

NY-501 CoC Bylaws

November 19, 2015

Revised May 2018

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization shall be the Southern Tier Entry to Programs and Services (STEPS).

ARTICLE II

Mission and Purpose

Section 1. Mission

The Mission of the NY-501 Regional Continuum of Care is to identify persons in the region, and assess the needs of those persons, who are either homeless or most at risk of becoming homeless, and to channel the resources and efforts of public and private community agencies to strategically plan and meet the needs of these individuals in a collaborative fashion.

Authorization and Coordination

The mission, purpose, and general operation of a Continuum of Care is set through local priorities to end homelessness—under the regulatory authority and guidance of the following documents:

- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987
- HEARTH Act
- CoC Program Interim Rule (24 CFR 578)
- Annual HUD CoC Program NOFA
- Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan To Prevent And End Homelessness

Section 2. Purpose

STEPS is dedicated to addressing and reducing homelessness by ensuring that an effective system of care and services is in place. The purpose of STEPS is to:

- 1) Serve as the Continuum of Care as described in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and

Rapid Transition to Housing Act and implementing regulations

- a. Operate the Continuum of Care in compliance with HUD regulations noted in 24 CFR Subpart B 578.7 in such a manner as to promote inter-agency coordination and collaboration by doing the following:
- b. Hold meetings of the full membership, with published agendas, at least semi-annually;
- c. 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 5 years;
- d. Appoint additional committees, subcommittees, or workgroups;

e. The Governance Charter includes the NY-501 Bylaws, the Written Standards of Performance and Operation, HMIS Policy and Procedures, Coordinated Entry Policy, the Letters of Support Policy, the STEPS PHA Policy, and the NY-501 Code of Conduct.

e-f. In consultation with the collaborative applicant and the HMIS Lead, develop, follow, and update annually a governance charter.

- 2) Develop and submit annual funding application in conformance with annual NOFA
- 3) Designate a Collaborative Applicant, delineate its responsibilities to STEPS, enter into an MOU and review performance annually.
- 4) Facilitate dialogue and strategic action among public, private and non- profit sectors to prevent and end homelessness and promote affordable housing.
- 5) Consult and coordinate with the State of New York and other municipalities in developing, updating and implementing their plans and programs to reduce and end homelessness and to provide an effective system of care and services responsive to the needs of at risk and homeless individuals and families (for example Consolidated Plans.
- 6) Develop, maintain and review annually Written Standards of performance and operation
- 7) Conduct all business necessary to implement the mission and purposes of STEPS, including conducting an annual review of the Governance Charter.

- 8) Designate an HMIS Lead to operate an HMIS, enter into an MOU and review periodically.
- 9) Continuum of Care planning. The Continuum must develop a plan that includes
 - a. Coordinating the implementation of a housing and service system within its geographic area that meets the needs of the homeless individuals (including unaccompanied youth) and families. At a minimum, such system encompasses the following:
 - i. Outreach, engagement, and Coordinated Entry;
 - ii. Shelter, housing, and supportive services;
 - iii. Prevention strategies.
 - b. Planning for and conducting, at least ~~biennially~~annually, a point-in-time count of homeless persons within the geographic area;
 - c. Conducting an annual gaps analysis of the homeless needs and services available within the geographic area;
 - d. Providing information required to complete the Consolidated Plan(s) within the Continuum's geographic area;
 - ~~e.~~e. [Supporting policies and procedures for the Emergency Transfer Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking; and](#)
 - ~~f.~~f. Consulting with State and local government Emergency Solutions Grants program recipients within the Continuum's geographic area on the plan for allocating Emergency Solutions Grants program funds and reporting on and evaluating the performance of Emergency Solutions Grants program recipients and subrecipients

Article III

MEMBERS

Section 1. Membership

The CoC encourages all public and private agencies who provide services to individuals or families who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless, as well as any homeless or formerly homeless individuals, to actively participate in the CoC planning and activities. The CoC Program Interim

Rule (24 CFR 578) specifies that this representation be broad based, and that the CoC make regular efforts to attract membership and participation from the following recommended groups

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Local homeless coalitions and networks</i>• <i>Homeless and formerly homeless people</i>• <i>Homeless service providers, agencies and advocates</i>• <i>Nonprofit groups for homeless persons</i>• <i>Local, state and regional government representatives</i>• <i>Employment programs and job councils</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Religious leaders</i>• <i>Mental Health service providers</i>• <i>Local job councils</i>• <i>Veterans service agencies</i>• <i>Law enforcement, parole and probation</i>• <i>Universities and Colleges</i>• <i>Key civic leaders & Organizations</i>• <i>For Profit and Business communities</i>• <i>And other stakeholders</i>
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~~Membership as an individual requires the indication of a current or previous status as a homeless individual.~~

Membership of an agency in the CoC shall be required for that agency to be eligible to include proposals for project funding to HUD as part of the CoC’s annual CoC Application.

Any agency or individual desiring to obtain membership in the CoC shall complete a CoC Enrollment Form and submit to the CoC:

No fees or dues are assessed for membership in the CoC.

It is expected that members from a specific CoC jurisdiction participate in the local planning efforts of that county’s CoC Homeless Housing Task Force.

Section 2. Public Invitation

Make a public invitation available for new members to join within the geographic at least annually.

Section 3. Voting

Membership includes the entitlement to vote for the Board of Directors as well as on



amendments to the Governance Charter and the annual application for Continuum of Care funds including the Priority Listing and Planning Grant.

Only one Representative of an organization shall have one vote.

ARTICLE IV

Committees

Section 1. County Level Homelessness and Housing Task Force Entities

One of the stipulations of a county or jurisdiction being a member of a Continuum of Care planning collaborative jurisdiction is that it maintains a “homelessness housing task force,” whose purpose is to monitor, plan, advocate, and execute such initiatives as are necessary to shape local written policy and muster resources to assure the adequate provision of shelter and supportive services—and to integrate these measures into the overall regional strategic plan.” The HHTF serves as a functional arm of the Regional CoC within a member county jurisdiction.

Section 2. **Rank and Review Committee**

The Rank & Review Committee is responsible for the development, review and operation of the Continuum of Care’s annual Rank and Review process. The Committee is expected to (1) develop a Rank and Review tool that focuses on annually prioritizing projects in order to best address community needs, (2) conduct in depth interviews with project applicants and (3) using information from both the tool and interviews draft and present the Board with a final ranking of projects for approval. Membership requires an odd number of general members (3-5), each from different counties who do not have a conflict of interest.

Section 3 - **Coordinated Entry Committee**

The Coordinated Entry Committee is responsible for creating the coordinated entry process in NY-501. The Committee is expected to (1) develop a zone-oriented coordinated entry process that is accessible by all in need (2) reviews all stages of the assessment, referral, application, vacancy

posting and acceptance/denial processes 3) develop a policy and procedure manual and user guide to ensure community and agency understanding of the system. Membership requires one Lead from each county Homeless Housing Task Force.

Section 4 - **HMIS Committee**

The HMIS Committee will develop plans and recommendations for review and approval by the Board of Directors and carry out action plans approved by the Board of Directors with respect to:

- (1) prepare and provide data and reports to the Collaborative Applicant for analyzing performance targets and outcomes in consultation with program recipients and sub-recipients
- (2) conducting evaluations and monitoring data quality including review of reports from HMIS, and taking action as warranted
- (3) ensuring compliance with HUD designation and operation of HMIS requirements
- (4) Coordinate through the participating agency leads to prepare and submit data for AHAR, HIC, PIT and system performance

Membership: HMIS Administrator plus one member from each agency operating a CoC Project

Section 5 – **Planning Committee**

The Planning Committee is responsible for the oversight of strategies developed by the Board to monitor and improve SPMs. The Committee is expected to work collaboratively with the HMIS Committee and Board to regularly review and analyze SPMs and the effectiveness of developed strategies specifically the following measures: Reduction in the Number of First-Time Homeless, Length-of-Time Homeless, Successful Permanent Housing Placement and Retention, Returns to Homelessness and Job and Income Growth.

ARTICLE V The Executive Board

Section 1.

As stipulated in the CoC Program Interim Rule, the General Membership shall create a Board to act on its behalf, and that the General Membership shall authorize and create a Homeless Housing Task Force

of its several members in each county of the CoC geography.

Each county shall select and nominate 3 (three) members from its HHTF teams -- 1 person from a public agency and 2 people from private agencies to represent them at a Continuum wide board. These members serve at the will of the county HHTF that seated them, and the pleasure of the general membership. There are no term limits. Each Board member shall serve consecutive years from the date of their election. However, a Board member may be asked to resign if 4 or more meetings are missed in an any given year.

The CoC Board shall consist of at least one individual representing a public agency from each participating county and two individuals representing a private agency from each participating county, and maintain no greater than a 35% ratio of public to private sitting members for any future enlargements of the committee.

In addition, the membership of the CoC Board shall consist of one individual representing a public agency of the City of Elmira, a U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development special district under the designation of Entitlement Community (EC) and Participating Jurisdiction (PJ).

Also, as stipulated by 24 CFR 578.5 (b)(2), the membership of the Board must include at least one homeless or formerly homeless individual who serves the Continuum at large.

Members of the CoC Board may participate in any meetings by conference telephone, electronic video screen communication or similar communications equipment. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting of the Board.

Eight (8) members of the Board shall make a quorum. Proxy votes, by a designated proxy, is allowed. Electronic voting is also allowed. All results of an electronic vote must report at the following Board Meeting.

The General Membership may also move to seat one or more ex officio members to its Board council. Such members are to advise the Board, and represent vital entities such as the Department for Veteran's Affairs or the Lead Agencies. Ex officio members do not have a vote on the Board in matters of Continuum business.

Annually, the Board shall nominate a Board Chair who shall be confirmed by a quorum vote of the General Membership at its last meeting of the calendar year. The Chair may serve as many terms as nominated.

Section 2. Activities and Role of the Board

The CoC Board shall meet monthly as a body (including combined Board/General Membership meetings) and its duties shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Monitoring all opportunities and correspondence from HUD and other funding organizations to ensure that the Regional CoC is positioned for maximum success;
- b. Overseeing the development and submission of the Regional CoC's annual HUD CoC Application;
- c. Coordinating 3 (three) joint General Membership meetings per year, including the communication of the time and place of the meeting to all current members and the community at large;
- d. Reviewing the Regional CoC's Governance Charter as needed, at least annually, to ensure that the policies enable the CoC to be conducted in a fair, impartial, and legal manner;
- e. Reviewing the annual HUD CoC Application NOFA, and assessing the Operating Policies in light of any changes in the annual Application to ensure the maximum consistency between the Regional CoC's application and HUD's expressed preferences and requirements;
- f. Facilitating recommendations for the revision, addition, or deletion of specific operating policies, as needed, including preparing a recommendation for the changes to be presented to the CoC membership and preparing the membership for a vote at a general meeting to approve the recommended changes;
- g. Lead a strategic planning efforts;
- h. Annually designate entities to be responsible for acting as HMIS Lead, Collaborative Applicant, and administration agent as necessary—executing an annual MOU with the same.
- i. Work collaboratively with each member county to ensure the necessary funding to operate the CoC administrative and general business operations.
- j. Appoint such workgroups and standing committees as necessary to affect Continuum business.
- k. Review performance of each project and the full CoC on the participation of mainstream programming, and make recommendations for improving participation as needed..

Section 3. General Membership Meetings

As noted in (c) above, the Board shall convene 3 (three) joint meetings of the Board and General Membership each year. Optimally these shall be in April, mid-year, and end of the year in timing with the HUD CoC Program NOFA. To make these meetings the most productive as possible, the Continuum shall adopt the following rules of order:

1. The Board and General Membership will meet in joint session
2. The role of the General Membership is to annual elect new BoD Members, and a chairperson; approve amendments to the Governance Charter; and, approve the annual Collaborative Application for Continuum of Care funds including the Priority Listing and Planning Grant
3. New business or discussion may be brought to the table in the appropriate segment of the Agenda.

ARTICLE VI
Amendment of Bylaws

Section 1.

The Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the membership of STEPS by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.