencies or non-profits to ensure all persons including persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, familial status, or disability status or limited English proficiency receive information about the offered services.
- **Access to persons with limited English proficiency.** ensuring meaningful access to persons with limited English proficiency by 1) translating documents advertising assistance, services, and contact information into other languages common in our community, including notices about participant's rights, grievance forms and other documents vital for program access and, 2) working with language services or pool of interpreters to assist persons who speak an alternate primary language other than English and need assistance communicating.

- **Inclusive Outreach** - ensuring that current methods of outreach, including street outreach are conducted on a regularly basis, and reach all potentially eligible households in our entire county geography, especially those least likely to apply for assistance and ensure efforts do not intentionally or unintentionally exclude protected groups & classes.
- **Using Data and Self-Assessment** – 1) performing a self-assessment or survey a program’s target population to determine its awareness of the program’s services and assistance, 2) evaluating a program’s service data to ensure the program knows whether certain groups are under-represented, and 3) if data analysis reveals that certain groups are under-represented, determining the reasons causing the under-representation and take actions to address them.
- **Accessible documents** - making documents accessible by online tools used by persons with visual and hearing impairments, such as screen readers.
- **Client’s Rights:** providing program participants with information on rights and remedies available under applicable federal, State and local fair housing and civil rights laws

# HMIS Governance Charter

## **Governance Charter for the VT Balance of State CoC and Burlington/Chittenden CoC Homeless Management Information System**

### A. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this Governance Charter is to confirm agreements between the Continuum of Care and the Institute for Community Alliances (hereinafter HMIS Lead Agency). As such, the Governance Charter sets forth the general understandings, and specific responsibilities of each party relating to key aspects of the governance and operation of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS.) This Governance Charter is effective upon execution by the VT Balance of State CoC, Burlington/Chittenden CoC and the Institute for Community Alliances.

### B. Background

The HMIS is a collaborative project of the VT Balance of State CoC, Burlington/Chittenden CoC, the HMIS Lead Agency, and participating Partner Agencies. HMIS is an internet-based data collection application designed to capture information about the numbers, characteristics and needs of homeless persons and those at risk of homelessness over time. Use of HMIS is mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for all communities and agencies receiving HUD Continuum of Care, Emergency Solutions Grant, Family and Youth Services Bureau's Runaway and Homeless Youth fund and by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for agencies receiving SSVF funds.

The continuum of care is a community-wide initiative that works to provide a range of housing and services for the homeless. The continuum of care system includes homelessness prevention assistance, emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent affordable and permanent supportive housing, supportive services, specialized programs and outreach for designated homeless subpopulations, and integration with mainstream programs. HMIS enables homeless service providers to collect uniform client information over time. HMIS is essential to efforts to streamline client services and inform public policy decisions aimed at addressing and ending homelessness at local, state and federal levels. Through HMIS, homeless people benefit from improved coordination in and between agencies, informed advocacy efforts, and policies that result in targeted services. Analysis of information gathered through HMIS is critical to the preparation of a periodic accounting of homelessness in Chittenden County, which may include measuring the extent and nature of homelessness, the utilization of services and homeless programs over time, and the effectiveness of homeless programs. Such an unduplicated accounting of homelessness is necessary to service and systems planning, effective resource allocation, and advocacy. The parties to this Governance Charter share a common interest in collaborating to end homelessness and successfully implementing and operating the HMIS.

### C. General Understandings

## 1. Continuum of Care Governance

The VT Balance of State CoC and Burlington/Chittenden CoC are responsible for governance of the HMIS. The CoC is the lead-planning groups for efforts to end homelessness and for implementing and operating homeless service delivery systems in Chittenden County, Vermont. As such and under HUD policy (24 CFR part 580), the CoC is responsible for HMIS oversight and implementation, including planning, software selection, HMIS Lead Agency designation and setting up and managing the HMIS in compliance with HUD's national HMIS Standards. The CoC's oversight and governance responsibilities are carried out by the HMIS Advisory Board (described below), which reviews and approves all HMIS policies and procedures.

## 2. HMIS Lead Agency Designation

The CoC designates the HMIS Lead Agency to manage HMIS operations on its behalf, and to provide HMIS administrative functions at the direction of the CoC through the CoC Board and the HMIS Advisory Board.

## 3. Homeless Management Information System Advisory Board

The CoC members and HMIS Partner Agencies actively participate with the HMIS Lead Agency through the HMIS Advisory Board in the management of the HMIS. The HMIS Advisory Board is responsible for establishing policies, procedures, and protocols for functions essential to the viability and success of the HMIS, including, but not limited to, data privacy, data quality, analysis, reporting, data sharing protocols. All CoC HMIS participating agencies will be represented on the HMIS Advisory Board to ensure shared responsibility and accountability.

### 3.1 Advisory Board Requirements

- a. Meetings - Board meetings will be held quarterly. Important HMIS policy items that emerge in between meetings will be handled by the Board via email, conference call, or an online meeting.
- b. Attendance - Advisory Board members are required to attend all meetings. A majority of the Advisory Board is one half plus one of the members present at the meeting when the vote is taking place. If a Board member cannot attend meeting, they will give advance notice and send an appropriate stand in.
- c. Accessibility - Board members will be publicly identified and available for contact by HMIS users and agencies throughout the state.
- d. Policies and Procedures - Approval of policy, procedures and HMIS protocols will be attempted through consensus and conversation but will ultimately be decided by simple majority.
- e. Voluntary Board Membership - Advisory Board members are volunteers and are not compensated for their participation.

## 4. Funding

Funding for the software and operations of the HMIS shall be provided by a HUD Continuum of Care program HMIS grant and other funding from the CoC. Partner Agencies may be required to pay user fees for the HMIS software and reporting licenses assigned to their agency. In the event there is a shortfall in funding for the software or operation of the HMIS, the CoC will explore options to increase revenue.

## 5. Software and Hosting

The CoC has selected a single software product to serve as the sole HMIS software application, in this case Mediware Information Systems ServicePoint. All Partner Agencies agree to use the product as configured for the CoC.

## 6. Compliance with Homeless Management Information System Standards

The HMIS is operated in compliance with the HMIS Data and Technical Standards and any other applicable laws. The parties anticipate that HUD will release revised HMIS Standards periodically. The parties agree to make changes to this Governance Charter, the HMIS Policies and Procedures, and other HMIS operational documents, to comply with the revised standards within the HUD-specified timeframe for such changes.

## 7. Operational Policies and Agreements

The HMIS operates within the framework of agreements, policies, and procedures that have been developed and approved over time by the HMIS Lead Agency and the CoC through the HMIS Advisory Board. These agreements, policies and procedures include but are not limited to the Policies and Procedures Manual, Privacy Policies and the Consumer Notice, Partner Agency Agreements, and User

Agreements. All operational agreements and policies and procedures are reviewed annually by the HMIS Lead Agency, the HMIS Advisory Board, and the CoC to comply with the HMIS Standards or otherwise improve HMIS operations.

## 8. Data Ownership

The data entered into the HMIS is owned by the Partner Agency responsible for entering the client-level information. The HMIS Lead Agency and Partner Agencies are jointly responsible for ensuring that HMIS data processing capabilities, including the collection, maintenance, use, disclosure, transmission and destruction of data, comply with the HMIS privacy, security and confidentiality policies and procedures. The Partner Agencies have the final authority to approve or disapprove the use of the data that is contained in the HMIS.

## D. Specific Responsibilities of the Parties

### 1. Balance of State Continuum of Care and Burlington/Chittenden Continuum of Care

Responsible for oversight, project direction, formalizing policy setting, and guidance for the HMIS project. It is the responsibility of the CoC to:

- a. Designate the HMIS Lead Agency, the software to be used for HMIS, and approve any changes to the HMIS Lead Agency or software.
- b. Request revision to any HMIS operational agreement, policy or procedure developed by the HMIS Lead Agency, and approved by the HMIS Advisory Board.
- c. Conduct outreach to homeless assistance agencies not using HMIS and encourage these agencies and other mainstream programs serving homeless people to participate in HMIS.

- d. Work to inform elected officials, government agencies, the nonprofit community, and the public about the role and importance of HMIS and HMIS data.
- e. Promote the effective use of HMIS data, including its use to measure the extent and nature of homelessness, the utilization of services and homeless programs over time, and the effectiveness of homeless programs.
- f. Provide all local information as necessary for compilation of the Continuum of Care Housing Inventory Count and support the HMIS Lead Agency in preparing the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) and HUD System Performance Measures (SPM).

## 2. HMIS Advisory Board

The CoC exercises the following responsibilities for HMIS governance through the HMIS Advisory Board

- a. Implement and continuously improve the HMIS.
- b. Regularly evaluate HMIS features, functionality and data points
- c. Ensure the HMIS scope aligns with the requirements of agencies, HUD and other federal partners, and other stakeholder groups.
- d. Address any issue that has major implications for the HMIS, such as HMIS Data Standards revisions released by HUD, or HMIS Vendor performance problems.
- e. Review, revise and approve all HMIS operational policies developed by the HMIS Lead Agency and submit all approved operational documents to each CoC Board of Directors or equivalent CoC governing body.
- f. Ensure agency and user compliance with the federal HMIS Standards, and all HMIS operational agreements, policies and procedures.
- g. Provide guidance and oversight of HMIS related user and agency compliance monitoring undertaken by the HMIS Lead Agency.
- h. Approve HMIS Lead Agency recommendations to terminate a user license or restrict the HMIS participation of a Partner Agency.
- i. Convene meetings of the HMIS Advisory Board no less than quarterly.

## 3. HMIS Lead Agency

The Institute for Community Alliances presently serves as the lead agency for the VT Balance of State CoC and Burlington/Chittenden CoC HMIS projects, managing and administering all HMIS operations and activities. The HMIS Lead Agency exercises these responsibilities at the direction of the HMIS Advisory Board. These responsibilities are contingent on receipt of the appropriate funding from the CoC and Partner Agencies. The responsibilities of the HMIS Lead Agency include:

### *I. General*

- a. Obtain and maintain the contract with the selected software vendor.
- b. Notify and solicit feedback from the CoC and the VTHMIS Advisory Board of vendor contract negotiation
- c. Determine the parameters of the HMIS as it relates to continuity of service, ability to limit access to the data, hosting responsibilities, general security and maintenance issues, data storage, back-up

and recovery, customization, compliance with HUD Data standards, reporting needs, training and technical support.

- d. Provide overall staffing for the operation of the HMIS.
- e. Develop and maintain all HMIS operational agreements, policies and procedures, including a written privacy notice.
- f. Obtain signed Partner Agency Agreements and User Agreements.
- g. Invoice Partner Agencies and jurisdictions for HMIS fees approved by the HMIS Advisory Board.
- h. Monitor Partner Agencies and users to ensure compliance with HMIS operational agreements, policies and procedures on behalf of, and at the direction of, the HMIS Advisory Board.
- i. Convene a meeting of the HMIS Advisory Board annually.
- j. Participate as a voting or non-voting member of the CoC's Board of Directors or equivalent decision-making body.
- k. Attend the HMIS and Data Committee meetings of the CoC.
- l. Provide and maintain the HMIS website.
- m. Comply with federal HMIS Standards (including anticipated changes to the HMIS Standards) and all other applicable laws.
- n. Apply as the project applicant for all HUD CoC Program HMIS Projects within the CoC.
- o. Serve as the liaison with HUD regarding HUD HMIS grants.
- p. The HMIS Lead will notify the HUD defined continuum of care when a board member is needed to represent that CoC.

*II. Administer the software, including:*

- a. Ensure the software vendor complies with the responsibilities designated below in Section D.4.
- b. Report any concerns with the software vendor to the HMIS Advisory Board.
- c. Inform CoCs and agencies how each software release will change or impact current workflow and operations.
- d. Protect confidential data (in compliance with federal HMIS Standards, local privacy policies, and other applicable law), and abide by any restrictions clients have placed on their own data.
- e. In accordance with and by all HUD regulations and policies
- f. Inform HMIS Users of any system bugs and the work arounds

*III. Administer HMIS end users, including:*

- a. Provide and manage end user licenses, including authorizing usage and the level of access to HMIS for all users.
- b. Add and remove partner agency administrators.
- c. Provide all training and user guidance needed to ensure appropriate system use, data entry, data reporting, and data security and confidentiality.
- d. Provide specific training for agency administrators and end users.
- e. Establish the training requirements for users and agency administrators.
- f. Maintain documentation of user training completion.
- g. Outreach to Partner Agencies to provide end user support.
- h. Develop and maintain a how-to manual that provides data entry guidance for users.
- i. Maintain an email helpdesk for user support.

- j. Communicate at least monthly with users through an e-newsletter. The e-newsletter will provide information on upcoming regulatory changes, software upgrades, current HMIS news, grants, training, etc.

#### *IV. Ensure Data Quality*

- a. Ensure all client and homeless program data are collected in adherence to the HUD HMIS Data Standards, the HMIS Policies and Procedures, and local additional requirements.
- b. Customize the HMIS application to meet local data requirements (within reason and within constraints of budget and other duties).
- c. Develop and implement a data quality plan.
- d. Monitor data quality and generate data quality reports under the data quality plan.
- e. Assist Partner Agencies and users to rectify data quality concerns.
- f. Carry out aggregate data extraction and reporting under the guidance of the HMIS Advisory Board.
- g. Assist Partner Agencies with agency-specific data collection and reporting needs, such as the Annual Progress Report and other program reports (within reason and within constraints of budget and other duties).
- h. Develop HMIS data entry workflow and requirements for HMIS data and reporting to meet Partner Agency reporting requirements.

#### *V. Reporting*

- a. Complete, or provide assistance for the completion of the Annual Homeless Assessment Report, HUD CoC Program Notice of Funding Availability, Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report, CoC 10 Year Plans, Partner Agency Annual Performance Reports, and other reports to funders from agencies federally mandated to use HMIS.
- b. Ensure the HMIS policies and procedures and recommend data entry workflow align with collecting the data necessary to complete the reports listed above in Section D.3.IV.a.
- c. Construct, run and publish all necessary system-wide reports to meet federal and local reporting compliance.
- d. Provide aggregate reports to groups or stakeholders requesting HMIS information within the constraints detailed in the HMIS Policies and Procedures Manual.

#### *VI. Satisfactory Assurances Regarding Confidentiality and Security:*

It is understood that the HMIS will contain client information that may be subject to the privacy and security protections and requirements of federal HMIS Standards, HIPAA Privacy Rule, other law, and local HMIS privacy and security policies and procedures. The HMIS Lead Agency hereby agrees that it will use protected client information only for purposes permitted by agreement with Partner Agencies and as permitted by the applicable law and Standards. Further, the HMIS Lead Agency agrees it will make use of all safeguards required by HUD Privacy Standards, HIPAA Privacy Rule, where appropriate, other law, and local HMIS privacy and security policies and procedures to prevent any unauthorized disclosure of protected client information.

- a. Develop and implement security and confidentiality plans required by the HUD HMIS Standards.
- b. Assist Partner Agencies to rectify agency data security and privacy concerns.

#### *4. Software Vendor*

The selected software vendor and HMIS database must meet all HUD regulations and policies, and the following requirements:

- a. Ensure the HMIS design meets the federal HMIS Data Standards.
- b. Develop a codebook and provide other documentation of programs created.
- c. Provide ongoing support to the HMIS Lead pertaining to the needs of end users to mine the database, generate reports and other interface needs.
- d. Administer the product servers, including web and database servers.
- e. Monitor access to HMIS through auditing.
- f. Monitor functionality, speed and database backup procedures.
- e. Provide backup and recovery of internal and external networks.
- f. Maintain the system twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.
- g. Communicate any planned or unplanned interruption of service to the HMIS Lead Agency.
- h. Take all steps needed to secure the system against breaches of security and system crashes.

## E. Period of Agreement and Modification/Termination

### 1. Period of Operation and Termination

This Governance Charter shall remain in effect until terminated by the parties. Each party shall have the right to terminate this agreement as to itself only upon 30 days prior written notice to the HMIS Advisory Board in care of the HMIS Lead Agency. Violation of any component may be grounds for immediate termination of this Agreement.

### 2. Amendments

Amendments, including additions, deletions, or modifications to this Governance Charter must be agreed to by all parties to this Agreement.

## Signatures

### ***Vermont Balance of State Continuum of Care:***

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Josh Davis, Co-Chair                      Date  
VT Balance of State CoC Board of Directors

### ***Burlington/Chittenden Continuum of Care:***

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Margaret Bozik, Co-Chair                      Date  
Burlington/Chittenden CoC Steering Committee

### ***Vermont Balance of State Continuum of Care:***

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Rebeka Lawrence-Gomez, Co-Chair                      Date  
VT Balance of State CoC Board of Directors

### ***Burlington/Chittenden Continuum of Care:***

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Travis Poulin, Co-Chair                      Date  
Burlington/Chittenden CoC Steeri

### ***Institute for Community Alliances:***

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David Eberbach, Executive Director

[Signed 6/13/2019: Signatures can be found here.](#)

## Revision History

4.18.2018	Section C item 1: Grammatical edit changing CoCs “is responsible” to “are responsible”.
4.18.2018	Section C sub section 3: Change to say meetings will be held Quarterly vs. Monthly
4.18.2018	Section D item 2: Added - Regularly evaluate HMIS features, functionality, and data points and Board Meetings are held Quarterly vs. Monthly.
4.18.2018	Section D 3.1.b: Add ICA will notify CoCs and VT HMIS Advisory Board of vendor contract negotiations.
4.18.2018	Section D 3.1.p: The HMIS Lead will notify the HUD defined continuum of care when a board member is needed to represent that CoC.
4.18.2018	Section D 3.2.f: Inform HMIS Users of any system bugs and the work around
8.8.2018	Added “s” to CoC to indicate that both Vermont CoCs are being talked about in the document
10.18.2018	Changed “Advisory Board” to “ Advisory Committee” and “board” to “committee” throughout
10.18.2018	Added section 2a. HMIS User Group
3.29.2019	Section B.: Background Clarify SSVF as Supportive Services for Veteran Families
3.29.2019	Section D sub section 2: Expanded section regarding compensation of committee members
3.29.2019	Section D sub section 2: Delete redundant “Implement and Continuously Improve HMIS” covered in other points
3.29.2019	Section D sub section 2: Remove authorizing deletion of user licenses for violations as part of committee’s responsibility

## Non-Discrimination Policy

The Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH) and its member agencies are dedicated to ensuring nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for participants in programs funded by the Continuum of Care (“CoC”). This non-discrimination policy applies to all CoC-funded programs of VCEH and its member agencies. It does not apply to non-CoC-funded programs of member agencies.

Pursuant to the Fair Housing Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 3601-19, VCEH and covered programs shall not discriminate against program participants and applicants on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, or national origin. Pursuant to the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, 42 U.S.C. §§ 6101-07, they shall not discriminate on the basis of age. They shall not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived disability pursuant to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101 *et seq.* In accordance with the Equal Access Rule, 24 C.F.R. § 5.105(a)(2), they shall not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status. Pursuant to Vermont fair housing law, 9 V.S.A. § 4503, VCEH and its member agencies shall not discriminate against program participants and applicants on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, religious creed, color, national origin, or disability, or because a person intends to occupy a dwelling unit with one or more minor children, or because a person is a recipient of public assistance.

In spite of the preceding paragraph, pursuant to 24 C.F.R. § 578.93, housing and supportive services for specific subpopulations is permissible if the housing and services address a need identified by VCEH and meets one of the following:

- (1) The housing is limited to one sex where it consists of a single structure with shared bedrooms or bathing facilities.
- (2) The housing is limited to a specific subpopulation, so long as admission does not discriminate against any protected class under federal nondiscrimination laws in 24 CFR 5.105 (e.g., the housing may be limited to homeless veterans, victims of domestic violence and their children, or chronically homeless persons and families).
- (3) the housing may be limited to families with children.
- (4) If the housing has in residence at least one family with a child under the age of 18, the housing may exclude registered sex offenders and persons with a criminal record that includes a violent crime;
- (5) Sober housing may exclude persons who refuse to sign an occupancy agreement or lease that prohibits program participants from possession, using, or being under the influence of illegal substances and/or alcohol on the premises.
- (6) If the housing is assisted with funds under a federal program that is limited by federal statute or Executive Order to a specific subpopulation, the housing may be limited to that subpopulation.

- (7) Agencies may limit admission to or provide preference for subpopulations of homeless persons and families who need the specialized supportive services that are provided in the housing. While the housing may offer services for a particular type of disability, no otherwise eligible individuals with disabilities or families including an individual with a disability may be excluded on the grounds that they do not have a particular disability.


VCEH and covered programs shall comply with the accessibility requirements of the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, and Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as applicable. In accordance with the requirements of 24 C.F.R. § 8.4(d), all programs shall ensure that their program's housing and supportive services are provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of persons with disabilities.

Persons with limited English proficiency shall be provided with meaningful access to CoC-funded programs and services pursuant to Executive Order 13166 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

VCEH and its member agencies shall administer CoC-funded rental assistance so as to affirmatively further fair housing in accordance with Executive Order 12259 (Dec. 31, 1980). They shall:

- (1) Affirmatively market their housing and supportive services to eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, or handicap who are least likely to apply in the absence of special outreach, and maintain records of those marketing activities;
- (2) Where they encounter a condition or action that impedes fair housing choice for current or prospective program participants, provide such information to the CoC jurisdiction that provided the certification of consistency with the Consolidated plan; and
- (3) Provide program participants with information on rights and remedies available under applicable federal, State, and local fair housing and civil rights laws.

The age and gender of a child under age 18 shall not be used as a basis for denying any family's admission to covered programs.

HUD Continuum of Care # and Name: <b>VT 501 - Vermont Balance of State CoC</b>	
VT BoS CoC Primary Decision-Making Body: <b>Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH)</b>	
Policy/Procedure: <b>Reallocating CoC Projects Policy</b>	
VT BoS CoC approved/revised: 9/9/16, 7/28/17, 9/17/2019	

The VT Balance of State CoC (VT BoS CoC/VT500) embarks on an annual proactive plan to assess all CoC Program-funded projects within the portfolio to strengthen our CoC's effectiveness at ending homelessness and to increase our national competitiveness. This process includes identifying projects for reallocation. The CoC has reallocated funds from projects that were under performing, using outdated program models, under spending and/or had high costs.

Local CoCs and the CoC Board are provided information on CoC priorities, best practices, review criteria, reallocation opportunities and requirements. The local CoCs make the initial recommendations of projects that might be reallocated.

As part of this process and education about best practices and CoC priorities, projects are offered a chance to voluntarily reallocate CoC Program funding in part or whole to support creation of new projects to achieve our goals to end homelessness. The CoC offers providers education and technical assistance regarding successful reallocation strategies.

Funding from projects that voluntarily reallocated are first offered to the current recipient or subrecipient to design another project to meet local goals to end homelessness as long as annual funding is available to fund all existing renewals and the project appears viable.

Funding from projects that are involuntarily reallocated are put up from public competition and announced through the CoC's listserv and website. The call for new projects for reallocated funds utilizes the same priorities and process in place for any available bonus funding.

*Note: As of FY16, all reallocations of CoC Program projects within the VT BoS CoC have occurred as the result of voluntary non-renewal by each CoC Program Recipient/Subrecipient/Partner.*

## VCEH Coordinated Entry Master List Inactive Policy

A Master List Inactive Policy ensures that a Coordinated Entry Partnership is able to contact and connect with households as soon as a housing opportunity is available. Loss of contact means that it is difficult to determine whether households on the Master List are still in need of housing. In some situations these households may have self-resolved their housing crisis or relocated to another area. Without a policy, the Coordinated Entry Partnership can experience delays in housing referral procedures due to the time spent searching for households in the community who they have not been able to reach through multiple attempts, often for many months.

### **Policy:**

If a household has had no contact with any Coordinated Entry Partner AND they have had no services or shelter stays in HMIS for the past 90 days, the household will be removed from the Active List and placed on the Inactive List. In HMIS, the household is not “exited” from Coordinated Entry.

Master List Inactive/Active status updates will be done at least once a month to ensure the Active List is accurate. For households who have not been contacted within the last 90 days, the assigned Housing Navigation Provider, or the agency where the household completed an assessment in cases where there is no Housing Navigator, will make three attempts to contact the household to inquire about housing status before moving the household to Inactive. The Housing Navigator or the agency where the household was assessed will update the household’s Active/Inactive status.

If a household on the Inactive list makes contact with any Coordinated Entry Partner, they are moved from the Inactive list to the Active list and can be referred to housing services and resources. The household may be re-assessed at this time in order to update household information, including housing and service needs. The date of the initial housing assessment remains the date used in any determination of prioritization.



## **VERMONT COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS (VCEH - VT BOS COC)**

### **Additional Policy, Procedure, and Memorandum of Agreements**

[Housing Opportunity Grant Program \[Emergency Solutions Grant Program\] Standards of Provision of Assistance SFY19 revised \(September 20, 2018\)](#)

[Memorandum of Agreement between AHS –VCEH – VSHA \(December 2013\)](#)

[Veteran’s Policies and Procedures \(2019\)](#)

[HMIS Policy and Procedure \(June 2019\)](#)

[Coordinated Entry Policy and Procedures \(Rev. 9.17.19\)](#)

[Coordinated Entry – Permanent Supportive Housing \(PSH\) Policy \(April 2017\)](#)

[Coordinated Entry Local Partnership Agreement \(April 2017\)](#)



## **VERMONT COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS (VCEH - VT BOS COC)**

### **Expired or Replaced Policy**

- Chronic Homeless Priority of All CoC-PSH Policy 10/20/2015 (replace in 2017 by CES standards and CoC Written Standards)
- Standards for Administering Assistance Policy – 10/20/15 (replace by full CoC Written Standards in July 2017)
- McKinney-Vento Homeless EDUCATION ASSURANCES Policy – (replaced by CoC Written Standards and “Education of Homeless Children and Youth Policy” - 10/20/15)