

FINGER LAKES HOUSING CONSORTIUM CONTINUUM OF CARE GOVERNANCE CHARTER

The name of this unincorporated organization shall be the Finger Lakes Housing Consortium (FLHC) Continuum of Care (CoC), referred to by HUD as NY 513, FLHC CoC

I. PURPOSE OF THE FLHC CoC

The FLHC CoC is a membership planning and oversight body for the Wayne, Ontario, Seneca, and Yates Counties regional CoC located in the Finger Lakes of NY. The four counties comprising the FLHC CoC region are: Wayne, Ontario, Seneca, and Yates. The purpose of the FLHC CoC is to develop and implement strategies to help end homelessness in the CoC.

The FLHC CoC coordinates the community's policies, strategies, and activities toward ending homelessness. Its work includes gathering and analyzing information in order to determine the local needs of people experiencing homelessness, identifying and bridging gaps in housing and services, implementing strategic responses, educating the community on homeless issues, providing advice and input on the operations of homeless services, and measuring CoC performance.

The FLHC CoC Board, as constituted in Article IV of this charter, provides ongoing leadership, administrative oversight, and implementation responsibility for fulfilling the purposes of the CoC, including the responsibilities set forth in Article II of this charter. All FLHC CoC procedures and processes will be transparent, inclusive and democratic in nature; special attention will be paid to these values in the recruitment of FLHC CoC members and making funding decisions.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FLHC CoC

The responsibilities of the FLHC CoC include:

A. OPERATING THE FLHC CoC

- Hold meetings of the full membership, with published agendas at least four times per year.
- Develop, follow, and update this governance charter, which will include all procedures and policies needed to comply with HUD requirements and with HMIS requirements, including a code of conduct and recusal process for the FLHC CoC Board, its chair(s), and any person acting on behalf of the CoC Board at least once every five years.
- In consultation with recipients of Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds within the CoC's geographic area, establish and operate either a centralized or coordinated assessment system that provides an initial, comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services.
- In consultation with recipients of ESG funds within the CoC, establish and consistently follow written standards for providing CoC assistance. At minimum these standards must include:
 - Policies and procedures for evaluating individual's and families' eligibility for assistance;
 - Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive transitional housing assistance;
 - Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible families and individuals will receive rapid re-housing assistance;
 - Standards for determining what percentage or amount of rent each program participant must pay while receiving rapid re-housing assistance; and
 - Policies and procedures for determining which eligible individuals and families will

receive permanent supportive housing assistance

- Consult with recipients and sub-recipients to establish performance targets appropriate for population and program type.
- Educate the community on homeless issues.
- For CoC and ESG funded projects, establish performance targets appropriate for population and program type in consultation with recipients and sub-recipients, then monitor performance, evaluate outcomes and report to HUD.
- Provide technical assistance and support to underperforming projects; take action against ESG and CoC projects that perform poorly.

B. FLHC CoC PLANNING

- Coordinate the implementation of a housing and service system within the CoC's geographic area that meets the needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness. At a minimum, such a system encompasses the following:
 - Outreach, engagement, and assessment.
 - Shelter, housing, and supportive services (supportive services include, but are not limited to mental health, substance abuse, medical services).
 - Prevention strategies (preventing an episode of homelessness).
- Develop strategies to end homelessness locally, based on the consideration of documented best practices, local needs and gaps, innovations in programs and service delivery, and available and potential resources.
- Plan for and conduct an annual point-in-time count of persons experiencing homelessness within the FLHC CoC geographic area that meets HUD requirements, including a housing inventory of shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing reserved for persons who are homeless, in general, and persons who are chronically homeless and veterans experiencing homelessness, specifically, as HUD requires.
- Conduct an annual gaps analysis of the needs of people experiencing homelessness, as compared to available housing and services within the CoC geographic area.
- Provide information that demonstrates consistency with the State Consolidated Plan.

C. DESIGNATING AND OPERATING A HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (HMIS)

- Designate a single HMIS for the CoC's geography, and an eligible applicant to serve as the CoC's HMIS lead agency.
- Review, revise and approve a FLHC CoC HMIS data privacy plan, data security plan, and data quality plan.
- Ensure that the HMIS is administered in compliance with HUD requirements.
- Ensure consistent participation by FLHC CoC and ESG recipients and sub-recipients in the HMIS.

D. PREPARING AN APPLICATION FOR FLHC CoC FUNDS

- Establish the local process for applying, reviewing and prioritizing project applications for funding in the annual HUD Homeless Assistance CoC Grants competition.
- Establish priorities that align with local and federal policies for recommending projects for HUD Homeless Assistance CoC Grant funding.
- Designate an eligible collaborative applicant to collect and combine the required application information from all applicants.
- Determine whether to select the collaborative applicant to apply for Unified Funding Agency designation from HUD.
- Approve the final submission of ranked applications in response to the CoC Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

III. FLHC CoC MEMBERSHIP

The FLHC CoC will publish and appropriately disseminate an open invitation at least annually for persons within the CoC area to join as new CoC members. Recruitment efforts will be documented by the FLHC CoC.

The FLHC CoC will identify and address membership gaps in essential sectors, from key providers or other vital stakeholders. The FLHC CoC will recruit members to ensure that it meets all membership requirements set forth in its governance charter, including representation of homeless sub-populations and certain organizations. Specifically, outreach will be conducted to obtain membership from the following groups as they exist within the FLHC CoC geographic area and are available to participate in the CoC: non-profit homeless assistance providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, behavioral health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcements, organizations that serve veterans, individuals who or who have been homeless and other relevant organizations within the FLHC CoC's geography.

The membership year will be from ^{January} 1 through December 31. Members in good standing must attend at least 67% of scheduled meetings.

Membership Meetings:

- Full membership of the FLHC CoC will meet at least quarterly.
- An annual schedule of meetings will be established. A reminder notice of the place, date and time of meetings will be emailed to members at least five days prior to the meeting date along with the agenda.
- Meeting agenda will at minimum include a report on the FLHC CoC's activities, committee reports, funding and progress toward meeting goals.
- The Annual Meeting will be held the last meeting of the year, December.

Quorum and Voting:

The members present at any properly announced meeting of the FLHC CoC will constitute a quorum. Issues presented to the CoC that require a vote will be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast and only one vote per agency will be allowed.

Member Qualifications and Responsibilities:

All members of the FLHC CoC shall affirm a professional interest in, or personal commitment to, addressing and alleviating the impacts of homelessness on the people of the community. Members must exercise care, diligence and prudence when acting on behalf of the FLHC CoC.

In addition to being a FLHC CoC member in good standing (Section III), each member must also:

- Sign a conflict of interest disclosure statement.
- Collaborate with other members to work toward the FLHC CoC mission and goals.
- Abide by the FLHC CoC Charter, policies, procedures, and code of conduct.
- If representing a certain sector of homeless services or prevention, solicit input from others in that sector to ensure their voices are represented.
- Participate in FLHC CoC activities including but not limited to committee membership, the Point-in-Time count, HMIS oversight, strategic planning, advocacy and public education efforts, project and system performance reviews, and the application processes for CoC Homeless Assistance Grants and other funding proposals.

- Complete work that has been agreed to on a timely basis

IV. FLHC CoC BOARD

The FLHC CoC will be governed by a Board which will provide oversight and accountability for all FLHC CoC responsibilities. Except for those responsibilities assigned to the FLHC CoC membership, the Board will act on behalf of the FLHC CoC to fulfill the regulatory duties of a CoC. The Board will be responsible for approval and implementation of all CoC policies and procedures, establish CoC Standing and Ad Hoc Committees and setting agendas for CoC Board and CoC full membership meetings. The Board is empowered to act on behalf of the full FLHC CoC Membership between meetings of the full membership, in cases of emergency or as directed by the Board. Board members will be elected by the full membership at the Annual Meeting.

The FLHC CoC Board will make recommendations to the CoC membership for approval of:

- Appointment of the CoC Collaborative Applicant
- Appointment of the HMIS Lead Agency
- Designation of the HMIS Vendor as the single HMIS system for the geographic area

Board Membership

This list of no less than 6 and no more than 9 Board members will represent all four counties and will be selected from this list:

- Homeless Service Providers and Non-profits that serve homeless
- County Departments of Social Services
- Housing Providers

The Board must include government and non-government representation. The Board must include at least one representative from the CoC Collaborative Agency and the HMIS Lead Agency and one formerly homeless person. Board members will serve staggered terms of three years so approximately one-third of the CoC Board will stand for election each year. There are no term limits. Board members will be elected by the full membership of the CoC at the Annual Meeting and must attend at least 75% of scheduled meetings.

No organization may have more than one representative on the CoC Board at any time. Individuals elected to the Board should have the authority to represent their respective agencies/bodies. Board members may have non-voting proxies attend meetings in their place.

Quorum and Voting:

A quorum for FLHC CoC Board action is a simple majority of its members. CoC Board action is subject to review and approval by the full membership at its next regular meeting. Each seat shall have one vote.

Removal:

If a FLHC CoC Board Member is absent from more than 25% of the regular CoC Board meetings in a calendar year, that person will be administratively removed from the CoC Board.

A Board Member may also be removed for cause from the Board upon a 2/3 vote of the remaining Board members. If a Board member wishes to resign, the Board member shall submit a letter of resignation to the President.

Board Officers:

The FLHC CoC Board's Officers shall consist of: one (1) President, one (1) Vice President, and

one (1) Secretary/Treasurer. The outgoing President shall serve on Board as Immediate Past President for one year following the expiration of his/her term as President. The Board Officers will be elected to two year terms by the CoC Board.

A Board Officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the CoC Board President or Secretary. A vacancy may be filled for the remainder of the term by a majority vote at any meeting where there is a quorum.

President and Vice-President: Responsible for scheduling meetings, developing meeting agendas and facilitating the CoC Board and CoC Membership meetings. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President assumes the duties of the President.

Secretary: Take accurate minutes at all FLHC CoC Board and CoC Membership meetings or designating another person to do so. Assure that meeting minutes and agendas are emailed to membership and/or posted on website.

V. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Any individual participating in or influencing decisions must identify actual or perceived conflicts of interest as they arise and comply with the letter and spirit of this policy. A financial conflict of interest is broadly defined to include a conflict by any CoC or CoC Board Member with any other Director(s), professional employment and groups, funding sources, and vendors, and with members of their immediate family or significant others. Disclosure should occur at the earliest possible time and, if possible, prior to the discussion of any such issues. Individuals with a conflict of interest shall abstain from both discussion and voting on any issues in which they may have a conflict. An individual with a conflict who is the Board chair shall yield that position during discussion and abstain from voting on the item. Decisions by the Board must be justifiable as being in the best interests of the FLHC CoC. Minutes of meetings involving possible conflicts of interest shall record such disclosure, abstention, and rationale for approval.

VI. MEETING PROCEEDINGS

FLHC CoC Board Meetings and CoC meetings shall be open to any interested party.

Meetings will ordinarily be conducted in an informal matter, but may be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, revised edition, as deemed appropriate by the President. The Board will refer to Roberts Rules of Order whenever a process is needed to conduct business. Meeting procedures for Board meetings must provide an opportunity for all Board members present to be heard and for the efficient conduct of business. Meeting procedures for CoC meetings must provide an opportunity for all present to be heard and for the efficient conduct of business.

Minutes of FLHC CoC Board and CoC full membership meetings shall be taken by the Secretary or his/her designee and shall be made available prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting along with the agenda. Interested parties may also request copies of meeting minutes once prepared for the CoC membership.

VII. COMMITTEES AND WORKGROUPS

The FLHC CoC Board will appoint committees, subcommittees, or workgroups to fulfill the work of the CoC. Much of the CoC's work is conducted at committee and workgroup meetings.

Standing committees will include:

- CoC Application/Project Selection Committee

- Coordinated Intake, Assessment, and HMIS Advisory Committee
- Strategic Planning/Needs Assessment
- Project Monitoring Committee

The FLHC CoC Board may also create time-limited ad-hoc committees to develop recommended solutions to the specific issue for which they were created.

Committees and work groups will be open to CoC members and individuals with expertise in relevant areas. Committees and work groups will submit their findings and recommendations to the CoC Board for further action and shared with the CoC membership. The chair of each committee must be a CoC member.

IX. AMENDMENT AND REVIEW

The FLHC CoC will review, update, and approve this governance charter at least annually. Amendment of the Charter requires a majority vote of the CoC at a regularly scheduled meeting of the CoC, provided that notice of the scheduled vote on the charter amendment was provided at least two weeks prior to that CoC meeting.