

# Seattle-King County Continuum of Care Board

## Application Form

Please complete the entire form and email to [CoC.Questions@kcrha.org](mailto:CoC.Questions@kcrha.org)

### Full Name and Pronouns:

Tamara Bauman (she/her)

### Preferred Contact Information:

Phone:	+1 (206) 334-3318
Email Address:	tbauman@solid-ground.org
Preferred Method of Contact: (Circle One)	Email
Zip code:	98168-4021
Are you able to commit up to 15 hours a month for the 2 year duration? (Circle One)	Yes

### Question 1: Please describe your understanding of a Continuum of Care (CoC).

CoC's are federally mandated entities responsible for the oversight and administration of homeless response systems across the country. Responsibilities include but are not limited to annual NOFO application and submission; HMIS governance; oversight of System Performance and Coordinated Entry Committees.

### Question 2: What motivates you to be on the CoC Board?

Please share your specific field of interest related to the CoC.

As I've been on the Board for the past 3.5 years, I would relish the opportunity to continue leading the work on incorporating #Wellbeing as a design principle in our system rebid and project evaluation activities. I am motivated by a firm belief that housing is a human right and not a privilege or a commodity! I hope to participate in the redesign of our systems by contributing insights gained from my own lived experience of homelessness and domestic violence as well as my expertise as a service provider. In partnership with the larger community, I hope to actualize a more equitable and effective homeless response system that shares power with those experiencing homelessness and defers to this group of experts when policy decisions are made. Ultimately, I am motivated to see an end to homelessness and the industrialization of this particular humanitarian crisis. I believe we can do that through cross-sector collaboration, innovation, centering lived experience, and a commitment to transformative justice, anti-oppression, and liberation for all communities.

**Question 3: What skills and experiences will you bring or draw upon as a member of the CoC Board?**

Please list any experiences or familiarity you have with accessing homeless housing services or program delivery, funding, the Continuum of Care, or other relevant skills.

As a frontline service provider of 17+ years, I deliver care and support to our various communities. In doing so, I have observed the adverse impact of discriminatory housing policies and practices on program participants, particularly immigrant and BIPOC communities. I advocate fiercely for the people I serve, meaning I will challenge and push back on systems that don't align with fair housing or landlord-tenant laws. For example, I've had to educate landlords and property management companies on fair housing laws as they relate to early lease termination for DV survivors; applicants' rights to individualized assessments when criminal history is cited as a reason for denial; and identifying local and federal protections for protected classes of people seeking/maintaining housing. Therefore, it is essential that program participants and service providers alike stay current on local and federal laws in order to effectively navigate housing and proximate systems. I have been described as a "tenacious justice seeker" and I completely identify with that description. I am not afraid to question, dispute, or challenge systems or people that reinforce structural racism or obstruct a participant's path to housing stability. I believe my on-the-ground experience, lived expertise, and human rights orientation can provide a unique perspective in developing policy recommendations and creating curricula for public education.

**Question 4: Describe your vision or understanding of a successful CoC Board.**

A successful CoC Board is multi-cultural and representative of various communities throughout King County. That CoC will embrace values of collaboration, accountability, healing justice, transformative justice, and a strong commitment to developing community driven solutions. I imagine a group of visionaries working together to incorporate the wisdom and insight of lived and living experience of homelessness into system redesign efforts. I believe our policy development activities must be rooted in a strong commitment to social and racial justice, collective impact, and building community power.

In developing policy recommendations, the CoC Board must also consider the intersecting social and economic conditions that allow homelessness, poverty, and inequity to thrive. Structural racism, state sanctioned violence, criminalization of homelessness, gentrification, employment and housing discrimination, etc are drivers of inequity, which reinforces a perverse power dynamic that punishes vulnerable people for simply trying to survive in a hostile world.

CoC Board members must resist complacency, despite political and social pressure to conform to the status quo "business as usual" response to homelessness. Most importantly, the CoC Board must be unrelenting in its mission to end homelessness by reframing the problem as a human rights issue requiring innovative, solutions-oriented brain power.

**Question 5: Describe your leadership experiences.**

For example, other boards you have been a part of, community groups or leadership activities.

In addition to serving on this Board for the past 3 years, I have also served as co-chair for our CoC's System Performance Committee. Most importantly, I have introduced our CoC to Full Frame Initiative's Wellbeing Blueprint, which will serve as the roadmap for community and systems transformation. In particular, we are currently developing new local metrics that will speak to the importance of uniting around a universal truth and that is: we are all hardwired to pursue things that support our wellbeing. Housing is foundational to our wellbeing and cannot be separated from other basic needs that are essential to our survival.

In developing new local metrics, my objective will be to develop a tool that shifts power to folx with lived and living experience who can then use the tool to "audit" the system. In turn, we will train contract monitors and auditors on the fundamentals of applying a wellbeing analysis to project evaluations. This is where the leadership lies—in the hands of people most impacted by policies and practices that contribute to the homelessness crisis.

**Question 6: How does systemic racism impact housing and the root causes of homelessness?**

History and research have demonstrated how discriminatory policies, such as redlining, the Indian Removal Act, Jim Crow laws, etc have had an enduring traumatic impact on BIPOC communities. Today, we see these laws and policies reflected in the overrepresentation of BIPOC households in the homeless response system. We also see race-based disproportionalities in our carceral system, unemployment/underemployment of BIPOC individuals, evictions--particularly for Black women, racial profiling, racial disparities in healthcare, wealth generation, the criminal legal system, anti-immigrant rhetoric and a myriad of other ways in which communities of color experience injustice.

The social and racial disparities in these systems reflect interdependent root causes of homelessness for BIPOC communities. These systems, policies, and practices converge to uphold a legacy of white supremacy that continues to permeate our society, including the human services industry.

**Question 6: Reviewing the Theory of Change what is one way you apply this theory in your everyday life and work? Briefly, describe how you will center the theory of change on the Board and how you plan to uplift the communities you represent and support.**

**KCRHA Theory of Change:**

If we create a homeless response system that centers people with lived experience, then we will be able to focus on responding to needs and eliminating inequities, in order to end homelessness for all.

The Theory of Change resonates very deeply with me. I have and will continue to amplify the voices of those with lived/living experiences in program design, funding/resource allocations (shoutout to NOFO team), and policy development work. In my role as a RRH Advocate, I have supported and encouraged participants to speak their truth through civic engagement and leadership development activities. A few of the participants I've worked with have been featured in news articles, participated in Townhalls and end-of-year campaigns, and written blog articles for our organization---all of these folx have reported feeling invigorated by their experience of speaking truth to power!

To be sure, it is not enough to solicit feedback from program participants, system partners, or nonprofit leaders. Real and meaningful systems change must be informed and led by those who have or are currently experiencing homelessness.

Our systems, policies, funding decisions must be adaptable and flexible to accommodate the varied, complex needs of the communities we serve.

**Question 6: Optional: Is there any resource you would need in order to fully participate as a CoC Board Member?**

No

**Affiliation (please note any that apply):**

Lived experience of homelessness (circle)	Yes
Public or Private Funder (circle); If yes, please note organization	No Organization:
Intersecting System – i.e. Behavioral Health, Child Welfare, Criminal Justice, etc. (circle); If yes, please note system & organization	No System & Organization:
Faith Based Organization or Partner	No
Homeless Housing and/or Service Provider (circle) If yes, please note organization)	Yes Organization: Solid Ground
Any other affiliations you'd like to note:	Yes

**Sub-Population Representation (please check any areas in which you have specific experience or expertise):**

Youth/Young Adults, Families, Chronic Homelessness, Domestic Violence, Immigrant and Refugees, American Indian/Alaska Native/Indigenous Communities, Black/African American Communities

**Region (please check any areas in which you have specific experience or expertise):**

Regional (King County - Non-specific)

**Identity (optional):**

How do you identify your race?	Pacific Islander
Sexual Orientation	Straight
Age	44
Disability Status	yes--mental health condition + complex trauma

**Agreement and Signature**

**I affirm that my application responses are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.**

Name ( <i>typed or signature</i> )	web-form@smartsheet.com
Date	05/03/24 8:43 PM

**When you have completed this form, please submit the final to the KCRHA at [CoC.Questions@kcrha.org](mailto:CoC.Questions@kcrha.org). Thank you!**