

## HOUSING FIRST SOLANO CONTINUUM OF CARE (HFS CoC) LIVED EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE BYLAWS

*The purpose of these bylaws is to describe how the Lived Experience Committee (the “Committee”) functions. Bylaws outline the Committee’s purpose and operations, who may participate, and expectations of members and leaders.*

### MISSION

The Lived Experience Committee (henceforth the Committee) is an advisory body intended to ensure the inclusion of those with current or past lived experience of homelessness within the Housing First Solano Continuum of Care (HFS CoC). The Committee amplifies the voices of lived expertise in HFS CoC policymaking and provides pathways to develop the leadership skills of the members.

The goals of the Committee are to foster a trusting feedback loop between members with lived expertise and the system of homeless and housing services in Solano, and to engage that expertise in decision-making. To do so, Committee members use this platform to share their experiences and knowledge, make recommendations for improvement, and participate in Housing First Solano CoC Board decision-making processes

### MEMBERSHIP

#### *Number of Members and Eligibility*

Per the HFS CoC Governance Charter, the Committee will consist of a minimum of 3 and maximum of 11 members, with an ideal size of 5-11 members. To be eligible to serve on the Committee, members identify themselves as having an experience of homelessness, past or present. This experience may have taken place in Solano County or elsewhere, and the member does not need to have utilized services in Solano County, although the member does need to have a current or past connection to Solano County.

Committee members will be invited to join the LEC through direct outreach to individuals with lived experience via word of mouth, community-based providers, advocacy groups, community partner media platforms, and the HFS CoC website.

#### *Diversity Mechanism*

In the interest of being inclusive, representing a broad range of opinions and proficiencies, and to bring voices to the table that are historically and presently marginalized, the Committee will strive to include a person who represents each of the experiences listed below (one person may represent more than one of these experiences and other experiences may be identified). The Committee may function

without complete representation across all categories, while continuously striving to achieve membership diversity. This mechanism and the diversity of the LEC will be reviewed on at least a bi-annual basis.

- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)\*
- Latinx/Hispanic who use English with different native languages
- Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Queer
- Transgender/Gender non-conforming
- Parenting/Family/Caregiver
- Persons challenged with substance use disorders
- Persons challenged with mental health conditions
- Persons with disabilities
- Veteran status
- Immigrant experience
- “DREAMer” – immigrant youth who came to the US as children and qualify for the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act and/or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)
- Former foster care
- Survivor of Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence
- Use of emergency shelter program or Project Roomkey
- Use of Cold Weather Shelter Program or rotating church shelter
- Use of housing subsidies, such as Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and public or affordable housing systems
- Youth homeless experience
- Aging Adults
- Currently experiencing homelessness
- Housed and connected to homeless services
- Jail/Prison/Reentry experience
- Gang affiliated, present or former

\* The Committee will strive to maintain a membership that reflects the population of those experiencing homelessness in Solano County per the most recent PIT count.

Note: The Committee may consider implementing representative seats to ensure diverse representation of specific populations.

### *Becoming a Standing Committee Member*

The initial launch of the Committee will consist of eligible individuals who attended Committee pre-planning meetings and express interest in being members, plus either (a) all eligible applicants, if this would result in a Committee of 11 or fewer members, or (b) eligible applicants chosen according to the process outlined below for becoming a member.

On an ongoing basis as membership spaces open up, new members will be chosen based on application for membership. Current members will review any application

materials and vote by majority of those present to approve applicants. Approvals to fill open vacancies may not exceed the maximum number of 11 total members.

### *Maintaining Membership*

Resignation: If a member chooses to voluntarily resign from the Committee, the member should provide notice to the other members as soon as possible in writing.

Attendance-Based: If a standing member misses more than 50% of meetings held in a one-year period (i.e. 2 quarterly meetings) without written notification to the Committee Co-chairs, then that member can be presumed to have resigned. In this situation, a majority vote of members present can dismiss the missing member. Before dismissing such a member, other members should attempt to get into contact with the individual and resolve the situation in a manner in line with the missing member's desired outcome if possible.

Period of Membership: Members are encouraged to serve for renewable terms of 27 months. This includes 24 months of service and 3 months to continue to serve while also recruiting applicants for a replacement member, when not running for a new term. When possible, members are encouraged to stagger turnover of membership in order to create continuity for the Committee.

Removal: A member may be removed from the Committee through vote to remove by 2/3 of all current Committee members. The member at issue does not participate in the vote and must be out of room while voting takes place.

### *Member Meetings*

Regular meetings will be held at least quarterly or as established by co-chairs. Subcommittees and any other subgroups may meet as frequently as desired.

### *Non-Member Attendance and Participation*

In order to keep open lines of communication, enhance collaboration, and support the Committee's work, non-members may be invited to attend member meetings and participate as non-voting participants in ways as allowed by Committee members. For example, CoC representatives and staff may be asked to attend Committee meetings for purposes of bringing information or opportunities to the Committee.

The Committee may hold open meetings announced to the public at their discretion.

## **LEADERSHIP**

### *Roles and Responsibilities*

#### **Two Co-chairs**

**Responsibilities:**

- Work with the Secretary or support staff to establish meeting agendas and provide agenda in advance to committee members and to staff for posting on the CoC website.
- Schedule and send an annual meeting calendar by February 15 of each year to Committee members and to staff for posting on the CoC website.
- Lead meetings or designate those who do so.
- Coordinate membership in establishing Committee goals and actions within an annual work plan.
- Monitor Committee size and initiate recruitment efforts when needed.
- Bring Committee recommendations to the CoC Board.
- Provide regular written or oral reports, as requested, to the CoC Board.
- Send meeting summaries to committee members and to staff for posting on the CoC website.
- Other duties per the HFS CoC Governance Charter.

**Length of Tenure:** 2 years

**Number of Terms:** Up to 2 consecutive terms (and may be voted back for additional non-consecutive terms in the future). Co-chairs are encouraged to ensure that at least one co-chair position turns over per year.

**Secretary (optional, for use as desired by the Committee):**

**Responsibilities:**

- Takes minutes and distributes them to the group and/or stores them in designated place.
- Tracks member attendance.
- May create agendas for meetings, informed by co-chair(s).
- Note that meetings could be staffed by non-Committee member support staff to cover these duties.

**Length of Tenure:** 1 year

**Number of Terms:** No limit

**Community Liaison (optional, for use as desired by the Committee):**

**Responsibilities:** Acts as voice of the Committee to coordinate or communicate with the Housing First Solano Continuum of Care (CoC), the County's homelessness organizing body, or other groups. May be for a specific issue or general representation for any matters. For example, the Committee may designate a Liaison to participate in the CoC Review & Rank Panel Committee to help decide which local programs are recommended for funding during the annual CoC competition.

- Outbound community outreach to other organizations and persons currently experiencing homelessness.
- May attend HFS CoC board, general membership and/or committee meetings to seek out opportunities for proactive Committee engagement.

**Length of Tenure:** 1 year

**Number of Terms:** No limit

*Election of Leaders*

In order to be a candidate for a vacant or soon-to-be-vacant leadership position, a member will be nominated as candidate. Any Housing First Solano general member or Committee member can nominate another member, and members may self-nominate.

Elections for co-chairs are to be held annually at the first HFS Board meeting of the year, or as needed when positions are vacant at a HFS Board Meeting. A call for nominations for positions will occur at the General Membership meeting prior to the elections and via the HFS listserv and website. Per the HFS CoC Governance Charter, the Committee must be chaired or co-chaired by a member of the HFS Board. If only one candidate is nominated for a position, they need to receive a majority vote of members present in favor to be placed in the position. If more than one candidate is nominated for a position, then whichever candidate receives more votes will be placed in the position.

Candidates do not participate in the vote and must be out of room while voting takes place. When voting is done electronically it will be done in a manner that preserves voter confidentiality, such as asking candidates to enter a breakout room during the vote. Vote should be kept confidential among those present to preserve integrity of the vote.

## QUORUM AND DECISION MAKING

### *Quorum*

Quorum describes the number of members who need to be present for decisions to be made or activities to occur.

For a vote to be held, a majority (more than half) of existing standing members must be present. Remote attendance, such as calling in by phone, qualifies as being present for purposes of quorum and voting.

No quorum is needed to hold a meeting, but quorum is needed to make decisions affecting the whole group.

### *Majority Vote to Make Decisions*

Membership on the Committee gives the right to vote. To bind the Committee in any decision, a majority vote of those present and entitled to vote is needed. Note that this means a tie vote is not approved.

### *Voting Procedures*

Recognizing that discussions are as important as voting for collaboration, at points of decision the Committee encourages respectful discussion and coming to a majority vote.

Any person may call for a vote on a matter that is being discussed in any way that effectively communicates with those present that a vote is taking place. No formal rules need be followed for voting to take place.

One method of discussion and voting that *may* be used, called “Robert’s Rules of Order,” uses motions and certain vocabulary in decision making. This method is described here as an option for Committee members to use as one way to communicate during discussion and voting. Committee members are welcome to use some form of the guidelines below but do not have to go by them.

- 1) One member states a desired outcome by making a motion, saying, “I move that...”
- 2) Another member can second the motion to agree, saying, “I second the motion.” If no one seconds the motion, no vote is taken at that time, though the motion and vote could be brought up again at another time.
- 3) If a member does second the motion, the co-chair or person leading the meeting makes space for discussion by saying, “It has been moved and seconded that... Is there any discussion?”
- 4) During discussion, the person who made the motion is allowed to speak first. Then, everyone else is allowed to speak as well. Each person should be able to speak at least once, and the leader may alternate between those who are for and against the motion.
- 5) After discussion, the leader initiates voting by saying, “Those in favor of the motion that... say “I approve.” Those opposed say “I don’t approve.” Votes may be taken verbally or by show of hands.
- 6) After votes are counted, the leader announces either that the motion is passed or that it did not pass.

### *Conflict of Interest Policy*

Conflict of interest is defined as a situation in which decisions made in a person’s official capacity may result in personal benefit or harm.

A member who has a conflict of interest should disclose the potential conflict to the other members and must abstain from participating in any vote or decision making that implicates the conflict.

All standing Committee members will be expected to sign a [HFS CoC Conflict of Interest form](#) annually.

### *Revising Bylaws*

These bylaws may be revised by Committee members through vote to approve by majority of all current Committee members. Bylaws should be reviewed and revised by Committee members as desired, not less than once every two years.

## SUBCOMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The Committee recognizes multiple ways for members to initiate work and take action as part of the Committee. Subcommittees are one way of doing this, and another way is to participate in other CoC committees and working groups.

For instances in which all members of the Committee do not want or need to work on a particular issue, smaller groups can be created to work independently. At any meeting, members may vote by majority to establish a Subcommittee on any topic that will further the work of the Committee. Ad hoc Subcommittees, which are formed for a specific task or objective and dissolved after achieving their objective, are also encouraged to further the work. Such subcommittees could include a recruitment subcommittee, governance subcommittee, executive subcommittee, etc.

Those who are part of Subcommittees should plan to report back to the Committee at the next full meeting of the Committee to update the group and get feedback and direction on their work.

## ENGAGEMENT AND COMPENSATION

Members of the Committee are encouraged to fully engage and participate in Committee and Subcommittee meetings, as well as in regular Housing First Solano Continuum of Care Board and General Membership meetings. Members are also encouraged to fill seats on the Solano JPA/CoC Grievance Advisory Committee and volunteer to participate in funding panels. All members who are not already compensated for their time, travel, fuel, parking, and/or internet access costs associated with participation in these meetings (i.e. via an employer), are eligible to voluntarily request compensation as follows:

- A gift card worth \$40.00 for each meeting attended, with meetings typically being 1.5 to 2 hours, including LEC Committee meetings, HFS CoC Board and General Membership meetings, and any subcommittee or funding panel participation. Cards will be provided to members upon request following confirmed meeting participation.
- Committee members may receive compensation for up to three meetings per month, for an amount not to exceed \$120.
- Notwithstanding the above limit, the HFS CoC Chair may determine that a special initiative project would benefit from an increased amount of Committee member participation and increase the maximum amount of compensation per month as necessary. That determination shall be made in a written notice identifying the special initiative, the effective date and duration of the increased stipend eligibility, and the temporary maximum amount.
- All active members of the Committee who are not receiving compensation from another party, organization, or individual may request compensation for meeting attendance.
- Committee members requesting compensation must have a current annual HFS CoC Conflict of Interest form on file.

- Compensation may be offered for board members who would like to further develop their professional career to attend relevant trainings, advisory boards on behalf of HF LEC, or costs to pursue peer credentialing.