

Franklin-Essex Housing Coalition

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I - NAME

Section 1.1

As set forth in the May 2013 founding documents, the name of this Continuum of Care shall be the Franklin-Essex Housing Coalition, inclusive of Franklin and Essex Counties, hereinafter referred to as the Coalition or FEHC.

ARTICLE II – MISSION/PURPOSE

Section 2.1 Mission

The Franklin Essex Housing Coalition is dedicated to preventing, reducing and combatting homelessness by ensuring that an effective system of care and services is in place.

Section 2.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Franklin Essex Housing Coalition 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.
- 2) 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.
- 3) Facilitate dialogue and strategic action among public, private and non- profit sectors to prevent and end homelessness and promote affordable housing.
- 4) Consult and coordinate with the State of New York, the Counties of Jefferson, St. Lawrence, and Lewis, the City of Watertown, 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.
5. Consult and coordinate with governmental entities in developing, updating and implementing their consolidated Plans, including the establishment of goals, objectives and action steps for reducing and ending homelessness, the allocation of Emergency Solutions Grant program funds, the development of performance standards, outcomes and evaluations of projects and activities assisted by Emergency Solutions Grant program and the development of funding, policies and procedures for the operation and administration of HMIS.
6. Conduct all business necessary to implement the mission and purposes of the FEHC, including conducting an annual review of these bylaws.

Section 2.3 Written Standards & Policies and Procedures

The FEHC will annually review the Written Standards for funded programs in compliance with HUD regulations. The FEHC Board of Directors will be responsible for ensuring the annual review of the FEHC Written Standards include the following:

- a) Policies and procedures for evaluating individuals' and families' eligibility for assistance;

- b) Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive transitional housing assistance;
- c) Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive rapid rehousing assistance;
- d) Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive permanent supportive housing assistance; and
- e) There will be an annual review of policies and procedures to guide the operation of the coordinated entry system to comply with any requirements established by HUD by Notice.
- f) Standards that determine what percentage or amount of rent each program participant must pay while receiving rapid rehousing assistance;
- g) Standards will be reviewed in consultation with Emergency Solutions Grants program funds within the geographic area.
- h) If the FEHC is designated a high-performing community, written standards as well as policies and procedures will be developed in accordance with HUD regulations.

Section 2.4. Coordinated Entry System

The FEHC will operate a coordinated entry system that will provide a comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services. It is designed to be easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool. The system is designed to coordinate program participation intake, assessment, and provision of referrals. The FEHC Board of Directors will oversee the implementation of the coordinated entry system.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 3.1

The Coalition is comprised of agencies, faith based organizations, and/or departments of government and individuals in Franklin and Essex Counties; whose organizations are committed to the mission/purpose of the CoC.

Section 3.2

Any such agency, organization, or individual shall be considered a member in good standing, and entitled to all rights and privileges herein granted upon acknowledgment by the Board of Directors and confirmed by a signed registration. A member in good standing is: One who has paid their dues and/or has requested a waiver of dues that was approved by the Board of Directors. The above notwithstanding non-dues paying members may attend coalition meetings, and sit on committees (at any level) however, non-dues paying members are not eligible to vote on any CoC matter and are not eligible for membership on the Board of Directors.

Section 3.3

Each entity or individual member in good standing shall be entitled to be represented in the Coalition on an individual or agency level. The terms of office of these delegates and the method of their selection shall be determined by each agency, organization. In case a regular delegate is unable to attend a Coalition function, an alternative, appointed by the agency, organization, may attend and act for that delegate.

Section 3.4

Each agency or organization delegate and each, individual member shall be entitled to one vote in the affairs of the Coalition.

Section 3.5

The Coalition's membership year shall begin on the first day of January and continue through the last day of December within that calendar year.

Section 3.6

Public Invitation- At least annually, the FEHC will issue a public invitation for new members.

Section 3.7

Members will apply for or renew their membership annually by submitting an application to the Board of Directors. All applications/renewals of membership will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

Section 4.1

The Officers of the Coalition shall be Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer to be elected by the membership on an alternating biannual basis (every other year). The same person may hold the office of both Secretary and Treasurer. Vice Chair and Secretary shall be elected at the annual meeting to serve two-year terms. The year after the election of the Vice Chair and Secretary, the Chair and the Treasurer shall be elected at the annual meeting to serve two-year terms.

Thereafter, each year, two officers shall be elected to two-year terms. Officers shall serve as Board of Directors members for the duration of their terms in office.

Section 4.2

The Officers shall be chosen from the Coalition's participating delegates representing member Coalition agencies, organizations, government departments or individuals.

Section 4.3

The Officers shall serve for two years, from the first day of January until the last day of December of the following year, or until their successors have been elected. In the event that an Officer abdicates his/her appointment prior to the end of his/her term, the Board of Directors shall appoint a temporary Officer until a successor has been elected. Terms shall be limited as per section 7.2.

Section 4.4

The Chair or Vice Chair shall: preside at all meetings of the Coalition and of the Board of Directors; execute in the name of the Coalition all agreements entered into by it and see that these agreements are properly carried out; consult with Chairs of Coalition committees to ensure that committee deliverables are carried out and perform other duties as directed by the Coalition.

Section 4.5

The Vice Chair shall, during the absence of the Chair, perform the duties of the Chair; and shall perform such other duties as the Coalition shall direct.

Section 4.6

The Secretary, or his/her designee, shall be the custodian of all of the Coalition's records, except as may be assigned otherwise by these bylaws; shall record the minutes of the Coalition and of the Board of Directors; shall maintain the roll of members and delegates; shall conduct all of the correspondence of the Coalition; and shall perform such other duties as the Coalition shall direct. Any member designated as the Secretary or Treasurer shall be elected with majority vote by the membership biennially.

Section 4.7

The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all of the Coalition's funds; shall collect dues on behalf of the Coalition; shall maintain full and accurate accounts of the Coalition's grant finances; shall see that no disbursement is made except as authorized by the Coalition or its Board of Directors; and shall perform such other duties as the Coalition shall direct.

ARTICLE V - NOMINATIONS

Section 5.1

Nominations for the Officers and Board of Directors Members of the Coalition shall be made at the Coalition meeting preceding the Annual meeting. Nominations will be distributed 30 days prior to the annual meeting.

Section 5.2

Nominations shall be made by report from the Nominating Committee with additional nominations permitted from the floor.

Section 5.3

Only persons who have given their consent to serve if elected shall be nominated.

Section 5.4

There shall be a Nominating Committee of three members preferably covering both counties one who shall be appointed by the Chair of Vice Chair with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors. The Committee members shall select a Chairperson.

ARTICLE VI - STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 6.1

Standing Committees may be created by the Board of Directors to further the administration of the Coalition in meeting its purpose. Each Standing Committee shall prepare a plan of work for review and report to the Board of Directors. The Chair or Vice Chair shall be considered ex-officio members of all committees.

Section 6.2

Members of Standing Committees shall be members of the community at large, shall be recruited by the Chair or Vice Chair and shall serve for the program year or until their successors are appointed.

Section 6.3

Each Standing Committee shall report fully to the Board of Directors and the Coalition on its activities at regular intervals and when called upon, and shall prepare a comprehensive annual report for presentation at the Annual meetings.

Section 6.4

The Standing Committees shall be: Steering, NOFA (including Ranking and Evaluation), Point In Time, Homeless Management Information System Data, Homeless Management Information System Advisory, Community Performance, Nominating Committee, and the By-Laws Committee.

Section 6.5

Any application resulting from a response to a HUD notice of funding availability (NOFA) shall be forwarded to the Ranking and Evaluation Committee for review. Applications and rankings will be sent to the Board of Directors for final review. The Board of Directors shall have a vote to approve issuance of letter(s) of support and determination of final ranking position on the applications.

Section 6.6

The Ranking and Evaluation Committee Members are elected each year by the NOFA Committee. If a member of the Ranking and Evaluation Committee is an employee of an applicant agency, he/she shall recuse themselves from review of that project application. In this instance the Ranking and Evaluation Committee will ask a non-applicant representative from the Franklin-Essex Membership to join the review of that year's NOFA applications.

ARTICLE VII – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 7.1

There shall be a Board of Directors, empowered to: create Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees; review the plans of work of the committees and make recommendations to the Coalition for action; transact necessary business of the Coalition in the intervals between meetings of the Coalition; and conduct such other business as the Coalition shall direct. All committee terms begin on January 1.

Section 7.2

The Board of Directors shall consist of 6-10 individuals; Coalition Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and (1-2) Coalition Members representing each county. If the Board of Directors does not have a member that currently is, or formally has, been homeless, an additional seat will be added to the Board of Directors to ensure that there is consumer representation. The Secretary may grant waivers to recipients unable to meet the requirement under the preceding sentence if the FEHC agrees to otherwise consult with homeless or formerly homeless individuals in considering and making policies and decisions. With exception to the Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) the Board of Directors will be elected by the members of the Coalition to staggered three year terms. The Board of Directors elections will be held at its Annual meeting, in such manner that the term of the County Representatives shall expire on the last day of December of each year. a.) Term Limits: Board of Directors members elected are subject to a limit of three (3) two (2) year terms of service or a total of six (6) years for Officers and two (2) three (3) year terms of service for a total of six (6) years. Board of Directors members may be eligible for re-nomination to this Board of Directors after a one-year absence.

Section 7.3

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Coalition shall both be Officers of the Board of Directors.

Section 7.4

The Board of Directors shall hold an organizational meeting during the month of December, and shall hold monthly additional meetings via conference call or face to face, at a time as fixed by the Committee.

Section 7.5

A meeting of the Board of Directors may be called by the Chair or Vice Chair or by a majority of the members of the Board of Directors.

Section 7.6

A quorum of the Board of Directors shall consist of a majority of committee members.

Section 7.7

Vacancies on the Board of Directors which occur prior to the expiration of the normal term shall be filled by appointment from the Chair following a report of the Nominating Committee.

Section 7.8

Any delegate or individual member in good standing is eligible to be elected as an Officer or Board of Directors Member, with respect to ensuring the broadest possible representation.

Section 7.9

Any Board of Directors member who misses three (3) meetings without excuse shall be notified of such absence by the Secretary, and upon a fourth absence without excuse as determined by the Committee, shall forfeit their position as a Committee Member.

Section 7.10

Any officer or Board of Directors representative shall only make application for housing grant funding subsequent to such funding notice being distributed to Franklin-Essex Housing Coalition members and agencies via email notification and/or presentation during a quarterly meetings

Section 7.11

The primary function of the Board of Directors shall be to move forward on the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. The Board of Directors is the primary decision-making body. Decisions will be made by majority vote and will bring motions forward to the Franklin-Essex membership for a majority vote process.

ARTICLE VIII- AD HOC COMMITTEES

Section 8.1

Ad Hoc Committees may be created by the Board of Directors to carry out specific activities to further the purpose of the Coalition. Such Ad Hoc Committees shall prepare a work plan which shall specify the task to be performed by the Committee and the term of the Committee. Ad Hoc Committees will be reviewed on an annual basis to determine continuation.

Section 8.3

Chairpersons, membership and reporting requirements for Ad Hoc Committees shall follow those rules laid out in Article VII, Section 7.2 and Section 7.3 for Standing Committees.

ARTICLE IX- MEETINGS

Section 9.1

The annual meeting of the Coalition shall be held at the last quarterly meeting of each year at such time and place as the Board of Directors may determine; and at which time Officers for the ensuing year shall be elected, and such other business transacted as is either herein specified or as may be necessary.

Section 9.2

The Coalition shall hold at least four meetings during the year, inclusive of the annual meeting. Agendas and prior meeting minutes shall be distributed electronically at least one week in advance.

Section 9.3

Meetings may be called by the Chair or Vice Chair, Board of Directors or at the request of one-fourth of the delegates or individual members in good standing.

Section 9.4

All meetings of the Coalition are open to the public.

Section 9.5

A quorum of the Coalition shall consist of a majority of all delegates and individual members in good standing, as recorded in the Coalition's records, maintained by the Secretary.

Board of Directors

Board of Directors

ARTICLE X – CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Section 10.1

The Coalition is committed to maintaining the highest standard of conduct in carrying out its fiduciary duties of care, obedience and loyalty in pursuit of the Coalition's mission. The Committee must be aware of and fully abide by the bylaws and policies of the Coalition. The purpose of this Committee's conflict of interest policy is to protect the

Coalition's interests whenever contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interests of the committee Member/Member Agency that might result in a possible excess benefit transaction.

1. The Coalition must disclose all interest(s) that may result in a conflict. Full disclosure of any situation in doubt should be made so as to permit an impartial and objective determination. Every member of the CoC with the authority to vote must, on an annual basis, file in writing a conflict of interest statement with the collaborative applicant (North Country Behavioral Healthcare Network).
2. For any transaction in which a Committee member or agency member has a financial or personal interest; the conflicted member shall recuse and abstain from participating in the Committee's discussion and vote on the issue.
4. The minutes of meetings at which such votes are taken shall record such disclosure, abstention and rationale for approval.

ARTICLE XI - CONTRACTORS

Section 11.1

Franklin-Essex Housing Coalition, via contract, shall authorize a designated entity to fulfill administrative, data collection and evaluation, administration of allocated funding for the purposes of grant application administration and monitoring or to support other necessary furtherance of the strategic plan. The Chair and Vice Chair shall be responsible for executing any contract approved by a majority of the minimum quorum for the Coalition. The Chair shall be responsible to present at the annual meeting (or as required) an updated status report on such contracts.

ARTICLE XII - COALITION AUTHORITY

Section 12.1

Any actions, programs or public statements of Coalition position represent the efforts, thinking and consensus of those individuals representing the members of the Coalition, having acted within the affairs of the Coalition. No actions, programs or public statements of Coalition's position represent or purport to represent policies or positions of member agencies or organizations, unless the governing authorities of those member agencies and organizations specifically and individually endorse those actions, programs or public statements of Coalition position.

ARTICLE XIII - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 13.1

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised shall be the Parliamentary Authority for rules of the Coalition in all matters, not otherwise provided for in these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XIV - AMENDMENTS

Section 14.1

These bylaws may be amended by the affirmative vote of a majority of those in attendance. The majority must equal at least the quorum number as recorded in the Coalition records. The proposed amendment(s) shall have been distributed to the Coalition at least 30 days prior to the next scheduled quarterly meeting.

ARTICLE XV- DISSOLUTION STATEMENT

Section 15.1

Should the Coalition be dissolved, any assets shall be given to other nonprofit agencies with the mission of ending/preventing homelessness. This action may allow distribution of funds throughout Franklin and Essex Counties. At this time the Coalition will choose, vote and approve a local public charity for the distribution of funds.

Revised Date: 6.14.18 FEHC Bylaws: General Notes

- Removal of redundant Articles X and XI.
- Removed first year term limits.
- Added clarification on the terms of officers.
- Corrected references.

Revised Date: 8.2.17 FEHC Bylaws: General Notes

May 30, 2013

- The Coalition currently has a tiered dues structure: \$235 to be a Coalition member; \$235 additional to submit a project for funding; and \$235 additional if that project is funded. The Coalition has identified dues payment as the clearest indicator of Coalition stakeholders. Members in good standing, i.e., who have paid dues and signed an MOU, are entitled to a vote in Coalition issues. Dues confer ownership and a stake in the Coalition's goals. There is no limit on how many dues-paying members the Coalition can accept. Dues for consumers (formerly or currently homeless individuals serving on the Coalition) are waived.
- FEHC meetings are open to all, and any attendee may have the floor. However, serving on committees, ranking and evaluating project proposals and casting a vote are reserved for Coalition members.
- A current record of registered members will be brought to each meeting to determine whether there is a quorum before voting on an issue.
- The Coalition Treasurer is responsible for collecting dues, which will be kept in the Coalition's treasury. The Coalition's managing organization—at this time, CARES—will sign a MOU with the Coalition to provide administrative services for a fee, which will amount to a subsection of the dues. CARES will invoice the Coalition for administrative services, and the Coalition will pay the balance using dues funding. The Coalition is free to alter this relationship at will. Using this method, the Coalition will have full control of and access to its funds and will hopefully be able to accumulate a “rainy-day fund” for use as new projects arise throughout the year.
- CARES will look for a confidentiality form appropriate for the Coalition and provide this to each new member for a signature.
- The Chair's and Vice Chair's responsibilities with regard to committees can be delegated to committee chairs to take some of the weight off of the Chair and Vice Chair.
- The Ranking and Evaluation Committee is ad hoc because it needs to be pulled together only when there is a project submitted for ranking and evaluation, as these submissions are unpredictable as well as the agencies submitting them (who cannot serve on the committee to evaluate their own projects).