

HOUSING FIRST SOLANO GOVERNANCE CHARTER

ARTICLE 1 – NAME OF THE CoC/CoC BOARD

Name of the Continuum of Care (CoC)

The name of the CoC is officially the Vallejo/Solano Continuum of Care; however, it shall be known as the Housing First Solano Continuum of Care, herein referred to as “HFS” or “the CoC.”

Name of the CoC Board

The name of the CoC Board shall be the Housing First Solano CoC Board, herein referred to as the “HFS Board” or “the Board.”

ARTICLE 2 – PURPOSE OF THE CoC AND THE CoC BOARD

The HFS CoC is a regional planning body of representative stakeholders in Solano County that coordinates the community’s policies, strategies, and activities toward preventing and ending homelessness. Its work includes gathering and analyzing information in order to determine the local needs of people experiencing homelessness, implementing strategic responses, educating the community on homeless issues, providing advice and input on the operations of homeless services, and measuring CoC performance.

HFS seeks to develop a continuum of services with the ultimate goal of preventing and ending homelessness in Solano County. Efforts are aimed at permanent solutions and the range of services are designed to meet the unique and complex needs of individuals and families who are at risk of or are currently experiencing homelessness. HFS also works collaboratively with the local jurisdictions and other stakeholders to help lift people out of poverty and provide the services needed to stably house them.

HFS seeks to address poverty and homelessness through a coordinated community-based process of identifying needs and building up a system of housing and services to address those needs. HFS seeks to move beyond the evaluation and prioritization of specific projects to a system-wide evaluation of the community’s response to homelessness.

ARTICLE 3 – GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION

HFS geographic area covers the seven cities located in Solano County: Benicia, Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun City, Vacaville, and Vallejo; the unincorporated areas of Solano County; and Solano County – and includes the housing and service plans for homeless persons and persons experiencing a housing crisis for each area. The membership is comprised of representatives of relevant organizations within the given geographic areas.

ARTICLE 4 – RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of HFS, the HFS Board, the Collaborative Applicant [Community Action Partnership of Solano, Joint Powers Authority (the JPA)], the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead (the JPA), and the staff are delineated in Appendix A in the Delegation of Authorities Chart. However, please note that the CoC itself will always have at least an oversight role for each responsibility because ultimately the CoC retains its responsibilities.

Operating a CoC

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- Develop, follow, and update annually this governance charter, which will include all procedures and policies needed to comply with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements and with the HMIS requirements, including a code of conduct and recusal process for the HFS Board, its chair(s), and any person acting on behalf of the HFS Board.
 - The Governance Committee will review annually and will make recommendations for changes or updates to the CoC for their final approval. In the interim, if relevant regulatory or policy updates require consideration, the Governance Committee will meet to review and make those edits and submit the revised Charter to the CoC.
- 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 "Coordinated Entry" system that provides an initial, comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services. The CoC aims for all CoC-funded programs to participate in Coordinated Entry using the VI-SPDAT, an assessment tool that prioritizes individuals and families based on need. The Coordinated Entry Workgroup makes recommendations on CoC-wide system design.
- In consultation with recipients of ESG funds within the CoC, implement the written standards for providing CoC assistance. At a minimum, the standards must include:
 - Policies and procedures for evaluating individuals' and families' eligibility for assistance under the CoC Program
 - 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 individuals and families 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
 - Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive permanent supportive housing assistance
- Consult with recipients and subrecipients to establish performance targets appropriate for population and program type. The Performance and Evaluation Committee develop the targets, in consultation with the CoC Board with final approval by the CoC.
- Monitor performance of CoC and ESG recipients and subrecipients. Evaluate the outcomes of projects funded under ESG and CoC programs. Work with projects that perform poorly to improve performance.
 - The Board will establish the appropriate method for evaluation and action, with assistance from staff, once the performance measures and targets are approved by the CoC and in place.
- Report the outcomes of ESG and CoC projects to HUD annually through the CoC application process.

CoC Planning

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- Coordinate the implementation of a housing and service system within the CoC's geographic area that meets the needs of homeless individuals and families. At a minimum, such a system encompasses the following:
 - Outreach, engagement, and assessment
 - Shelter, housing, and supportive services
 - Prevention strategies
- Plan for and conduct, at least biennially (every other year), a Point-in-Time count of homeless persons within the CoC geographic area that meets HUD requirements, including a housing inventory of shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing reserved for homeless persons, in general, and chronically homeless persons and veterans, specifically, as HUD requires.
- Conduct an annual gaps analysis of the needs of homeless people, as compared to available housing and services within the CoC geographic area.
- Provide information required to complete the Consolidated Plan(s) within the CoC geographic area.
 - Work closely with jurisdictions who are represented on the CoC Board
- Consult with State and local government ESG recipients within the CoC geographic area on the plan for allocating ESG funds and reporting on and evaluating the performance of ESG recipients and subrecipients.
 - As a priority, encourage applicants for ESG funding in the upcoming year

Designating and Operating an HMIS

- Designate a single HMIS for the CoC's geography, and an eligible applicant to serve as the CoC's HMIS lead agency. (Currently CAP Solano, JPA is HMIS Lead and the Collaborative Applicant.)
 - Process for designating an HMIS Lead agency:
 - The HMIS Lead will be designated using a Request for Proposals process conducted by a Subcommittee of non-conflicted CoC members
 - Applicants will be given the opportunity to present themselves to the CoC membership at a general meeting
 - The final choice is made by the full CoC
 - The agency chosen will be selected for 1-3 years with the option for renewal based on a performance report and survey of the CoC
 - The HMIS Lead will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the CoC
- Review, revise and approve a CoC HMIS data privacy plan, data security plan, and data quality plan at least annually and as needed due to regulatory updates.
- Ensure that the HMIS is administered in compliance with HUD requirements.
- Ensure consistent participation by CoC and ESG recipients and subrecipients in the HMIS.

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- Work with all participating HMIS agencies to maintain high data quality and encourage non-HUD funded projects to participate.

Preparing an Application for Funds

- Design, operate, and follow a collaborative process for the development of a CoC application to HUD.
- 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.
 - Process for designating the Collaborative Applicant:
 - The Collaborative Applicant will be designated using a Request for Proposals process conducted by a Subcommittee of non-conflicted CoC members
 - Applicants will be given the opportunity to present themselves to the CoC membership at a general meeting
 - The final choice is made by the full CoC
 - The agency chosen will be selected for 1-3 years with the option for renewal based on a performance report and survey of HUD-funded applicants
- Approve the final submission of applications in response to the CoC Notice of Funding Availability.

ARTICLE 5 – THE CoC BOARD

Membership

HFS established a Governing Board selected in compliance with the process approved by the CoC as required by 24 CFR 578.7(a)(3). The Board is responsible for the overall policy and direction of HFS CoC and may delegate responsibility for day-to-day operations to staff and Committees. (See Appendix A for Delegation of Authorities). The Governing Board shall comply with the conflict of interest requirements established by 24 CFR 578.95(b).

In compliance with the HUD CoC Program Interim Rule, the HFS Board will include at least one homeless or formerly homeless individual and will represent the relevant organizations and projects serving homeless subpopulations, such as persons with substance use or disorders, nonprofit homeless assistance 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, and organizations that serve veterans.

Board Composition

- Nonprofit homeless assistance providers two

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• Faith-based representative	one
• Government representatives (including Public Housing Authority)	eight
• Educational representative (school district, university, etc.)	one
• Mental health provider	one
• Health service provider (including hospitals)	one
• Law enforcement representative	one
• Representative of organization/entity serving veterans	one
• Homeless and/or formerly homeless representatives	two
• Members at large	three
• Business representative	one
• Affordable housing development representative	one
• Total	23

One Board member may represent the interests of more than one homeless subpopulation, and the Board must represent all subpopulations within the CoC to the extent that someone is available and willing to represent that subpopulation on the Board.

Leadership of the CoC Board

The HFS Board shall have three officers consisting of a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary. Their duties shall be as follows:

- The Chair shall convene regularly scheduled Board meetings and CoC meetings, shall preside or arrange for other members of the Executive Committee to preside at each meeting in their absence in the following order: Vice-Chair and then Secretary
- The Vice-Chair shall chair Committees on special subjects as designated by the Board and shall Chair CoC and CoC Board meetings in the absence of the Chair
- The Secretary shall work with the CoC staff on ensuring records for the Board are kept and posted and shall be a liaison to the CoC staff and shall Chair CoC and CoC Board meetings in the absence of the Chair & Vice-Chair

The HFS Board shall elect officers of the Board at least annually. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the current Board members.

Terms of Office

The members of the HFS Board shall serve three-year terms, but are eligible for re-election.

The government seats are held by the jurisdictions themselves rather than the person serving in the seat and those appointees are subject to the appointment processes within that jurisdiction. Each jurisdiction must notify the CoC staff at least annually who the appointed member and alternate will be. If there are

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any changes or if that person is not meeting the attendance requirements for the Board, the jurisdiction must notify the CoC staff as soon as possible who the new appointee and alternate, if applicable, will be.

CoC Board Member Responsibilities

All members of the HFS Board shall demonstrate a professional interest in, or personal commitment to, addressing and alleviating the impacts of homelessness on the people of Solano County. The HFS Board members have an active role in the HFS Board. Members are expected to:

- Attend meetings and contribute to informed dialogue on actions the group undertakes
- Serve on a committee of the HFS Board or HFS CoC
- Participate in the activities of the HFS Board, including 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
- Seek input from and report back to the constituency they represent on key issues and strategies and otherwise keep abreast of needs and gaps in the CoC
- Ensure that the CoC is meeting all of its responsibilities assigned to it by HUD regulations
- Represent the relevant organizations and projects serving homeless subpopulations
- Support homeless persons in their movement from homelessness to economic stability
- Ensure that the CoC is inclusive of all of the needs of the geographic area's homeless population, including the special service and housing needs of homeless sub-populations

CoC Board Selection

HFS Board members are seated through an election by the full CoC.

If the Board is full, elections are held annually at the first meeting of the year for seats opening up due to terms that are expired.

Special elections may be held at general CoC meetings to fill empty seats or seats vacated throughout the year. The same procedures apply.

Candidates for Board membership may be self-nominated or may be nominated by the Board, by CoC members, or by community members. The candidate must fill out a brief application that indicates general information about them, their level of interest and which categories and subpopulations they represent. CoC staff will review all applications to ensure that the candidate matches an open Board seat prior to placing the applications before the CoC for a vote.

The entire Charter will be reviewed annually but this provision for CoC Board selection will also specifically be reviewed at least every five years.

Designating a CoC Board Alternate

Board members may designate a single Alternate who can attend in the Board members place if they must miss a meeting so long as that Alternate represents the same subpopulation, sector or jurisdiction. The Alternate will count towards quorum requirements and can vote in the Board members absence. If

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both the Board member and Alternate attend a Board meeting, only the Board member will be recognized as representing the Board officially and will have rights thereof.

CoC Board Attendance and Termination

Board members shall not miss more than 25 percent of Board meetings in a 12-month period. Having an Alternate attend the meeting will count as attendance as it does not leave the seat unrepresented. If a Board member misses more than 25 percent of Board meetings in a 12-month period, the Chair may call for a vote to dismiss the Board member. A member may also be dismissed from the HFS Board for other reasons by a three-fourths vote of the remaining members. Discussion and possible action on the dismissal of any member must be properly noticed on a Board agenda. If a board member wishes to resign, the board member shall submit a letter of resignation to the HFS Board staff.

CoC Board Meeting Frequency

The HFS Board shall meet monthly. Special meetings may be called by the Chair as needed; however, notices must comply with the Brown Act.

CoC Board Proceedings

Quorum

A quorum of 50 percent plus one member of the currently seated HFS Board shall be present at any regular or specially scheduled meeting in order for the HFS Board to engage in formal decision making. This same quorum of 50 percent plus one member of the HFS Board must be present at a regularly scheduled HFS Board committee meeting if action is going to be taken.

Voting

While the HFS Board will strive to achieve consensus, the affirmative vote of a majority of members in attendance shall be required for the approval of any matter as long as those members constitute a quorum. Secret votes are not permitted and, in cases where the vote is not unanimous, the specific ayes, nays and abstentions must be recorded in the minutes.

Inclusion

The HFS Board works to ensure input to HFS Board deliberations and decision-making from a diverse segment of stakeholders, including consumers and community members, as well as gender, ethnic, cultural and geographical representation. All interested persons are encouraged to attend meetings, provide input, and voice concerns. CoC members are encouraged to bring grievances or concerns to the attention of the CoC Board or CoC staff.

Notice and Brown Act

All HFS Board meetings shall be open to the public and properly noticed. The HFS Board will follow all the requirements of the Brown Act, which provides greater transparency for the CoC and the community. An official HFS Board meeting agenda/notice shall be sent to each Board member, posted publicly, and posted on the CoC website at least 72 hours in advance of any meeting. The HFS Board also encourages all members of the community to participate in group discussions and working groups.

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Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct

Each HFS Board member, and anyone acting on behalf of them, is expected to uphold certain standards of performance and good conduct and to avoid real or apparent conflicts of interest. In order to prevent a conflict of interest, HFS Board members and anyone acting on behalf of the Board, may not:

- Participate in or influence discussions or decisions concerning the selection or award of a grant or other financial benefit to an organization that the HFS Board member has a financial or other interest in or represents, except for the CoC Board itself
- Solicit and/or accept gifts or gratuities by anyone for their personal benefit in excess of minimum value
- Engage in any behavior demonstrating an actual conflict of interest or giving the appearance of any such conflict

Individuals with a conflict of interest will inform the CoC Board of the conflict and excuse themselves from the meeting or deliberations during such discussions. The CoC Board Chairperson and staff will also track which CoC members have conflicts of interest and assist to ensure that such members do not participate in discussions or decisions in which those members have a conflict.

Each CoC Board member must sign a personal conflict of interest and code of conduct policy annually to demonstrate that they are aware of this policy and agree to abide by it.

Compensation

The Board members shall serve without compensation.

Relationship with Full CoC Membership

HFS Board meetings will be open to the full membership and the public and the HFS Board will post minutes of the HFS Board meetings on the CoC website at http://www.housingfirstsolano.org/Agendas_Minutes.html.

Between HFS Board meetings, HFS Board leaders and Staff will keep the full membership involved by participation in workgroups and committees and sharing information, including meeting minutes, resources for homeless services providers, plans and implementation progress, data about homelessness in the region and funding availability via email list or via the CoC website.

ARTICLE 6 – CHARTER AMENDMENT AND REVIEW

The HFS CoC will review, update, and approve this governance charter at least annually, first through the work of the Governance Committee and then by a final review and vote of the CoC. Amendment of the charter requires a majority vote of the CoC at a regularly scheduled meeting, provided that notice of the scheduled vote on the charter amendment was provided at least one month prior to that meeting.

ARTICLE 7 – HFS COMMITTEES

The HFS Board or CoC may appoint committees, subcommittees, or workgroups to fulfill the work of the CoC.

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Committees and Workgroups

Much of the HFS CoC's work is conducted at committee and workgroup meetings. Standing committees will include: The Governance Committee, the Performance and Evaluation Committee, the Strategic Planning Committee, and the Coordinated Entry Workgroup. Subcommittees currently are the HMIS Users Work Group and the Point and Time Count Subcommittee. Members of the HFS Board or of CoC staff will be the designated chairpersons of each committee, but committee membership will comprise of CoC members.

The HFS Board may create ad-hoc committees to develop recommended solutions to the specific issue for which they were created. The ad hoc committees may be comprised of HFS Board members, CoC members, and subject-matter experts who are not CoC Board members.

The HFS committees may meet monthly, bimonthly or at some other interval depending on the tasks to be accomplished. Each committee will have a clear purpose and overall timeline for addressing issues or problems that it was chartered to address. Committees or workgroups will present their work product to the HFS Board and/or CoC for action or next steps.

ARTICLE 8 – HFS CoC MEMBERSHIP

HFS membership is open to all public wishing to participate. HFS will actively seek to recruit relevant stakeholders as listed below in the recruitment and outreach section. In order to maintain records of membership and facilitate communication and the work of the CoC, HFS will request that new members fill out a very brief new member card to introduce themselves to the CoC and provide their contact information. HFS seeks to be as welcoming and inclusive as possible and to achieve as diverse a membership as possible. All members are welcome to vote and share their perspectives on all matters before the CoC. There is no limit on the number of voters allowed or perspectives encouraged per entity or agency. HFS welcomes those who will actively engage in the CoC.

A CoC member who has a specific conflict of interest on any matter before the CoC shall recuse himself or herself from voting on that matter.

HFS CoC Meetings

The HFS CoC will hold meetings of the full CoC membership bimonthly, but at least semiannually. The CoC staff will announce the date, time and location of these meetings at least two weeks in advance and will publish the meeting agenda at least 72 hours before the date of the meeting. Meeting agendas will be posted online at http://www.housingfirstsolano.org/Home_Page.html for review prior to the meeting and disseminated to the CoC listserv.

ARTICLE 9 – RECRUITMENT

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

Recruitment and Outreach

The CoC Board will work to identify and address membership gaps in essential sectors, from key providers and other vital stakeholders. The CoC Board and staff will recruit to ensure that it meets all membership requirements set forth in its governance charter, including representation of certain

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populations and organizations. Specifically, outreach will be conducted to obtain membership from the following groups:

- Nonprofit homeless assistance 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 veterans
- Homeless and formerly homeless individuals
- Other relevant organizations within the CoC's geography (which may include mental health service providers and funders, substance abuse service providers and funders, foster care, local job councils, etc.)

ARTICLE 10 – RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS

The Collaborative Applicant documents and collects evidence that the CoC Board meets all the requirements of 24 CFR 578.5 (b), including meeting agendas, minutes, the Governance Charter, policies and procedures, and all required updates and notices.

The Collaborative Applicant documents and collects evidence that the CoC prepared the application for funds as required, including the designation of the eligible applicant as the Collaborative applicant.

The Collaborative Applicant documents and collects evidence of use of planning funds for eligible costs and other grants management documentation.

Agendas, minutes, and other required documents will be available on the HFS website.

Chair Signature

Date