

**RAMSEY COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE  
GOVERNANCE CHARTER**

- I. **Vision Statement:** We work together to create a community where homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring, where we eliminate racial disparities, and everyone is housed.
  
- II. **Mission Statement:** We prevent and end homelessness by delivering effective, people-centered, integrated responses that are racially equitable and driven by community voice, advocacy, and learning.

**ARTICLE I: ORGANIZATION AND PURPOSE**

**Section 1: Name** St. Paul/Ramsey Continuum of Care MN-501

**Section 2: Geographic Area of Coverage** Ramsey County

**Section 3: Oversight Responsibility**

Ramsey County Continuum of Care is responsible for planning and implementing the homeless response system in Ramsey County and carrying out the duties identified in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act and the Continuum of Care Interim Final Rule (24 CFR 578).

Specifically, those duties are to:

1. Operate the Continuum of Care
2. Designate a Homeless Management Information System for the Continuum of Care; and
3. Plan for the Continuum of Care

Additionally, the Continuum of Care (CoC) must be involved in the coordination of funding streams and resources – federal, local, or private – of targeted homeless programs and other mainstream resources.

The Continuum of Care:

- promotes community-wide goals to end homelessness
- provides funding to quickly rehouse homeless individuals (including unaccompanied youth) and families while minimizing trauma and dislocation
- promotes access to, and effective utilization of mainstream programs; and
- optimizes self-sufficiency for all persons experiencing homelessness.

A schedule of Continuum of Care meetings shall be made available to the public with an open invitation for any interested person to attend.

**Section 4: Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agency**

The Continuum of Care has concurred on the decision to operate a HMIS and, along with the other Continuum of Care regions in the state, has designated Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) as the lead agency of that system. Details included in Addendum.

**Section 5: The Designated Continuum of Care Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant: Ramsey County**

**Definitions:**

**CoC Lead Agency:** Entities tasked by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) with developing a systemic response to homelessness in their jurisdiction.

Collaborative Applicant: The Collaborative Applicant is the eligible applicant designated by the CoC to collect and submit the CoC Registration, CoC Consolidated Application (which includes the CoC Application and CoC Priority Listing), and apply for CoC planning funds on behalf of the CoC during the CoC Program Competition. The Collaborative Applicant may or may not be the same entity as the CoC Lead Agency.

### **Selection**

The Continuum of Care selects Ramsey County as the Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant for the community. Designation as the Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant is valid for a maximum of 4 years before renewal by the CoC.

Specific responsibilities of the Lead Agency are detailed in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Continuum of Care Governing Board and Ramsey County. The MOU is reviewed annually and can be changed by mutual agreement of the Governing Board and Ramsey County. The MOU is included in the Addendum.

As the Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant for the CoC, Ramsey County shall:

- Take direction from the CoC Governing Board to ensure implementation of the CoC's planned goals and priorities.
- Serve as the Collaborative Applicant for the CoC, including designing and implementing a collaborative process to develop, submit, and monitor the annual Consolidated Application to HUD, and fulfilling the responsibilities in the HUD agreement.
- Maintain staff to fulfill and execute all Collaborative Applicant and Lead Agency responsibilities, including staffing the Governing Board and related committees and work groups.
- Ensure appropriate planning, research and administrative functions are conducted for the Continuum of Care.

## **ARTICLE II: CONTINUUM OF CARE MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1: Participants in and Role of Continuum of Care**

The Ramsey County Continuum of Care seeks to be as inclusive as possible and to include the opinions and insights of various stakeholders, including people who have experienced or are experiencing homelessness. The Continuum of Care membership engages in planning with the Continuum of Care Governing Board, informs them, and holds them accountable. Members of the Continuum of Care may include, but are not limited to:

- Affordable housing developers, landlords, building owners
- Any person interested in improving the response to homelessness
- Businesses
- CDBG/HOME/ESG Entitlement Jurisdiction (County, City of St. Paul, DHS)
- Continuum of Care- funded and non-CoC funded youth homeless organizations
- Continuum of Care funded victim service provider
- Culturally specific homeless service provider
- Disability Services organization/disability advocates
- Domestic violence advocates/provider
- EMS/Crisis Response Teams
- Faith-based organizations
- Family homeless service provider
- Homeless and formerly homeless persons
- Hospitals/Health care clinics
- Law enforcement/local jails
- Legal services organizations
- LGBTQ+ service organizations/advocates
- Local/state governments
- Mental health service organizations

- Nonprofit homeless providers
- Organizations serving homeless and formerly homeless with specific barriers posed by involvement or past involvement with the criminal justice system
- Organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans
- Public housing agencies
- School district administrator/homeless liaisons
- Street outreach teams
- Substance abuse service organizations

The **roles and responsibilities** of the Continuum of Care membership are focused on **providing feedback and input** to help guide the decision-making of the Continuum of Care Governing Board and the Continuum of Care Steering Committee in the following areas:

1. **Vote** to elect a portion of the Continuum of Care Governing Board and Steering Committee as specified in Article III, Section 1.
2. **Vote** annually through a consent agenda at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Continuum of Care membership on the Continuum of Care Governance Charter. For 30 days prior to the meeting, CoC members may provide written comments on the Governance Charter (posted on the CoC website) to the Governing Board for their consideration.
3. **Participate** in the committees and subcommittees of the Continuum of Care.
4. **Review** and provide feedback on community data and analysis related to efforts to prevent and end homelessness.
5. **Review** and provide feedback on priorities for funding projects.
6. **Review** and provide feedback on the establishment and operations of a centralized or coordinated assessment system (CES), in consultation with recipients of ESG funds.
7. **Delegate to** the Governing Board, Steering Committee, and working groups, the implementation of the strategic framework and day-to-day work of the Continuum.

### **Section 2: Continuum of Care Meetings**

To fulfill these responsibilities, the full Continuum of Care membership will be **convened at least twice annually**. Ramsey County will issue a public invitation to all Continuum of Care membership meetings and will publish meeting agendas and materials.

In conjunction with the full CoC membership meeting, the CoC will also host a Provider and Consumer Forum.

- **The Provider Forum** is an opportunity for providers of homelessness and housing services to offer input on strategy and operations of the CoC and share information about their programs and experience. Participation in the Continuum of Care Provider Forum is vital to the Continuum of Care planning process.
- **The Consumer Forum** is a vehicle through which the CoC engages with people currently or previously experiencing homelessness or housing instability to ensure that the Continuum is informed by their experience.

## **ARTICLE III: GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1: Creation and Selection of a Governing Board**

The Continuum of Care Governing Board is the delegated authority and decision-making body for the Continuum of Care. The Governing Board (hereafter referred to as “the Board”), consisting of an odd number of members not less than 21 and not more than 25, shall be voted on by the Continuum of Care to carry out the responsibilities as assigned by the Continuum of Care. The Governing Board must be racially diverse and include a range of stakeholders. Governing Board members must have fiscal and/or program authority of the entity they represent.

### **Election of Initial Governing Board (2021)**

For the initial Governing Board and Steering Committee of the redesigned Heading Home Ramsey that will be elected in January 2021, potential Board members will be recruited in advance through a public process and a list of nominees made public prior to the meeting of the full CoC membership. CoC members will elect members from that list. Write-in candidates will be allowed; however, nominations from the floor will not be permitted. In future years, the election process will proceed as outlined below.

### **Nominating Committee**

Annually, the Governing Board chair will appoint four to six members from the Continuum of Care and/or Steering Committee to serve on a Nominating Committee to recruit members to the Governing Board and Steering Committee. Interested candidates will complete an application. This committee will conduct all outreach, orientation, and nominating activities on behalf of the Governing Board. The committee will bring nominations to the Continuum of Care annually for a vote. The committee will work closely with the Lead Agency to recruit candidates and conduct elections. The committee will select its own chair.

### **Elections**

The CoC Coordinator will prepare a ballot in advance of the annual meeting and post it publicly. The packet will include the slate of candidates and biographical material about each candidate. At the annual meeting, attendees will vote for candidates to fill the open seats. Write-in candidates are permitted; however, potential candidates are encouraged to inform the nominating committee in advance of their interest to run for a seat.

### **Elected Membership**

The membership of the Continuum of Care will elect 11-15 representatives from the relevant organizations (defined in Article II, Section 1) that are members of the Continuum of Care who have applied to serve on the board. These individuals must have fiscal and/or program authority of the entity they represent.

One member of the board can represent more than one of the subpopulations listed above (i.e., one nonprofit provider representative can serve as the representative for youth and veterans if the provider serves both populations.) The Board must include a person who is currently or who has previously experienced homelessness.

No more than forty-nine percent (49%) of the members of the Board may be representatives of agencies funded through the annual Continuum of Care application to HUD. No organization may be represented on the Board by more than one person unless noted below or waived by the Governing Board. To ensure a range of stakeholders on the Governing Board, no more than 10% of elected seats can be from one relevant category (for example, businesses or mental health providers.)

### **Designated Membership**

Designated seats are filled by the entities listed below and the individual must have fiscal and/or program authority of the entity they represent. Each entity appoints or re-appoints their representative annually.

<b># Seats</b>	<b>Entity</b>	<b>How Designated</b>
2	Ramsey County	(1) Elected official (Commissioner) & (1) County or Deputy County Manager – designated by the County Board
2	City of St. Paul	(1) Elected official (Mayor or City Councilmember) & (1) Deputy Mayor or if not Deputy Mayor a senior staff-- designated by the Mayor
2	Suburban cities	(2) Elected officials (Mayor or City Councilmember) – designated by Ramsey County League of Local Governments

1	School District	One Superintendent designated by group of School Districts in Ramsey County
1	St. Paul Public Housing Agency	Designated by the Saint Paul PHA
1	Philanthropy	Designated by The Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation
1	Metropolitan Housing & Redevelopment Authority	Designated by the Metropolitan Council

**Terms**

Elected (i.e. not designated) Board members shall serve staggered terms of three years so that approximately one-third of members stand for election each year. In the Board’s first year, newly-elected members shall draw lots to determine the length of their term—one, two, or three years.

Terms for elected Board members shall be renewable up to three times if desired by the member and approved by the Continuum of Care. Renewing terms shall be for three years.

**Section 2: Attendance, Delegates and Membership Status**

Regular attendance and participation in board activities is required. Each Governing Board member shall also select an alternate delegate from their agency/organization who will attend and vote in the absence of the assigned voting delegate. The alternate delegate must be submitted in writing to the CoC Chair and CoC Coordinator.

If a member has three (3) consecutive absences or 50% missed meetings in any 12-month period and fails to notify the chair, they will be deemed inactive and unable to vote until reinstated. The Executive Committee will contact inactive members on a quarterly basis. Members failing to meet the attendance and participation standard shall be subject to removal and replacement. The Executive Committee will be responsible for enforcing active/inactive membership status and termination policy.

**Section 3: Termination**

Members of the Governing Board may be removed by a two-thirds vote of remaining Board members for repeated absence, misconduct, failure to participate, or violation of code of conduct policies. A vote on terminating membership can only be taken when there has been advance notice of this vote of at least 5 days sent to all members.

**Section 4: Vacancies**

In the event of a vacancy of an elected seat, the members of the Governing Board will appoint a successor to hold the seat until the next meeting of the full CoC at which point an election will be held for the duration of the term. Priority for filling vacancies of sitting CoC Board members shall be given to candidates representing either the same, or a closely related category, as that of the vacated position. In the event of a vacancy of a designated seat, the Governing Board shall follow the designation process as describe in Article 3, Section 1.

**Section 5: Governing Board Responsibilities**

The Continuum of Care Governing Board is the delegated authority and decision-making body for the CoC with primary responsibility to:

- Provide overall direction and high-level leadership of the CoC process
- Make formal decisions for the CoC, with input from committees, membership, the Lead Agency/Collaborative Applicant and others with expertise
- Review and approve policy and program recommendations created by the Steering Committee and other committees
- Develop, monitor and be held accountable for the implementation of the Strategic Framework
- Monitor and evaluate system-wide and individual program performance toward established goals and targets
- Approve the CoC’s annual NOFA submittal to HUD

- Seek, secure, align, and coordinate CoC, State of Minnesota, philanthropic and other homeless assistance, and mainstream resources. A detailed description of the Governing Board’s decision-making authority in funding is included in the Governing Board Charge.
- Designate the CoC Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant and work closely with the designated entity to fulfill major duties of the Continuum
- Delegate activities to the Steering Committee and work groups as appropriate, and receive and review any reports from the Committee and work groups
- Enter all Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) on behalf of the CoC and monitor performance under these contracts and MOUs
- Ensure transparent governance within the CoC and address potential conflicts of interest.
- Communicate effectively with the CoC Membership and other key constituencies, such as the Ramsey County Board, the St. Paul City Council, and units of government on issues affecting people who are or who are at risk of being homeless

**Governing Board Staffing**

The Lead Agency will provide support to the Governing Board including, but not limited to recording minutes, sending meeting notifications, preparing meeting materials and ensuring appropriate updates to the Governing Board members.

**Section 6: Governing Board Officers**

Officer positions shall be Chair and Vice Chair.

**Eligibility**

Any active Governing Board member is eligible to serve as an officer.

**Officer Selections**

Officers shall be elected by a simple majority of all voting members of the Governing Board at the last meeting of each calendar year or at an alternative time approved by a majority of the members.

**Terms**

Officers shall be elected for a one-year term and no officer may serve more than 4 consecutive terms in the same office.

**Officer Roles**

Chair

- The Chair shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Governing Board and Continuum of Care, including Provider and Consumer Forums.
- The Chair shall, with assistance from Lead Agency staff, prepare the agenda for each meeting.
- Serve as Chair of the Executive Committee, which meets prior to all Governing Board meetings.
- The Chair shall have the authority to call special meetings of the Governing Board.
- The Chair shall have the authority to sign all formal documents on behalf of the Governing Board.
- The Chair shall perform other duties as may be assigned by the Governing Board.

Vice-Chair

- The Vice-Chair shall exercise the duties of the Chair in his/her absence or recusal.
- The Vice-Chair shall serve on the Executive committee of the Governing Board.
- The Vice-Chair shall have the authority in the absence of the Chair to call special meetings of the Governing Board.
- The Vice-Chair shall serve as timekeeper at all Governing Board meetings.
- The Vice-Chair shall perform other duties as may be assigned by the Governing Board.

### **Executive Committee**

The Governing Board Officers along with the Coordinator of the Continuum of Care and a designated member from the Steering Committee (as needed) comprise the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee has responsibility for preparing the agenda for each meeting and ensuring adequate communication with all Board members regarding meeting times and places, and other issues necessary for the proper functioning of the Board.

### **Section 7: Governing Board Meetings**

#### **Meeting Schedule**

The Governing Board shall meet quarterly.

#### **Special Meetings**

Special meetings may be called by any Executive Committee member if the full Board membership is informed at least five (5) days in advance. Advance notice must include agenda items for discussion and no items not part of the advance notice may be considered at the special meetings.

#### **Public Meetings and Closed Sessions**

Unless otherwise posted, Board meetings are open to the public. Members of the public may participate in discussion at the discretion of the chair. Closed sessions may be held at the discretion of the Board membership.

#### **Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of no fewer than one half of the elected (51%), active voting members available either in person, by phone, or by e-mail. In the absence of a quorum, meetings and discussion can continue but no motions or votes may be taken.

#### **Decision-Making**

All decisions regarding Board planning, funding and governance must be formulated as a motion by active members of the Governing Board. Voting can only take place in the presence of a quorum. Decisions shall be by a simple majority vote, **except** charter amendments, and member termination decisions, which may only be decided by a two-thirds majority.

Email voting may be used for time-sensitive and/or critical votes or in the event that an in-person vote may not be able to be held; these votes must be initiated by the Continuum of Care Lead Agency at the direction of the Governing Board Chair. At least 51 percent of the voting board membership must cast votes for an email vote to be accepted.

## **ARTICLE IV: COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1: Steering Committee**

The Board and Continuum of Care membership jointly establish a Steering Committee responsible for formulating proposals and recommendations for the Governing Board. The Steering Committee:

- Moves the work of the Board forward, and votes to bring key decisions to the full Board for discussion and action
- Provides on-going, structured engagement of the Board's committees, key County Departments, and specific key stakeholder groups
- Handles routine business, exercises oversight, and engages with designated entities as needed during months when the full board does not convene
- Ensures inclusive process to develop and implement strategic plan
- Establishes committees or working groups to fulfill strategic plan goals and other operational duties
- Ensures committees establish annual workplans and monitors implementation of those plans.

The Steering Committee consists of 25 people with intimate knowledge of the field, operations and funding. The Continuum of Care elects 13 seats. Members elected by the CoC shall also represent the breadth of relevant

organizations as considered for the Governing Board. The Governing Board appoints 12 seats with priority given to senior staff from Governing Board member entities that fill designated seats. Steering Committee members should have expertise and decision-making authority in housing and homelessness work. A member of the Governing Board may be seated on the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee must be racially diverse and include a range of stakeholders.

### **Meeting Attendance**

The Steering Committee meets no more than monthly. Steering Committee members are expected to attend all Steering Committee meetings. Regular attendance and participation in Steering Committee activities is required.

If a member has three (3) consecutive absences or 50% missed meetings in any 12-month period and fails to notify the chair, they will be deemed inactive and unable to vote until reinstated. The Steering Committee's Executive Committee will contact inactive members on a quarterly basis. Members failing to meet the attendance and participation standard shall be subject to removal and replacement.

The Steering Committee's Executive Committee will be responsible for enforcing active/inactive membership status and termination policy.

### **Termination**

Members of the Steering Committee may be removed by a two-thirds vote of remaining Steering Committee members for repeated absence, misconduct, failure to participate, or violation of code of conduct policies. A vote on terminating membership can only be taken when there has been advance notice of this vote of at least 5 days sent to all members.

### **Terms**

Elected (i.e. not appointed) Steering Committee members shall serve staggered terms of three years so that approximately one-third of members stand for election each year. In the Committee's first year, newly-elected members shall draw lots to determine the length of their term—one, two, or three years.

Terms shall be renewable up to three times if desired by the member and approved by the Continuum of Care. Renewing terms shall be for three years.

### **Leadership Positions**

The Steering Committee will be led by a Chair and Vice-Chair. All leadership positions will be nominated and voted on by the membership of the Steering Committee and will serve at least annual terms. Annually, the Steering Committee will affirm or adjust the leadership of their group. The duties of these positions are:

#### Chair and Vice-Chair (Chair Elect)

- Facilitating the Steering Committee meetings
- Attending Governing Board meetings
- The Chair shall, with assistance from Lead Agency staff, set the agenda for each meeting, prepare materials, and complete follow-up work
- Engage with the Committee's membership to ensure engagement and active participation

### **Executive Committee of the Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee Chair and Vice Chair, along with the Coordinator of the Continuum of Care comprise the Executive Committee. They have responsibility for preparing the agenda for each meeting and ensuring adequate communication with Steering Committee members regarding meeting times and places, and other issues necessary for the proper functioning of the Committee.

### **Voting/Forwarding Recommendations to Governing Board**

The primary role of the Steering Committee is to recommend certain actions, policies, etc. to the Governing Board. To make recommendations, the Steering Committee will vote per the following:

- Each member has one vote.
- Voting can only take place in the presence of a quorum (51% of members present)
- Email voting may be used for time-sensitive and/or critical votes or in the event that an in-person vote may not be feasible; At least 51 percent of the voting board membership must cast votes for an email vote to be accepted.

## **Section 2: Standing Committees and Working Groups**

The Steering Committee can establish Standing Committees and Working Groups as it deems necessary to create and carry out the work to achieve the goals established in the Strategic Framework. In these bodies, strategies are developed, deepened, and expanded into actionable work plans. These groups may also be directly responsible for specific initiatives or for exploring options to solve particular concerns. Except for the Executive Committees of the Governing Board and the Steering Committee, the Steering Committee, and the Ranking Working Group, all other committees and working groups of the Board may include any HHR members or members from the community at large.

Each Committee or Working Group shall develop and manage a workplan with clear objectives. The Chair of each Committee or Working Group will be a member of the Steering Committee. Meeting locations must be accessible to all interested participants.

The Governing Board and Steering Committee may form and give specific assignments to additional committees and workgroups. Each Committee shall report the results of its meetings to the Steering Committee in the form of agendas, notes, and meeting minutes posted to the Continuum's web site.

Upon completion of its purpose, any Standing Committee or Working Group will be disbanded.

## **ARTICLE V: CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

A Governing Board or Steering Committee member may not participate in or vote on a decision of the board relating to an agency in which the member has a direct financial interest. While serving on the Governing Board or Steering Committee, a person shall avoid a potential conflict of interest.

A conflict of interest may occur when a member takes an action, which results or has the appearance or intention of resulting in any financial benefit on such member, his or her family members, spouse or partner, or any organization in which the member, his or her family members, spouse or partner serves in an official capacity. Service in an official capacity shall include service as an employee, owner, stockholder, director, board member, consultant, or officer that represents any such entity or organization which is seeking or receiving funding through the Governing Board, but shall not include service solely as a volunteer (that do not serve as board members or consultants) or recipient of services.

### **Recusal**

On issues in which a voting member of the Governing Board or Steering Committee has a conflict of interest as described above, the member must recuse her/himself from voting. The member may participate in discussion upon declaring a conflict of interest. The Governing Board or Steering Committee members will be responsible for monitoring the disclosure of voting members' conflicts of interest.

### **Disclosure**

In the event that a matter, which raises a potential conflict of interest, comes before the Governing Board or Steering Committee for consideration, recommendation and decision, the member shall disclose the conflict of interest as soon as he or she becomes aware of it, and the disclosure shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. To establish a procedure to encourage disclosure, all members of the Governing Board or Steering Committee will be required to sign the Disclosure Statement on an annual basis.

## **ARTICLE V: ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS TO THE GOVERNANCE CHARTER**

### **Section 1: Adoption**

Adoption of this Governance Charter shall be by a majority of the members of the Continuum of Care.

### **Section 2: Amendments**

A two-thirds majority vote of the Governing Board will be required to adopt a motion to amend the Governance Charter. Amendments must be submitted, presented, and discussed with the Board membership at least one meeting prior to the meeting at which they will be voted on and adopted.

### **Section 3: Effective Date**

Once approved, amendments to the Governance Charter become effective immediately unless the motion passed specifies a later date.

### **Section 4: Annual Review**

The Governing Board will annually review the Governance Charter and certify they are consistent with HUD's requirements for Continuums of Care. Annually the Governing Board will consider changes recommended by members of the CoC during the posted 30-day comment period.

## **ADDENDA**

- 1. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agency**
- 2. MOU between Lead Agency (Ramsey County) and Governing Board**
- 3. Governing Board Charge and Responsibilities**
- 4. Steering Committee Charge and Responsibilities**

**Addendum 1**  
**Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agency**

The Continuum of Care has concurred on the decision to operate a HMIS and, along with the other Continuum of Care regions in the state, has designated Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) as the lead agency of that system.

**Operate the Continuum of Care HMIS**

**Data and Technical Standards Compliance**

The ten Continuums of Care will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a statewide system administrator, Institute for Community Alliances (ICA), and the MN HMIS Board, to ensure that this operation will be in compliance with the HMIS Data and Technical Standards (69 FR 146, March 10, 2010). All parties involved will review this compliance on an annual basis and report to the Ramsey County Continuum of Care Governing Board on the review results, recommending any corrective action that is required.

**Policies and Procedures**

ICA will maintain comprehensive HMIS operational policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan. These policies and procedures will be reviewed annually for necessary updates.

**Training and Technical Assistance**

ICA will provide regular and ongoing training and technical assistance and support to all homeless system agencies using the HMIS network.

**Monitor System Participation / Data Quality Performance**

The Statewide system administration (SSA) or the local system administrator (LSA) for Ramsey County Continuum of Care will regularly monitor the number of homeless system agencies utilizing the network and report the percentages to the Continuum of Care. State system administration (SSA) will work collaboratively with the Ramsey County Continuum of Care system administrator to develop a plan to address low participation rates, as outlined in the MOU.

**Performance Reporting**

SSA, in collaboration with the Continuum of Care Administrator, will coordinate the effort to design a Ramsey County-wide performance outcomes report, consistent with the expectations of the HEARTH Act.

**Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA)**

SSA will manage the collection of all data elements required for the annual Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA) and enter the data as required into the HUD Homeless Data Exchange on behalf of the Ramsey County Continuum of Care.

**Addendum 2**  
**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**Ramsey County Continuum of Care and Ramsey County**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to confirm agreements between Ramsey County Continuum of Care Governing Board (Board), organized pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended (the Act), and Ramsey County, a political subdivision of the State of Minnesota. The Board is the lead decision-making body for the Continuum of Care (CoC) and has selected Ramsey County to serve as the Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant, as defined in the Act. This MOU defines the general understanding, roles and specific responsibilities of each party related to the CoC. This MOU replaces any other oral or written agreements or understandings between the parties. This MOU is intended to be the entire understanding of the parties.

**II. COMMENCEMENT AND TERM**

Except as provided in Section V (Termination) herein, this MOU shall commence upon approval by the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, following approval by the CoC Governing Board (the “Commencement Date”). The Term shall be from the Commencement Date through December 31, 2024 (the “Termination Date”). The parties will meet and confer annually to review the MOU to ensure the continued relevance of the terms of the MOU to the parties, and to ensure continued consistency and compliance with regulations of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). No later than October 1, 2024, the parties will meet and confer for the express purpose of determining whether to continue the relationship of the parties, discuss any needed amendments to the MOU, and to initiate execution and approval of a new or amended MOU by the respective Boards.

**III. GOVERNANCE AND DESIGNATIONS**

**A. CoC Governance**

The CoC is the lead planning entity for HUD-funded and non-HUD funded efforts to end homelessness and for implementing and operating a homeless prevention and response system in Ramsey County. As such and per HUD policy, the CoC is responsible for oversight and governance of the Continuum of Care/Homeless Prevention and Response System. The CoC’s oversight and governance responsibilities are carried out by its Governing Board.

**B. Governing Board**

The CoC designates the Governing Board to set policies and priorities and to make funding decisions related to the CoC Application for funding through HUD. The Governing Board provides direction to the Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant to ensure implementation of the CoC’s goals and priorities. The Governing Board has a specific set of responsibilities that are outlined in Addendum 3 of the Governance Charter.

**IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF RAMSEY CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC)**

**A. Establish Governance Structure to Meet Requirements and Serve Homeless Response System**

The CoC will follow the Governance Charter and related documents to operate the CoC consistent with HUD and other requirements and deliver satisfactory outcomes. This includes:

- structuring meetings and committees and conducting business in a transparent and accountable manner
- ensure compliance with HUD requirements and utilize performance measures to improve outcomes

**B. Effectively partner with Ramsey County in its role of Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant**

- providing guidance and responding in a timely manner to requests
- providing regular updates to the Lead Agency
- working jointly to address concerns as they arise

**C. Retain Separate Legal Counsel**

In the event of a conflict of interest between the CoC and Ramsey County, the CoC will retain separate legal counsel to represent its legal interests.

**V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF RAMSEY COUNTY ON BEHALF OF THE CoC BOARD**

Ramsey County shall deploy sufficient staffing to fulfill all Collaborative Applicant and Lead Agency responsibilities, including:

**A. Serve as the Collaborative Applicant for the Continuum of Care**

The Collaborative Applicant is the eligible applicant designated by the CoC to collect and submit the CoC Registration, CoC Consolidated Application (which includes the CoC Application and CoC Priority Listing), and apply for CoC planning funds on behalf of the CoC during the CoC Program Competition. The Collaborative Applicant may or may not be the same entity as the CoC Lead Agency.

- Design and implement a process to develop, manage, and submit the annual CoC application to HUD
- Collect and combine the required application information from all applicants and for all projects that the Continuum has selected funding
- Receive and incorporate input from the Governing Board on the draft application
- Engage the Steering Committee, which will advise, review drafts, and forward the final submission of the CoC program application to the Governing Board for approval
- Apply, with guidance and approval of the Governing Board, for new projects through strategic re-allocation of funding or when new monies become available from HUD or other federal partners
- Apply for Continuum of Care planning activities, as directed by the Governing Board
- Sign an agreement with HUD and fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the agreement
- Receive CoC planning funding from HUD and other sources as needed
- Monitor and report progress of CoC activities as required by HUD

**B. Conduct a Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons**

Plan for and conduct, at least biennially, a point-in-time count of homeless persons that meets the following requirements:

- a) Homeless persons who are living in a place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans must be counted as unsheltered homeless persons
- b) Persons living in emergency shelters and transitional housing projects must be counted as sheltered homeless persons
- c) Other requirements established by HUD by Notice

**C. Serve as Lead Agency for the CoC**

The CoC Lead Agency is tasked by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) with developing a systemic response to homelessness in their jurisdiction. As Lead Agency, Ramsey County will accomplish the following duties:

Administrative Duties

- Provide administrative support staff to cover all CoC meetings including Governing Board, Executive Committee, Steering Committee, Provider/Consumer forum and other committees as directed by the Governing Board. Duties include, but are not limited to, scheduling, logistics (locations, room set-up), preparing meetings minutes, distributing minutes, managing rosters, etc.
- Provide legal staffing for day-to-day operations of the CoC, limited to general legal advice where no conflict of interest exists between the CoC and Ramsey County
- Perform any other day-to-day duties necessary to support the Governing Board in overseeing the Continuum of Care
- Assist Nominating Committee in orienting new Governing Board members
- Support efforts to recruit applicants to serve on the Governing Board and Steering committee that reflect a range of stakeholders and demographics
- At the direction of the Governing Board, draft updated bylaws and policies as needed for approval by the Governing Board.

#### Planning Duties

- To ensure, in collaboration with the CoC, to the maximum extent practical, the inclusion of individuals and families experiencing or having had experienced homelessness and housing instability in the Continuum of Care
- In consultation with the Steering Committee, conduct a biannual homeless service needs assessment in Ramsey County
- In consultation with the Steering Committee, develop performance measurements to ensure that programs meet the needs of homeless persons in the Continuum of Care
- Taking direction from the Governing Board, evaluate implementation of the Continuum of Care's annual planned goals and priorities
- Ensure staff participate in other meetings of importance to the CoC

#### Funding Duties (beyond the HUD CoC NOFA)

- Manage the process to allocate Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) funding
- Evaluate outcomes of projects funded under ESG and Continuum of Care and report to HUD
- Produce and submit reports as needed for different funding within the Continuum of Care
- Seek input from the Governing Board to identify, secure and align additional sources of funding.

#### Communications Duties

- In partnership with the CoC, communicating to its members and the broader community about homelessness issues, plans, progress.
- Developing and maintain the CoC website [www.headinghomeramsey.org](http://www.headinghomeramsey.org) to provide current information to all interested parties on the work of the Continuum. The website will include, but is not limited to, meeting times and locations, CoC-related reports and information related to the performance of the CoC and each of its participating agencies.

#### **D. Coordinated Entry Operations Designation**

Coordinated Entry is a process developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs.

The CoC Board designates Ramsey County to coordinate and oversee the Coordinated Entry system, including:

- Oversee the referral process for individuals and families directly or through contractors and partners.

- Ensure use of a standardized assessment process to triage those most at-risk of homelessness and to prioritize those with the most need for services.
- Coordinate development of specific policies to guide the operation of the system for review and adoption by the Governing Board.
- Provide regular updates to the Governing Board.
- Ensure system complies with HUD requirements.
- Ensure Assessor training and Assessor compliance with CoC policies and procedures occurs.

**IV. AMENDMENT**

This Agreement may not be modified except in writing signed and acknowledged by both parties.

**V. TERMINATION**

Either party may terminate this MOU at a date prior to the renewal date specified in this MOU by giving sixty (60) days written notice to the other party. If the funds relied upon to undertake activities described in this MOU are withdrawn or reduced, or if additional conditions are placed on such funding, either party may terminate this MOU within thirty (30) days by providing written notice to the other party. The termination shall be effective on the date specified in the notice of termination.

**CONTINUUM OF CARE GOVERNING BOARD**

---

Maria Wetherall  
Board Chair

**RAMSEY COUNTY**

---

Toni Carter  
Chair, Ramsey County Board of Commissioners

---

Janet Guthrie  
Chief Clerk, Ramsey County Board of Commissioners

*Approved as to form:*

---

Assistant County Attorney

**Addendum 3**  
**GOVERNING BOARD Expectations and Charge**

**OVERVIEW**

The Ramsey County Continuum of Care is responsible for planning and implementing the homeless response system in Ramsey County and carrying out the duties identified in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act and the Continuum of Care Interim Final Rule (24 CFR 578). The Governing Board is the delegated authority and decision-making body for the Continuum of Care (CoC). Decisions shall be made with input from the full CoC membership, the Steering Committee, other committees and working groups, and the Lead Agency (Ramsey County.)

The Governing Board is comprised of 21-25 members; 10 of which are designated positions and 11-15 which are elected by the Continuum of Care membership.

The Lead Agency will provide support to the Governing Board including, but not limited to, recording minutes, sending meeting notifications, preparing meeting materials, and providing relevant updates to the Governing Board members.

**EXPECTATIONS**

**Qualifications**

Governing Board members are selected to represent various constituencies as described in Article III of the Governance Charter. To adequately represent that constituency, Board Members shall meet basic qualifications including:

- Hold an executive or senior position with decision-making (program, financial, policy) authority
- Develop sufficient knowledge of homelessness issues and programs to engage in Board decisions
- Seek out input from peers, industry, and/or constituents and bring that input into Board deliberations
- Adhere to the Governance Charter

**Meeting Attendance**

Regular attendance and participation in board activities is required.

- Attend all quarterly Governing Board meetings
- Attend the two meetings of the full Continuum of Care per year
- Complete work undertaken on behalf of the CoC in a timely manner and be prepared to discuss matters presented for deliberation at quarterly meetings
- Designate an alternate delegate for instances when attending is not possible
- If a member has three (3) consecutive absences or 50% missed meetings in any 12-month period and fails to notify the chair, they will be deemed inactive and unable to vote until reinstated. The Executive Committee will contact inactive members on a quarterly basis. Members failing to meet the attendance and participation standard shall be subject to removal and replacement.

**Voting**

- Each member has one vote
- All decisions regarding Board planning, funding and governance must be formulated as a motion by active members of the Governing Board. Voting can only take place in the presence of a quorum (51% of members present)

- Decisions shall be by a simple majority vote, **except**, charter amendments and member termination decisions, which may only be decided by a two-thirds majority
- Email voting may be used for time-sensitive and/or critical votes, or in the event that an in-person vote may not be able to be held; these votes must be initiated by the Continuum of Care Lead Agency at the direction of the Governing Board Chair. At least 51 percent of the voting board membership must cast votes for an email vote to be accepted.

### **Terms**

Elected (i.e. not designated) Board members shall serve staggered terms of three years so that approximately one-third of members stand for election each year. In the Board's first year, newly-elected members shall draw lots to determine the length of their term—one, two, or three years.

Terms for elected Board members shall be renewable up to three times if desired by the member and approved by the Continuum of Care. Renewing terms shall be for three years.

## **CHARGE TO THE GOVERNING BOARD**

### **Provide Leadership**

- **Serve** as leader and change agent for preventing and ending homelessness in Ramsey County, driving local solutions and implementation
- **Designate** the Continuum of Care Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant for a four-year term, with annual review
- **Make** formal decisions for the CoC, with input from committees, membership, the Lead Agency/Collaborative Applicant, and others with expertise
- **Communicate** effectively with the CoC Membership and other key constituencies, such as the Ramsey County Board, the St. Paul City Council, and units of government on issues affecting people who are or who are at risk of being homeless
- **Hold** meetings of the full membership, with published agendas, at least semi-annually
- **Invite** new members of the public to join at least annually
- **Establish** a 4-6 person Nominating Committee each year to recruit Governing Board and Steering Committee members
- **Consider and Recommend** changes to the Governance Charter for full CoC based on Provider Forums, Consumer Forums, and CoC member feedback.

### **Provide Strategic Oversight and Direction**

- **Develop, monitor, and be held accountable for** implementation of the Strategic Framework
- **Monitor and evaluate** system-wide and individual program performance toward established goals, including HUD's System Performance Measures
- **Review and approve** policy and program recommendations created by the Steering Committee and other committees
- **Seek, secure, align and coordinate** State of Minnesota, philanthropic and other homeless assistance, and mainstream resources to achieve CoC objectives
- **Ensure** transparent governance within the Continuum of Care and address potential conflicts of interest
- **Delegate** activities to the Steering Committee and work groups to accomplish specific CoC objectives.

### **Ensure Effective Operation of the CoC**

**Direct** the Lead Agency, Steering Committee, and other Committees to:

- Coordinate the implementation of a housing and service system that meets the needs of the homeless individuals (including unaccompanied youth) and families. At a minimum, such system encompasses the following:
  - i. Outreach, engagement, and assessment
  - ii. Shelter, housing, and supportive services
  - iii. Prevention and diversion strategies
- Conduct a semi-annual gaps analysis of the homeless needs and services available
- Provide information required to complete the Consolidated Plan(s) within the Continuum's geographic area
- Follow all other requirements for operating a centralized intake/coordinated entry system as required by HUD

### **Review and Approve Funding Decisions**

The Governing Board is responsible for soliciting, aligning, and coordinating funding from a range of sources including Federal, State, local and philanthropic sources. These sources include the HUD CoC NOFA, as well as funds available for specific homeless populations (i.e. FHPAP, etc.) The steps below apply to the HUD CoC NOFA, specifically.

- **Program Evaluation:** Soon after the annual release of the HUD CoC NOFA, the Board shall receive a presentation describing relevant aspects of the NOFA and the proposed ranking process. Based upon recommendations from the Steering Committee and the CoC Coordinator, the Board shall adopt ranking criteria and a process for selecting and ranking projects for funding.
- **Ranking Process:** The Steering Committee will develop qualifications for and annually select no fewer than five (5) people to serve on the *CoC Ranking Working Group*. *The Ranking Working Group* will evaluate all proposals for inclusion in CoC funding applications. Steering Committee or Governing Board members may serve on the *Ranking Working Group*. Potential members will be asked to sign a conflict of interest disclosure form prior to participating. Representatives of organizations with new or renewal applications competing for funding are barred from participation on the *Ranking Working Group* or participating in Board voting on funding recommendations. *Ranking Working Group* members shall maintain confidentiality until after the Board decision on those recommendations. Based on recommendations from the *Ranking Working Group*, the Governing Board may reallocate Continuum of Care funding as permitted by the source of the funds.
- **Final Funding Decisions:** Recommendations from the *Ranking Work Group* will be submitted for questions, comments and approval by all Governing Board members who do not have a conflict of interest with any of the proposals submitted.
- **Appeals Process:** The Governing Board delegates to the Steering Committee responsibility for addressing any appeals to HUD CoC funding decisions. The Steering Committee will post and communicate the appeals process and ensure that it is fair and transparent.

**Statement of Commitment**

By my signature below, I commit to fulfill the duties as described in this document and to be an active and collaborative participant in the Continuum of Care.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Addendum 4**  
**STEERING COMMITTEE Expectations and Charge**

**OVERVIEW**

The Ramsey County Continuum of Care is responsible for planning and implementing the homeless response system in Ramsey County and carrying out the duties identified in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act and the Continuum of Care Interim Final Rule (24 CFR 578). The full CoC and Governing Board jointly establish the Steering Committee, which is responsible for formulating proposals and recommendations for the Governing Board. The Governing Board is the delegated authority and decision-making body for the Continuum of Care.

The Steering Committee consists of 25 people with intimate knowledge of the field, operations, and funding. The Continuum of Care elects 13 seats. Members elected by the CoC shall also represent the breadth of relevant organizations as considered for the Governing Board. The Governing Board appoints 12 seats, with priority given to senior staff from Governing Board member entities that fill designated seats. The Steering Committee must be racially diverse and include a range of stakeholders. A member of the Governing Board may also, in rare instances, be a member of the Steering Committee.

The Lead Agency will provide support to the Steering Committee including, but not limited to recording minutes, sending meeting notifications, preparing meeting materials, and providing relevant updates to the Steering Committee members.

**EXPECTATIONS**

**Qualifications**

- Hold a senior position with subject matter expertise in housing and homelessness issues
- Skilled at “managing up” to key decision-makers, to keep leadership informed and request action when appropriate
- Ability to carry out and lead activities, working groups, and discussions

**Meeting Attendance**

Regular attendance and participation in committee activities is required.

- Attend Steering Committee meetings (no more than monthly)
- Attend the two meetings of the full Continuum of Care per year
- Complete work undertaken on behalf of the CoC in a timely manner and be prepared to discuss matters presented for deliberation.
- If a member has three (3) consecutive absences or 50% missed meetings in any 12-month period and fails to notify the chair, they will be deemed inactive and unable to vote until reinstated. The Steering Committee’s Executive Committee will contact inactive members on a quarterly basis. Members failing to meet the attendance and participation standard shall be subject to removal and replacement.

**Voting/Forwarding Recommendations to Governing Board**

The primary role of the Steering Committee is to recommend certain actions, policies, etc. to the Governing Board. To make recommendations, the Steering Committee will vote per the following:

- Each member has one vote.
- Voting can only take place in the presence of a quorum (51% of members present)
- Email voting may be used for time-sensitive and/or critical votes or in the event that an in-person vote may not be able to be held; At least 51 percent of the voting board membership

must cast votes for an email vote to be accepted.

### **Terms**

Elected (i.e. not designated) Steering Committee members shall serve staggered terms of three years so that approximately one-third of members stand for election each year. In the Committee's first year, newly-elected members shall draw lots to determine the length of their term—one, two, or three years.

Terms shall be renewable up to three times if desired by the member and approved by the Continuum of Care. Renewing terms shall be for three years.

## **CHARGE TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE**

The Steering Committee operates between the high-level strategic leadership of the Governing Board and on-the-ground program implementation. Members ensure that the more detailed, ongoing work needed to operationalize and achieve the mission and vision of the Ramsey County CoC is implemented and members develop and bring forward recommendations for the Governing Board's consideration and action. The Steering Committee handles routine business, exercises oversight, and engages with designated entities as needed during months when the Governing Board does not convene. Key areas of work include:

### **Planning**

- **Create** a strategic framework for Governing Board adoption that includes annual goals consistent with strategic plan priorities and pillars
- **Identify** strategies to improve HUD System Performance Measures and other metrics
- **Facilitate** understanding and acceptance of best practices and share barriers and progress with community stakeholders
- **Advise and Review** semi-annual needs assessment and gap analysis of homelessness needs and services as prepared by Lead Agency

### **Performance Monitoring**

- **Advance** CoC project performance targets for Governing Board approval
- **Develop** a dashboard that is responsive to the Governing Board's needs, which will monitor and report on key metrics, including HUD System Performance Measures, on a monthly or quarterly basis
- **Review** and summarize for the Governing Board, the results of monitoring of CoC, ESG, and state-funded housing and prevention recipient and sub-recipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and review recommended actions against poor performers

### **Coordinated Entry**

- **Recommend** the documentation and policies necessary to establish and operate a Coordinated Entry system, in consultation with recipients of ESG funds
- **Report and translate** CE/HMIS data to the Governing Board to ensure an effective coordinated solution for homeless and near-homeless community members

### **HUD and State Funding**

- **Develop** ranking criteria and a process for selecting and ranking projects for HUD CoC and State FHPAP funding for Governing Board approval

- **Establish** a CoC Ranking Work Group each year with no fewer than five people who will evaluate all proposals for inclusion in CoC funding applications
- **Recommend** reallocations of CoC funding as permitted by funding source and as needed
- **Develop** recommendations to the CoC Governing Board for priorities for funding projects
- **Develop and post** appeals process to address any appeals to HUD funding decisions. Ensure process is fair and transparent

**Homeless Management Information Systems**

- **Review** a monitoring tool (in collaboration with the Governing Board, Evaluations Committee, the HMIS Lead Agency of the CoC) to ensure consistent participation of recipients/sub-recipients in HMIS
- **Review and revise** the HMIS policies and procedures, including a Data Quality Plan, Security Plan, and a Privacy Policy as requested by the HMIS Governing Board

**Committee Management**

- **Determine** the structure and focus of CoC committees and work groups and how they align with goals of the Strategic Framework
- **Review** and participate in the work of the CoC committees and work groups, including annual work plans for each group and quarterly updates to the Steering Committee that include progress on workplan; key challenges; and results
- **Designate a Steering Committee member to serve as Chair** each workgroup
- **Participate** in Nominating Committee to recruit and orient new Governing Board and Steering Committee members

**Miscellaneous**

- **Recommend** changes to the Governance Charter on an annual basis for consideration by the Governing Board
- **Receive** developer presentations and **Provide** developer letters of recommendation as requested and appropriate

**Statement of Commitment**

By my signature below, I commit to fulfill the duties as described in this document and to be an active and collaborative participant in the Continuum of Care.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_