

**OUT-WAYNE COUNTY HOMELESS SERVICES COALITION  
OPERATING PRINCIPLES/GOVERNANCE CHARTER**

Adopted: January 7, 2014

Amended: *April 1, 2014*

**Article I – Name**

The Out-Wayne County Homeless Services Coalition is a non-incorporated membership organization without IRS or legal status.

**Article II – Mission**

The Mission of the Out-Wayne County Homeless Services Coalition is to eliminate homelessness in Out-Wayne County. Toward this end, the Coalition identifies and addresses the economic and social policies at the local, state and national levels that contribute to homelessness and works to improve the capacity of all community partners to help homeless and imminently homeless persons expeditiously secure safe, sanitary affordable permanent housing.

**Article III – Purpose**

- A. The Out-Wayne County Homeless Services Coalition (hereafter referred to as “the Coalition”) shall plan and implement a coordinated community-based process of identifying the housing and service needs of individuals and families that are homeless or at-risk of homelessness in Wayne County and build a system of housing and services to address those needs.
- B. The Coalition shall prepare and submit an annual application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on behalf of the entire Continuum of Care.
- C. The Coalition shall support, promote and participate in the collection of data utilizing the Homeless Management Information System. The data will be collected by member agencies and used to better understand homelessness, identify potential unmet needs, educate the community and as a tool to advocate for additional resources and community support to meet Coalition goals. Agencies who serve victims of Domestic Violence will utilize a comparable data collection system.
- D. The Coalition shall provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers and state and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness; and optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
- E. The Coalition shall evaluate the outcomes of projects for which funds are awarded in Out-Wayne County including the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program.

- F. The Coalition shall pursue funding opportunities to support the achievement of its mission and goals.
- G. The Coalition shall support the centralized intake Housing Assessment and Resource Agency (HARA) model.
- H. The Coalition shall plan for and conduct at least a biennial point-in-time count of homeless persons within the geographic area.
- I. The Coalition will utilize the community assessment conducted by Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency (WMCAA) to identify gaps in the services available within the geographic area, providing information necessary to complete consolidated plans when requested.
- J. The Coalition shall establish and operate a centralized or coordinated assessment system that provides an initial, comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services in the geographic area and promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families.

#### **Article IV – Membership**

- A. The membership of the Coalition shall be open to all interested community members or organizations. It is the expectation of the Coalition that all housing provider agencies will participate in the Coalition process.
- B. The Coalition membership shall include representatives of organizations including nonprofit homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and homeless and formerly homeless persons.
- C. WMCAA will operate as the collaborative applicant to apply for a grant from HUD on behalf of the Continuum that the collaborative application represents.

#### **Article V – Facilitation**

- A. The Coalition shall have a facilitator who serves at the pleasure of members in good standing.
- B. The Coalition facilitator shall be chosen in December by a simple majority of members in good standing present at the December meeting to serve a term of two years beginning in January of the following year with no term limit.
- C. Should the facilitator be unable to fulfill their duties, a successor will be chosen by a simple majority of members in good standing to complete the term.

## **Article VI – Membership**

- A. All in attendance are considered members.
- B. Members (individuals and organizations) are considered having good-standing status if all of the following apply: up-to-date paid dues (dues cover the calendar year January through December), attended eight of the past 12 Coalition meetings and serve as a member of one committee.
- C. Members shall provide guidance on overall policy issues; oversight of sub-committees, including recommending their creation and dissolution; the review and approval of sub-committee goals and objectives, and oversight of the development of the Continuum of Care plan.
- D. Meeting agendas and minutes will be posted on the Coalition website.

## **Article VII – Committees**

- A. The following Committees shall be recognized as part of the Coalition organizational and planning structure:
  - 1. Political/Corporate Outreach - Identify existing political/corporate relationships and gaps and address those gaps through a coordinated outreach strategy that engages these partners in coalition activities and events.
  - 2. Communication - Expand and coordinate communication between members and the public regarding issues related to homelessness and the work of the Coalition through publications and outreach. Promote community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness.
  - 3. Mental Health/Substance Abuse - Engage mental health and substance abuse providers in the coalition and improve the provision of mental health and substance abuse services to homeless persons.
  - 4. Project Homeless Connect – Coordinate annual Project Homeless Connect events.
  - 5. Homeless Awareness Week – Awards Luncheon – Coordinate homeless awareness week awards breakfast/luncheon.
  - 6. Homeless Awareness Week tour - Coordinate homeless awareness week tour (when applicable).
  - 7. Data Quality – Monitor the data quality and system performance.
  - 8. ESG – Monitor ESG program design, implementation and performance.

- B. Each committee shall have a lead person selected by the respective committee members. The lead person shall be generally responsible for the formation and dissemination of agenda items, minutes, and the preparation of summary reports to the Coalition.
- C. Committees can be added as need and circumstance dictates.

**Article VIII – Board/Advisory Panel**

- A. The Board/Advisory Panel may include but not be limited to those who:
  - 1. Are or have experienced homelessness.
  - 2. Provide services and/or housing to homeless individuals and families and subpopulations that include but are not limited to: veterans, persons living with HIV/AIDS, chronically homeless, mentally-ill/dually-diagnosed, victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking and runaway and homeless youth.
  - 3. Do not represent a HUD and/or MSHDA-funded organization.
- B. The Board/Advisory Panel shall be comprised of an odd-number of members of no less than three but not to exceed a total of seven.
- C. Each member organization in good standing will be eligible to nominate a Board/Advisory Panel member. Four of the first class of members will serve for three years. Three of the first class will serve for two years. Thereafter, all members will serve for a term of not less than two years with no term limit (terms begin January 1).
- D. A representative from each member organization in good standing will choose the members of the Board/Advisory Panel by unanimous decision. Members in good standing will replace Advisory Panel members as required.
- E. The Board/Advisory Panel will choose a chair who will serve for a term not to exceed two consecutive years.
- F. The Coalition will select a Board/Advisory Panel liaison that will function in that capacity for a term of two years with no term limit. The Coalition will select a liaison in December to begin his/her term in January of the following year.

## **Article IX – Resignation**

- A. Committee members may resign their committee membership by submitting a written resignation to the Chair of their committee. If so desired, a replacement member will be appointed by the Chair and will fulfill the remainder of the original member’s term.
- B. A committee Chair may resign by notifying, in writing, all committee members about his or her intent to do so. A replacement will be selected by committee members.

## **Article X – Meetings**

- A. Coalition meetings will be held the first Tuesday of each month (unless noted in meeting minutes) at the WMCAA Administrative Offices, 2121 Biddle Suite 102, Wyandotte Michigan. The meetings will commence at 9:30 am and end at 11 am.
- B. Coalition Committee meetings will be held as required and necessary.
- C. The Board/Advisory Panel will meet on an as-needed basis but at minimum quarterly.

## **Article XI - Voting and Decision Making**

- A. All members present at any given meeting will be allowed to vote on non-funding-related issues including the adoption of this Operating Principles (governance charter).
- B. Voting protocol on funding-related issues is as follows when applicable:
  - 1. When applicable, projects (new and renewal) will submit pre-applications to all members for review. Members must be in good standing to be considered for funding.
  - 2. When applicable, projects will be ranked by members based on funding guidelines and thresholds.
  - 3. Members in good standing (one vote per organization) will vote on final ranking (simple majority).
  - 4. Members in good standing (one vote per organization) will vote on funding (project and non-project related) issues (simple majority).

5. Final project rankings and associated project funding recommendations will be presented by the Coalition liaison to the Board/Advisory Panel for final approval. The Advisory Panel will approve by a simple majority. Advisory panel members must recuse themselves from voting on funding decisions for any organization of which any of the following apply:
  - Currently, or formerly, an employee (either salaried or contractual) of the organization
  - Currently, or formerly, a volunteer of the organization
  - Currently, or formerly, a member of the Board of Directors of the organization
  - Have received, or a family member, is a current or former recipient of services provided by the organization
6. The Facilitator may ask members to approve a project-funding protocol based on funding guidelines, timelines, priorities and thresholds.
7. *The Facilitator will be responsible for the coordination, compilation and submission of all consolidated applications for funding.*

## **Article XII - Amendment and Adoption of Operating Principles**

- A. Proposed alterations, amendments, or additions to these Operating Principles may be initiated by any member. Proposed alterations, amendments, or additions shall be presented in writing to the Coalition Facilitator at least two weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting or special meeting at which the changes are to be considered. Changes to the Operating Principles shall require a simple majority vote of all possible voting members.
- B. These operating principles will be reviewed, updated, and approved at least every five years.