Seattle-King County Continuum of Care Governance Charter

Amended: October 2024
Approved January 29, 2025, by majority vote of CoC members
Note: Any amendments other than fixing grammatical or formatting errors must go back in front of the CoC membership for approval.

I. Overview

This Seattle/King County Continuum of Care Governance Charter (Charter) establishes the governance structure for the Seattle/King County Continuum of Care (CoC) in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (as amended), and 24 CFR 578 and in accordance with state and local law.

The Seattle/King County CoC (WA-500) covers the entirety of King County, including all incorporated municipalities, tribal lands, and unincorporated areas within the county's geographic boundaries.

Included within the CoC's jurisdictional boundaries are the units of local government that directly receive Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) funding from the federal government, including the Washinton State Department of Commerce, King County, and the City of Seattle. The CoC and ESG grantees have a statutory requirement under the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act to coordinate planning and service delivery.

This Charter establishes the roles of the CoC Board[1], Committees, and Workgroups, that are representative of the relevant organizations serving homeless populations within the CoC's geographic area (WA-500). Further, this Charter designates delegates authority for certain regulatory responsibilities within the geographic area to specific committees and required designated roles – the Collaborative Applicant, Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) Lead entity, and Coordinated Entry (CE) Lead entity

In addition to this charter, there are policy and procedure documents outlining the specific processes, protocols and expectations for overall CoC Written Standards, HMIS, CE, and ESG Standards.

II. Duration

This Charter shall be adopted on the day it is approved by the current CoC Membership.

Thereafter, the Charter shall be updated and affirmed annually by the Seattle/King County Continuum of Care Membership in consultation with the CoC Board, Collaborative Applicant and the HMIS Lead.

[1] For the purpose of this document, the Continuum of Care (CoC) Board will be referred to as the CoC Board but is the same entity and has the same duties as the Advisory Committee per the language established in the Interlocal Agreement (ILA), amended November 7, 2024, between King County and the City of Seattle that established the King County Regional Homelessness Authority.

III. Mission, Values and Theory of Change

The mission of the CoC is to make homelessness in the region rare, brief, and non-recurring. To accomplish this mission, the CoC is adopting a set of values that will guide its actions and a theory of change that will orient the CoC in specific ways towards its mission.

The CoC (through the Board, Committees, and designated entities) will endeavor to make funding, program and policy actions that are aligned with its stated values. These values will guide the actions of all CoC bodies established under this Charter:

a. Recommendations and decisions will reflect the people impacted by homelessness and housing systems.
b. The CoC will promote belonging for high-need communities affected by homelessness.
c. Decisions and recommendations made by the CoC will reflect a cross-sector and regional approach.
d. The CoC will operate with transparency.
e. The CoC will promote shared responsibility and accountability.
f. The CoC will establish clearly defined roles and responsibilities of governance and communicate decisions clearly and widely.

While values help to guide the development of specific recommendations and decisions that are presented to the CoC Board, a theory of change is necessary to provide a broad framework for how the work of the CoC orients towards the mission.

This theory of change was developed by the community, in concert with National Innovation Service and is consistent with the theory of change adopted by the King County Regional Homelessness Authority. The theory of change requires the CoC to approach the system resources it controls in a specific way, with the understanding that this orientation is aimed at specific results.

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

The principle of centering voices of people with lived experience are integral to the work of the CoC. Therefore, any changes to the stated mission on behalf of the CoC must be approved by the Participant Advisory Council and Youth Action Board prior to coming to the Board for final approval.

IV. Governance and Responsibilities

The CoC is a broad coalition of community members and organizations dedicated to the mission of the CoC. This includes people with lived and living experience of homelessness, those currently accessing services, service providers representing various populations and interventions, funders, the faith community, researchers and universities, health care providers and others.

A. CoC Membership

Members of the CoC shall be those organizations and individuals who live or work within King County and are interested in, and supportive of, our community's goals to end homelessness.

i. Invitation to Join

The CoC will make an invitation for new members to join publicly available at least annually. Membership registration and key information will be available throughout the year on the relevant CoC webpage.

ii. Membership Meetings

The full CoC membership shall meet at least twice a year. This may include an annual conference and/or other meetings for the purpose of approving necessary documents, confirmation of new CoC Board members, or to review progress towards approved plans/milestones. These meetings are open to the full CoC membership. Agendas and meeting materials will be available on the CoC website.

Meetings may be called by the CoC Board or by the designated Collaborative Applicant, HMIS Lead, and Coordinated Entry operator for it to complete required administrative duties. The CoC Board will designate a planning body – a committee or ad-hoc workgroup – to plan and execute membership meetings. A delegated board workgroup and Collaborative Applicant staff are responsible for identifying agenda items for each membership meeting. The Collaborative Applicant staff execute the meetings and will circulate/post meeting agendas and relevant meeting materials ahead of each meeting.

iii. Membership Requirements

In order for an organization or individual to become, and remain a member of the CoC they must:

- Register to become a member.
- Maintain a minimum attendance of one full membership meeting a year.
- Adhere to the Mission, Values, Policies and Procedures of the CoC, HMIS, and CE.

iv. Membership Levels & Voting

CoC membership will have two levels:

a. Individuals, who will have one, vote, and
b. Organizations, which will have one vote with an individual representative.
    a. Representatives of organizations will not have voting power as an individual during a vote.
    b. No organization may have staff or board members make a majority of a vote.

v. Role and Responsibilities

1. CoC Members vote to designate the following:
    - Collaborative Applicant
    - HMIS Lead
    - Coordinated Lead
2. CoC Members vote to approve CoC Board Members.
    - A super-majority vote of 60 percent of those present and voting shall be required to approve board members.
3. CoC Members vote to approve the CoC Charter and CoC Policies and Procedures.
    - The CoC Charter will be reviewed annually and updated as needed.

4. Updating of the CoC's policies and procedures, as needed, will be done in consultation with ESG recipients within the CoC's service area.
    - A simple majority vote of those present and voting shall be required to approve amendments to the CoC Charter and CoC Policies and Procedures.

B. CoC Board

i. Purpose

The CoC Board serves as the Continuum's decision-making body, weighing recommendations, evidence, and community voice to approve funding, guide policy, and set the direction of the homeless response system. This allows for a strong connection between regional efforts towards making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring and the administration of federal CoC program funding, while preserving the integrity of the CoC Application process and compliance with HUD administrative rules and requirements.

The CoC Board will perform two main functions:

1. It will function as the CoC Board for actions required under the HUD regulations at 24 CFR §578, including approval of committee recommendations that do not have non-CoC fund appropriation.

2. It will apprise the Governing Board on policy and technical issues on which it has made decisions, and forward for approval any committee recommendations that it identifies as sensitive or political in nature, or for which it does not have decision-making authority.

ii. Open Decision Making and CoC Board Authority

CoC Board meetings are open to the public, in compliance with and to the extent required by the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 42.30 RCW, as amended, in concert with policies and procedures adopted by the CoC Board. Public input will be accepted via email and during time allocated on the agenda at regular board meetings. Meetings will strive for consensus and will allow sufficient time for discussion, so each person has a fair chance to be heard and issues can be understood.

The CoC Board co-chairs and Collaborative Applicant staff are responsible for identifying agenda items for each Board meeting based on work of the designated entity and in the committees ready to be elevated to the Board for discussion or action. Board members may also bring forward agenda items, with the Board co-chairs responsible for finalizing Board meeting agendas and determining time allocations for each topic. The Collaborative Applicant will provide support to the Board co-chairs to circulate/post meeting agendas and relevant meeting materials ahead of each meeting.

Draft minutes of the CoC Board meetings shall be available within three business days. Approved minutes are posted publicly on the CoC's website.

a. Only seated CoC Board members may vote on CoC business. Where substantial differences of opinion exist, the final report shall make an effort to reflect the divergence of views.
b. Decisions may be made only when a quorum, defined as a simple majority, of the seated CoC Board is present.
c. Board actions require approval by a majority of members present. No votes may be taken unless a quorum is present.
d. CoC Board members will have expertise in areas related to housing and homelessness, or related fields. While the CoC Board will receive recommendations from designated entities, committees or workgroups for specific policy and program decisions, it is authorized to make final decisions that are based on their own expertise and experience, which may be independent of recommendations provided.
e. Decisions made by the CoC Board in cases where there is a disagreement between the Participant Advisory Council/Youth Action Board and another committee may be appealed to the CoC Board by the Chair of the impacted committee or Participant Advisory Council/Youth Action Board.

f. CoC Board members are strongly encouraged to attend in person. Meetings will be hybrid when possible.
g. The CoC Board has authority to adopt revisions to the Charter in order to comply with HUD CoC Program regulations as detailed in 24 CFR 578.7.
h. The CoC Board approves the local process for the annual CoC application to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), including establishing annual priorities and ranking (see Committees).

iii. Commitment

Unless otherwise provided by written agreement, any CoC Board member may resign at any time by giving written notice. In addition, the CoC Board co-chairs may remove members for repeated absence, misconduct, or violation of conflict-of-interest and/or code of conduct policies.

a. Regular personal attendance at board meetings and events is required unless the co-chairs and relevant staff are notified, and the absence is excused. This commitment is not delegated to others. Three unexcused absences in one year are grounds for removal.
b. Commitment to listen to, value, and utilize the experience and contribution of each Board member as well as people who are or have experienced homelessness as equal partners in ending homelessness and leading decision-makers in ending homelessness.
c. A quarterly commitment to seek input from, convey the interests of, and provide updates to the communities that CoC Board members represent and are accountable to, including recipients of CoC services, cities, tribes, and providers.
d. Leadership to further regional goals, including serving as a community champion, speaking on behalf of the regional efforts or the CoC and assuring ongoing dialogue with the community on opportunities, progress, results, and barriers to ending homelessness in King County.

iv. CoC Board Membership and Selection Process

The CoC Board will have a maximum membership of 19 people.

a. CoC Board members must adopt and follow a written process to select a board to act on behalf of the Continuum of Care. The process must be reviewed, updated, and approved by the Continuum at least once every 3 years.
b. Applications for CoC Board membership will be open to the public on the CoC webpage and will be managed by an Ad-Hoc Selection Committee of at least three CoC Board members established by the CoC Board when necessary. The Selection Committee will make recommendations to the CoC Board for vacant seats.

v. CoC Board Representation

Representational categories shall be identified to ensure that CoC Board membership comprises an appropriate array of committed private, public, and nonprofit sector community leaders who reflect the diversity of people experiencing homelessness and regional differences. At least one seat will be reserved for a local public funder of the CoC for the purpose of promoting alignment with funding decisions within the CoC. Individuals may fulfill cross-representation of categories. Members selected for each category listed below should explicitly represent each named community.

A majority of the members of the CoC Board shall be people whose combination of identity, personal experience, or professional expertise enables them to credibly represent the perspectives of, and be accountable to, populations that are disproportionately represented among people impacted by homelessness and housing systems in King County.

All CoC Board Members shall possess demonstrable expertise, experience and/or skill in one or more of the areas specified in this subsection, including but not limited to: implementation of policies and practices that promote belonging; provision of services for persons impacted by homelessness and housing systems, or related social services with an emphasis on serving populations disproportionately represented within local data available through HMIS; and physical and/or behavioral healthcare or another intersecting system of care/institution such as foster care or criminal/legal systems.

Individual members shall be selected so that each geographical area specified in this subsection is represented on the fully seated CoC Board:

- South King County
- East King County
- North King County
- City of Seattle

At a minimum, CoC Board membership must include (members may fit more than one category):

a. Criminal Justice/Public Safety
b. Mental health/Substance Use Disorder/Behavioral Health
c. Hospital/Healthcare/Medicaid
d. Public Housing Authority
e. Tribal Representative *(encouraged to include a person with lived or living experience of homelessness within the last 5 years)*
f. Local Housing Developer

g. Domestic Violence System/Victim Service Provider *(encouraged to include a person with lived or living experience of homelessness within the last 5 years)*
h. Veterans *(encouraged to include a person with lived or living experience of homelessness within the last 5 years)*
i. Youth Action Board (YAB) Representative *(encouraged to include a person with lived or living experience of homelessness within the last 5 years, appointed by the YAB)*
j. Families
k. Education/McKinney-Vento
l. Local Business Owner/Representative (Inclusive of small business owners)
m. City/County (Inclusive of local public officials)
n. Faith based *(encouraged to include a person with lived or living experience of homelessness within the last 5 years)*
o. Homelessness Services Provider (shelter, housing, service only project)
p. Outreach Provider (including Peer Navigators)
q. Funder(s) of the CoC
r. HMIS Lead *(non-voting, appointed by the HMIS Lead entity)*
s. CE Lead *(non-voting, appointed by the CE Lead entity)*

The CoC Board shall elect two Co-Chairs, only one of whom may be a provider.

vi. Terms

A term begins at the first regular CoC Board meeting after being confirmed by CoC membership. A CoC Board member serves a 2-year term, for a total of 2 terms. CoC Board members must apply for a second term.

CoC Board membership terms shall be staggered. Terms for Co-Chairs shall be for one year from the date of approval.

vii. Leaves of Absence

Board members may take a leave of absence of up to four (4) months due to extenuating circumstances. The seat will not be counted towards quorum during the four months.

viii. Proxy Voting

- Board members may appoint one alternate who is able to vote by proxy and must submit a designation form identifying the individual and agreement to prepare the individual to vote on pending matters.
- Identified persons to serve as a proxy are not required at the time of applying for a board seat. The process to identify a proxy will begin after acceptance into board position.

- Proxy activation shall not exceed three (3) consecutive meetings; however, when a proxy is designated as part of a formally approved leave of absence, the proxy may serve for the full duration of that leave, regardless of length.
- The proxy will serve same first term as original board member. At the end of board member first term, if serving a second, a new proxy will need to be identified.
- A proxy adheres to same voting standards as the board member they represent, including full voting participation as a regular board member.
- A proxy cannot serve in the role of co-chair/chair.
- If the original board member serving as co-chair/chair activates a proxy, the proxy will participate strictly as a regular board member.
- During the period in which a co-chair/chairs proxy is active, a Chair Pro Tempore will be selected from among the regular board members to fulfill the duties of the co-chair/chair for that time.

ix. Board Member Dismissal

Dismissal of a current CoC Board member is warranted under the following circumstances:

- Engagement in activities counter to the values of the Continuum of Care,
- Frequent, persistent, and unexcused absences from Committee meetings (three or more in one year), or
- Breaking the CoC Conflict of Interest or Code of Conduct policies

In each of these cases, a super-majority vote of 60 percent of those present and voting shall be required to dismiss current members.

New CoC Board members may be appointed under the following circumstances:

- The resignation or dismissal of a current member.
- Instances in which current board membership no longer fulfills the required representation

In each of these cases, a super-majority vote of 60 percent of CoC Members present and voting shall be required to approve new members.

C. Advisory Bodies, Committees, and Workgroups

Committees and workgroups are structured to ensure a system-level focus rather than a CoC-specific focus. Generally, committees and workgroups have the following characteristics:

i. Definitions

Advisory Body

An Advisory Body is a formally established group that provides guidance, recommendations, and subject matter input to the Board. Advisory Bodies are open to the public and conduct their work transparently, including holding meetings that allow for public attendance and participation as appropriate. The only advisory body with decision-making authority is the Youth Action Board (YAB) unless otherwise granted by the CoC Board.

Committee

A Committee is a subset of the Board created to focus on specific areas of governance, operations, or strategic priorities. Committees may include Board members and, where appropriate, non-Board participants. Committees are open to the public and operate in a transparent manner, with meetings accessible for public observation and input consistent with Board policy.

Workgroup

A Workgroup is a flexible, task-oriented group convened to address specific issues, projects, or deliverables within a defined timeframe. Workgroups may include Board members, staff, and/or external participants. Workgroups may be either open to the public or closed, depending on their purpose, as determined by the Board. Workgroups are intended to support focused collaboration, technical work, or preliminary discussions and are not required to provide public access during their proceedings.

ii. Committee and Workgroup Membership, Structure, and Responsibilities

- All committee and workgroup members must sign up to be a CoC member.
- The chair/s of each committee or workgroup will be selected by the respective entity and must be a CoC Board member, or a CoC member who has been approved by the CoC Board. Chairs will be supported by relevant designated entity staff. The staff of the corresponding functional area may serve as an interim Chair of the committee or workgroup, when appropriate.
- Members are selected based on their subject matter expertise from the staff of the designated entities, and provider organizations (including government partners like the VA or health care) and lived experience communities.
- Committees and workgroups are limited to no more than 12 regular members, unless otherwise recommended by the relative body's scope of work.

- Committees and workgroups are responsible for ongoing communication and coordination with the CoC Board,
- Members must participate consistently and substantively or may be removed by the Chair,
- Committees and workgroups are empowered to identify and engage specific experts for time-limited projects to increase capacity.
- Committees and workgroups are empowered to make changes to practices and policies due to local, state, and federal government requirements, but are required to provide fa timely update to the CoC Board on any changes.
- Any changes to practices and policies made by workgroups that are based on best practices, or are advised by the committee or workgroup, must be brought to a regular CoC Board meeting for approval.
- Committee and workgroups will provide a general update on current work and next steps to the CoC Board on a quarterly basis at minimum. This update may be in the form of a written report or presentation at a regular CoC Board meeting.

iii. Standing Bodies of the CoC Board

Standing Advisory Bodies

- Participant Advisory Council (PAC): In the event that CoC Board Membership includes fewer than one-third members with lived experience of homelessness or housing instability, the CoC Board must establish a Participant Advisory Council – staffed by a designee of the Collaborative Applicant and a CoC Board Member, the PAC will include members with lived and living experience who also have an analysis and understanding of the current homelessness response system.
- Youth Action Board (YAB): The Youth Action Board (YAB) is a collective of young people (14-24) with current or past lived experience of homelessness. The YAB serves as both an Advisory Body and the primary policy and decision-making body for the youth and young adult homelessness response system. The YAB provides leadership, guidance, and oversight for the implementation of the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) Coordinated Community Plan, with the goal of preventing and ending youth homelessness. YAB members play a central role in shaping policies, programs, and system design to ensure they are responsive to the needs and experiences of youth and young adults.
- As part of its authority the YAB reviews and approves all policy and program recommendations impacting youth and young adults prior to submission to the CoC Board for final approval. The YAB ensures that all recommendations align with youth-centered and lived-experience-informed approaches.

Standing Committees

- *Governance Committee* – The Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending updates to the CoC Governance Charter, Written Standards, and other governance documents, and for supporting CoC strategic planning and governance activities in collaboration with other partners.
- *System Performance Committee (SPC)* - The SPC is responsible for oversight of policies, procedures, standards, metrics, performance evaluation methodologies, and project ranking and evaluation criteria related to HMIS, system performance, and the annual CoC Program selection process.
- *Coordinated Entry Committee (CEC)* – The CEC is responsible for oversight of policies, procedures, performance measures, and system improvements related to Coordinated Entry system.

Standing Workgroups

- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Workgroup – Staffed by a designee of the Collaborative Applicant to ensure system-level priorities are articulated. The purpose of this workgroup is to prepare the local application for the annual CoC Competition. Members may include non-HUD-funded providers, funding partners, and participants who can make strong recommendations to the CoC Board for rating and ranking projects for the annual CoC Competition.

The CoC Board has the authority to establish time-limited, ad-hoc workgroups as needed. The advisory bodies and standing committees shall establish by-laws in line with the CoC Charter to outline their purpose and scope of work. Each standing and ad-hoc workgroup shall develop a scope of work to guide its work and priorities. The bylaws and scopes of work shall specifically outline and clearly articulate the specificity of the role that the body will take on and the timeframe in which the work will take place. The bylaws and scopes of work shall be presented to the CoC Board at a regular meeting for the Board's approval.

D. Delegation of Authority

The CoC Board retains responsibility for carrying out the duties of the Continuum of Care set forth in 24 CFR 578.7 and 578.9, except as expressly delegated below.

- 578.7(a)(6 and 7) – Establishing, monitoring, evaluating and taking action regarding performance are delegated to the Collaborative Applicant.
- 578.7(a)(8) – Establishing and operating a Coordinated Entry System is delegated to the appropriate office of the Regional Authority.
- 578.7(a)(9) – Establishing written standards is delegated to the Collaborative Applicant.

- 578.7(b)(1-5) – Selection, implementation and operation of the regional HMIS is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer of the Regional Authority.
- 578.7(c)(1-5) – CoC planning must be conducted as part of regional planning efforts, Therefore, the development of a work plan, conducting the point-in-time count, conducting a gaps analysis, coordinating with ESG recipients and providing input into the regional Consolidated Plan is delegated to the Collaborative Applicant.

Changes to the policies of the above actions must be made in partnership with the CoC Board, who retains final approval.

E. CoC Board and Governing Board Relationship

The CoC Board elects to function in an advisory capacity to the Governing Board in accordance with the King County Regional Homelessness Authority ILA. The CoC Board will provide quarterly reports to the Governing Board. These reports will include guidance and advice from the CoC Board in its advisory capacity, and will also include updates on the CoC Board, working bodies, and other related CoC work, as well as current advice and guidance from the CoC. The CoC Board shall meet with the Governing Board on an annual basis at minimum to provide guidance alongside strategic planning.

F. Designations

i. HMIS Lead

In fulfilling its HMIS governance responsibilities, the Seattle/King County CoC seeks to balance the needs and interests of all HMIS partners, including individuals and households experiencing homelessness, service providers, funders, and policymakers.

The King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) is designated as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Entity (referred to in this document as the "HMIS Lead") for the WA-500 Continuum of Care (CoC). In this role, KCRHA is responsible for the administration, governance support, and project management of the Seattle/King County HMIS and for ensuring the system operates in compliance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements and applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

If KCRHA is unable to fulfill its responsibilities as the HMIS Lead, the CoC Board will implement a transparent process to identify, evaluate, and select a new entity to serve as the CoC's designated HMIS Lead in accordance with the requirements of 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11360a. The CoC will notify HUD of any change in designation and complete all required registration and documentation processes in accordance with applicable HUD requirements.

Responsibilities of the HMIS Lead include, but are not limited to:

- Managing day-to-day operations, oversight, and configuration of the HMIS database
- Reviewing, revising, and approving the privacy, security, and data quality plans for the HMIS database
- Facilitating agency onboarding, user access, and system adoption
- Promoting high-quality data entry, data integrity, and effective system use
- Providing training and ongoing technical assistance to participating agencies and users
- Supporting system performance monitoring, reporting, and compliance with federal, state, local, and CoC and ESG requirements
- Supporting community planning, Coordinated Entry, HMIS governance, and performance management through data analysis, technical expertise, and stakeholder engagement
- Managing relationships with HMIS software vendors and technology partners, including oversight of system performance, enhancements, and issue resolution
- Leading cross-system data strategy and integration efforts to improve interoperability and support executive-level decision-making across the homeless response system

KCRHA partners with the HMIS software vendor, Bitfocus, to support system functionality, implementation, and user support. HMIS staff within KCRHA are responsible for local administration of the system and serve as the primary point of contact for participating agencies.

KCRHA coordinates all HMIS-related activities, including system maintenance, training, technical assistance, and data quality management, in collaboration with CoC partners. More detailed roles and responsibilities of the HMIS Lead are documented in the HMIS Lead Agency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Collaborative Applicant, if designated to a separate entity, and supporting policies.

ii. Collaborative Applicant

The King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) is designated as the Collaborative Applicant for the WA-500 Continuum of Care (CoC). In this role, KCRHA is responsible for coordinating the development and submission of the CoC Program Consolidated Application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on behalf of the CoC, in accordance with HUD requirements.

If KCRHA is unable to fulfill its responsibilities as the Collaborative Applicant, the CoC Board will implement a transparent process to identify, evaluate, and select a new entity to serve as the CoC's designated Collaborative Applicant. This entity will meet all federal requirements as outlined in 24 CFR § 578.9. The CoC will notify HUD of any change in designation and complete

all required registration and documentation processes in accordance with applicable HUD requirements.

Responsibilities of the Collaborative Applicant include, but are not limited to:

- Collecting and combining required application information from all CoC Program applicants
- Submitting the CoC Consolidated Application, including the CoC Application and Priority Listing, to HUD
- Applying for CoC planning funds on behalf of the CoC, when applicable
- Ensuring the CoC operates in compliance with HUD program requirements, including 24 CFR Part 578, by working with CoC leadership, committees, and partners to:
    - Coordinate the annual CoC Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) process
    - Develop and facilitate a fair and transparent local competition to select and rank project applications
    - Ensure the CoC application reflects community-wide planning, funding priorities, data, system design and performance, and performance evaluation
    - Support implementation of the CoC's strategic priorities and performance goals
    - Manage CoC planning activities, including consultation with ESG recipients and other system partners.

More detailed roles and responsibilities of the Collaborative Applicant are described in the Collaborative Applicant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and supporting CoC governance documents and policies available on the CoC webpage.

iii. Coordinated Entry Operator

The King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) is designated as the Coordinated Entry (CE) Lead Entity (referred to in this document as the "CE Lead") for the WA-500 Continuum of Care (CoC). In this role, KCRHA is responsible for the overall administration, oversight, and management of the CoC's Coordinated Entry system.

KCRHA administers the Seattle/King County Coordinated Entry system and ensures that it operates in compliance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements, including 24 CFR §578.7(a)(8), and applicable federal, state, and local regulations. The Coordinated Entry system is designed to provide fair access to housing and services for all individuals and households experiencing homelessness.

If KCRHA is unable to fulfill its responsibilities as the CE Lead, the CoC Board will implement a transparent process to identify, evaluate, and select a new entity to serve as the

CoC's designated CE Lead in accordance with the requirements of 24 CFR § 578.7(a)(8). The CoC will notify HUD of any material change in Coordinated Entry governance and update applicable Continuum of Care governance documents and policies to reflect the new designation.

Responsibilities of the CE Lead include, but are not limited to:

- Managing the day-to-day operations and oversight of the Coordinated Entry system.
- Developing, implementing, and maintaining CoC-wide Coordinated Entry policies and procedures
- Ensuring standardized access, assessment, prioritization, and referral processes across the CoC.
- Promoting nondiscriminatory access to services, including compliance with fair housing and civil rights requirements.
- Ensuring the system incorporates participant choice, prioritizes households based on vulnerability and severity of service needs, and aligns with CoC-established performance goals.
- Providing training and ongoing technical assistance to participating agencies and system partners.
- Monitoring system performance, including evaluation of outcomes and adherence to established policies.
- Overseeing data quality and integration with the HMIS, in coordination with the HMIS Lead.

KCRHA performs all Coordinated Entry activities in collaboration with CoC partners, including service providers, ESG grantees, funders, and individuals with lived experience of homelessness. More detailed roles and responsibilities of the CE Lead and operator are documented in Coordinated Entry policies and procedures, applicable Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), and supporting CoC governance documents.

Appendix 1: Conflict of Interest

No member may participate in or influence discussions or resulting decisions concerning the award of a grant or other financial benefits to the organization that the member represents.

Therefore, any individual participating in or influencing decision making must identify actual or perceived conflicts of interest as they arise and comply with the letter and spirit of this policy. Disclosure should occur at the earliest possible time and if possible, prior to the discussion of any such issue. Individuals with a conflict of interest should abstain from discussion and voting on any issue in which they may have a conflict. An individual with a conflict of interest, who is the committee chair, shall yield that position during discussion and abstain from voting on the item.

Annual written disclosure statements will be provided by each member by the end of February. Members will not be permitted to participate in a discussion or a vote until the statement is on file. All voting members shall have the right to recuse themselves from voting on a matter without providing an excuse.

All members of the CoC shall abide by the Conflict-of-Interest guidelines provided in the Continuum of Care Interim Rule at 24 CFR 578.95 - Conflicts of Interest. All members of the CoC Board will sign a Conflict-of-Interest statement at the beginning of their membership. Members who find themselves faced with a potential conflict between their business, organizational or private interests and their CoC responsibilities shall avoid conflict of interest during the decision-making process by following these guidelines:

a. Disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest in advance of the meeting to the Co-Chairs.
b. Publicly disclose conflicts of interest at relevant CoC Board meetings.
c. Recuse himself or herself at any time from involvement in any decision or discussion in which they believe he or she may have a conflict of interest.

Appendix 2: Code of Conduct

Purpose

The Seattle-King County Continuum of Care (CoC) is committed to maintaining an environment that encourages and fosters appropriate conduct among all people and respect for individual values. Accordingly, the CoC is committed to enforcing this Code of Conduct at all levels and events to create an environment free from discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation regarding board governance. Discrimination or harassment based on race, gender and/or gender identity or expression, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, ethnicity, disability, veteran or military status, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, genetic information, marital status, citizenship status, or on any other legally prohibited basis is unlawful and undermines the character and mission of the CoC.

Standards of Conduct

- **Role Clarity**: Know and fulfill duties in this Governance Charter, Interlocal Agreement, and Board Member Agreement.
- **Meeting Conduct Enforcement Protocol:** To preserve order and fair participation, the Co-Chair(s) (or designee) may apply progressive, meeting-specific measures:
    - Honor the Co-Chair(s)' roles in maintaining order; stay on agenda; engage in civil discourse.
    - reminder of decorum and agenda alignment;
    - loss of the floor for the current item;
    - if disruptive behavior continues after two warnings, removal from the speaking queue or the meeting (or restriction to written input) for the remainder of the session; and
- **Professional Communications:** Distinguish when speaking personally, for your agency, or on behalf of the CoC, the CoC Board (only if authorized) and/or the designated entities (only if authorized). Use respectful language; avoid derogatory, intimidating, or abusive remarks.
- **Confidentiality:** Protect privileged and personal information; share only with those who have a legitimate need to know.
- **Use of Position:** Do not use Board role for personal advantage or to benefit family/associates; no improper gifts or favors.
- **Anti-Lobbying for Personal or Organizational Gain:** CoC Board Members must not lobby other CoC Board Members, committees, or designated entity staff for decisions, exceptions, or resource allocations that primarily benefit the Member's personal, professional, political, or organizational interests. When a discussion could foreseeably benefit the Member's organization, the Member must disclose that interest consistent with Appendix 1 (COI) and refrain from advocacy aimed at securing preferential outcomes.

- **Digital Conduct:** Apply the same standards across email, messaging, social media, and virtual meetings.
- **Compliance:** Follow applicable laws, the Governance Charter, the Interlocal Agreement, procurement standards, and related CoC and designated entity policies.

Conduct Toward Partners

Respectful Engagement

- Demonstrate respect, courtesy, and integrity toward all non-Board participants in the CoC system, including service providers, persons with lived experience, advocacy organizations, and community partners.
- Refrain from any intimidating, hostile, harassing, or discriminatory conduct toward CoC members, designated entity staff, or provider staff. This includes verbal aggression, personal attacks, derogatory comments, threats, or dismissive conduct.
- Recognize that designated entity staff perform operational, compliance, and data responsibilities on behalf of King County's homelessness response system and must be treated as neutral professionals – not as representatives of any Board member's personal or agency interests.
- Avoid directing designated entity staff to take actions outside approved processes, bypassing policy, or influencing outcomes of funding competitions, system performance evaluation, or HMIS activities. Directive authority flows through established governance structures, not individual Board members.
- Respect technical expertise and boundaries, including allowing designated entity staff to present analysis, data, or compliance information without interference, coercion, or pressure to modify findings.
- Avoid using Board status to extract privileged information from designated entity staff. Access to data must follow established HMIS privacy, data-sharing, and role-based access protocols.
- CoC Members and CoC Board Members will not attack, ridicule, or disparage other Board Members in public or digital forums related to CoC or designated entity business. Concerns about conduct should be raised through the appropriate reporting channels with the Collaborative Applicant or Ombuds Office, not via public posts.
- Refrain from speaking to or treating designated entity staff in a demeaning, condescending, or dismissive manner, including during disagreements or when questioning designated entity staff recommendations.
- Model constructive communication and support a psychologically safe environment where staff can provide candid feedback, raise risks, and offer technical guidance without fear of reprisal.

Protection from Retaliation

No CoC Board Member, CoC committee member, CoC member, or designated entity staff member may retaliate against any CoC Board Member, CoC committee member, CoC member, or designated entity staff member for raising a concern, reporting actual or suspected violations of law, policy, or CoC requirements; providing technical, compliance, audit, monitoring, or programmatic information; participating in an investigation, review, or corrective action process; or refusing to engage in conduct that would violate applicable laws, regulations, policies, or ethical obligations.

For purposes of this subsection, ***retaliation*** means any adverse action, threat, coercion, intimidation, harassment, exclusion, disparagement, interference, or other materially adverse treatment taken because an individual engaged in protected activity. Such adverse, threatening, or coercive actions may include, but are not limited to, attempts to suppress concerns; restrict participation in CoC activities; remove responsibilities without a legitimate business reason; pressure an individual to alter data, findings, recommendations, or decisions; or otherwise take actions that would reasonably deter a person from raising concerns, reporting violations, providing information, participating in a review or investigation, or otherwise fulfilling their governance, compliance, oversight, or professional responsibilities.