



# Continuum of Care (MD-503) Governance Charter

## Anne Arundel County and Annapolis Coalition to End Homelessness

*Last Updated: June 2024*

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### **PURPOSE**

The Anne Arundel County Continuum of Care (CoC) promotes community-wide planning and strategic use of resources to prevent and end homelessness; improve coordination and integration of mainstream resources and other programs targeted to people experiencing homelessness; improve data collection and performance measurement; and ensure that every individual and family in Anne Arundel County has an affordable place to call home and the resources and supports to remain there.

This Governance Charter is mandated because Anne Arundel County receives federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) CoC funds and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and State of Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Homelessness Solution Program (HSP) funds. This Governance Charter establishes the composition, roles, responsibilities, and structure of the Anne Arundel County and the City of Annapolis Continuum of Care to ensure the CoC is meeting the responsibilities assigned to it by HUD regulations.

### **MISSION AND VISION**

The mission of the Anne Arundel and Annapolis Coalition to End Homelessness is to utilize education and advocacy to ensure homelessness in Anne Arundel County and the City of Annapolis is rare and brief.

The vision and purpose of the Anne Arundel and Annapolis Coalition to End Homelessness, a collaborative and inclusive community-based planning body, is to end and prevent homelessness in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, including the City of Annapolis by: (a) working to facilitate an adequate supply of affordable permanent housing with supportive

services for the homeless; (b) providing a vehicle for community investment in and support of the mission to end homelessness; and (c) establishing a collaborative partnership to ensure a coordinated delivery of services to end homelessness; and (d) advocacy to make recommendations for legislative improvements and funding related to homelessness on the County, State, and federal level.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Arundel Community Development Services, Inc. (ACDS) serves as the Collaborative Applicant, also known as the Lead Agency, for the Anne Arundel County CoC. Any organization or individual that aligns with the purpose of the Anne Arundel County CoC is eligible to become a member.<sup>1</sup> The Anne Arundel County CoC conducts outreach at least annually to obtain membership from the following group categories:

- Non-Profit Homeless Assistance Providers
- Victim Service Providers
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Government Departments
- Businesses
- Advocates
- Public Housing Agencies
- School Districts
- Social Service Providers
- Mental Health Agencies
- Hospitals
- Universities
- Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport
- Affordable Housing Developers
- Law Enforcement
- Veteran Service Organizations / SSVF Providers
- For-Profit Companies
- Homeless and Formerly Homeless Individuals
- Elected and Public Officials
- Representatives of the Judicial System
- Landlords and Landlord Associations
- Tenant Associations
- HIV/AIDS Service Providers
- Community Action Agencies
- Partnership for Children Youth and Families

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<sup>1</sup> Member is defined as any of the following: "1) an individual person not employed or formally affiliated with any other member organization, 2) a non-profit organization, 3) a for-profit company, 4) a government department, or 5) a local public official."



An organization or individual interested in becoming a member of the CoC must contact a Board Officer or the designated CoC Lead Agency. The communication should capture basic information about the applicant's commitment to ending homelessness in Anne Arundel County and confirm their intention to be an active member of the CoC. Membership is automatic upon verifying the organization's or individual's identity and confirming their interest in participating. Each year at the April annual meeting, members will be asked to reconfirm their continued interest in actively participating on the CoC.

#### ***MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES***

1. Elect the Anne Arundel County CoC Board of Directors.
2. Review, update, and approve board selection process every five (5) years.
3. Assure committees are established in accordance with the governance charter.
4. Assure the creation of additional committees, subcommittees, or workgroups as necessary.
5. Approve ranking criteria as recommended by Board.
6. In consultation with the Collaborative Applicant and HMIS Lead, develop, follow, and update annually this governance charter – any amendments must be approved by the Anne Arundel County CoC membership.
7. Approve a coordinated assessment system that provides an initial, comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services.
8. Approve written standards for providing CoC assistance.
9. Designate an HMIS Lead to operate an HMIS.
10. Review and approve a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan for the HMIS.
11. Approve plans, policies, and procedures governing the HMIS.
12. Set priorities and confirm eligibility to submit for CoC Program Competition funds and ESG Program funds.
13. Designate a collaborative Applicant to design, operate, and follow a collaborative process for the development of applications and approve the submission of applications in response to a NOFA published by HUD including applying for CoC Planning Activities.

14. In coordination with the Collaborative Applicant, responsibility for CoC Planning that includes:

- a. Developing and coordinating the implementation of a Housing and Service System called the County Strategic Plan to End Homelessness.
- b. Planning for and conducting at least biennially, a Point-in-time count of homeless persons in Anne Arundel County.
- c. Conducting an annual gaps analysis of the homeless needs and services available in Anne Arundel County.
- d. Providing information required to complete the Consolidated Plan.
- e. Consulting with the Coordinated Entry and other ESG program recipients in the County on the plan for allocating ESG program funds and reporting on and evaluating the performance of ESG program recipients and sub-recipients.

15. Designate a Housing Assessment Resource Agency (Coordinated Entry) .

16. Designate a Fiduciary for ESG Program funds.

17. Approve the County Strategic Plan to End Homelessness and any amendments.

#### ***MEETINGS***

The Anne Arundel County CoC holds General Body Meetings (GBM) every other month, one of which is the Annual Meeting. Meetings may be rescheduled or canceled at the discretion of the President or CoC Lead Agency. The agendas will be sent as early as possible in an email message to interested parties. For any additional full membership meetings or special meetings called by a board member, members will be given a minimum of ten (10) days' notice.

#### ***MEMBER VOTING***

Each member shall have one vote at the membership meetings. Only one (1) representative of a member organization may cast a vote. If a vote on a CoC matter is presented to the entire membership during a meeting, then the vote of a majority of members present constitutes an act of the Anne Arundel County CoC. Proxies can step in to represent organizations. Attendance at meetings will be open to any interested person to observe. Electronic voting may be utilized to vote on Coalition matters.

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Anne Arundel County CoC membership must establish a board of directors to act on behalf of the Anne Arundel County CoC. The CoC Board of Directors ("CoC Board," or "Board") consists of a diverse array of local stakeholders and practitioners representing a range of interests and expertise. The Board includes organizations that operate projects serving homeless families

and individuals and must include at least one homeless or formerly homeless individual. The Board will consist of at least nine and no more than twenty-nine (29) members. A representative of the Collaborative Applicant and HMIS/Coordinated Entry Lead have permanent seats on the CoC Board of Directors which will be filled by representatives chosen by the Collaborative Applicant and the HMIS/Coordinated Entry Lead, respectively.

#### ***TERM***

The members of the CoC Board shall serve two-year terms beginning with the first board meeting following the annual meeting, with no limits on the number of terms. See "Board Officers" for term limits for specific positions. Board members may resign from the Board by a written notification to the Board President or CoC Lead. Where a vacancy exists, the Board may elect a successor that is recommended by the resigning member by majority vote to serve the remainder of the term. If the resigning member has not recommended a successor, then the Board may vote based on a nomination or nominations by the remaining Board members, and the person receiving a majority of the votes shall serve the remainder of the term.

#### ***ELECTIONS***

The Board Vice President or CoC Lead calls for nominations from the general membership at the first GBM of the calendar year, at least sixty (60) days prior to the annual meeting. The communication will request nominations from all relevant organizations and individuals. Each nominee must indicate a willingness to serve. A list of nominees shall be communicated to the membership at least five (5) days before the annual meeting. Nominations shall be received from the floor at the annual meeting only if there are not enough nominees to fill open seats. The Board Vice President will conduct the vote. The individual(s) receiving the highest vote for each office shall be elected to the Board.

#### ***MEETINGS***

The Anne Arundel County CoC Board holds standing meetings every other month, and additional meetings as necessary with a minimum of a 10-day notice, at a place and time set by the Board President or CoC Lead. Members who fail to attend two (2) consecutive standing meetings during the year or, for cause, may be removed by a vote of three-quarters of the current Board. If a Board Member is removed, the membership can re-elect them during the next board election.

#### ***BOARD MEMBER VOTING AND QUORUM***

Attendance will be taken at all Board meetings. A majority of more than 50% of the sitting Anne Arundel County CoC Board constitutes a quorum at all meetings. The vote of a majority of board members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present constitutes an act of the Anne Arundel County CoC Board.

## ***DUTIES***

The duties of the Anne Arundel County CoC Board include, but are not limited to:

1. Provide overall direction and leadership of the CoC.
2. Create Anne Arundel County ad-hoc and charter directed committees.
3. Appoint members to serve on the CoC committees.
4. Appoint chairs and co-chairs of the CoC standing committees.
5. Serve on at least one CoC committee.
6. Regularly attend CoC membership meetings.
7. Monitor activities of CoC committees, receive reports.
8. Provide agenda and announcements for full membership meetings.
9. Author and publish official CoC communications.
10. Review annual performance reports for all recipients and sub-recipients and provide general updates and/or strategic recommendations regarding project performance and compliance to the CoC membership. Take action against poor performing recipients.
11. Monitor and evaluate the performance of the CoC Housing and service System, known as Anne Arundel County Strategic Plan to End Homelessness, providing an annual report to the CoC membership.
12. Evaluate outcomes of projects funded under federal programs and report to HUD.
13. Develop ranking criteria for the ESG program application and CoC program competition NOFA for member approval.
14. Approve the CoC Program Competition NOFA application, CoC Planning application, and ESG program application.
15. Authority to sign off on or endorse proposals for other non-CoC funding and providers.
16. All other duties assigned by the CoC.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Executive Officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting by General Membership and include the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. An officer is elected by a majority vote and serves a two (2) year term. Board officers are restricted to two (2) consecutive terms in a specific officer position (four (4) years of service). An officer can be re-elected to that position

after a two (2) year absence from that office (the length of one full term). Board Members can run for other officer positions immediately after vacating their current officer position due to term restrictions.

#### ***CHAIR/PRESIDENT***

The President shall be responsible for scheduling membership and board meetings, setting the agendas, chairing the meetings, and signing any necessary documents on the behalf of the Anne Arundel County CoC. The President is responsible for assuring that all board and membership responsibilities and resolutions are carried out.

#### ***VICE-CHAIR/VICE PRESIDENT***

The Vice President shall, in the event of the absence of the President, assume the responsibilities of the President. The Vice President will be responsible for the nomination process and elections and may request assistance from the membership. In addition, the Vice President shall conduct other tasks as assigned by the President.

#### ***TREASURER***

The Treasurer oversees all financial transactions and fundraising efforts going in or out of the Anne Arundel and Annapolis Coalition to End Homelessness. Their primary duties include budget planning, writing checks, financial reporting, record-keeping, and managing incoming and outgoing funds.

#### ***SECRETARY***

The Secretary shall take minutes at the CoC membership and board meetings, record attendance, and notify the membership of meetings times and dates. If absent, the Secretary is responsible for designating another person to take minutes at the meetings. The Secretary will ensure that the meeting dates, times, and agendas are posted on the Collaborative Applicant's website. In addition, the Secretary will be responsible for keeping contact information for all members and board members.

### **STANDING COMMITTEES**

The Coalition established Standing Committees to aid in accomplishing tasks and duties throughout the year and fulfill the work of the CoC. Much of the CoC's work is conducted at committee and workgroup meetings. Standing committees include: Membership Development Committee, Point-In-Time (PIT) Count Committee, Coordinated Entry Committee, Application Review Committee, Training Committee, and Strategic Planning Committee.

A member of the CoC Board will chair or co-chair each standing committee. Other committee membership will include relevant CoC members and other interested stakeholders or relevant experts. The standing committees will meet as often as necessary to accomplish the assigned tasks stated in this Charter. Committees will make available all meeting minutes for the Board and provide a summary of activities and other recommendations annually or as requested by

the Board. Each standing committee may create subcommittees to focus on specific issues, challenges, or projects related to the committee's assigned tasks. The Coalition may establish new committees or ad hoc committees as needed.

#### ***MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE***

Responsible for recruiting and maintaining CoC membership that is diverse and inclusive of People with Lived Experience (PWLE). Assess the level of diversity and involvement of PWLE among the CoC membership and seek out for inclusion members of communities that are under-represented. Develop best practices and implement strategies for recruiting members of diverse backgrounds and PWLE for membership in the CoC and ensuring their meaningful involvement in the CoC's functions.

#### ***POINT-IN-TIME (PIT) COUNT COMMITTEE***

Assist the HMIS Lead to plan and conduct at least biennially, a point-in-time count of homeless persons in Anne Arundel County that meets requirements set by HUD by notice.

#### ***COORDINATED ENTRY COMMITTEE***

Responsible for oversight of the coordinated assessment system for Anne Arundel County that provides an initial, comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services. Monitor and evaluate the quality of services and provide oversight of the recipients based upon documented outcomes. Review the Coordinated Entry Lead's Annual Performance Report and provide strategic recommendations regarding performance and compliance to the Board. The Department of Social Services will operate the coordinated assessment system. This system must comply with requirements established by HUD and Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

#### ***APPLICATION REVIEW COMMITTEE***

Responsible for ranking projects submitted for the CoC Program Competition NOFA and Emergency Solution Grants program according to HUD and Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development guidelines. Amounts awarded to the recipients of the Emergency Solutions Grants program will be determined by the committee utilizing any guidelines issued by HUD and DHCD. Final approvals of project rankings are approved by the Board.

#### ***TRAINING COMMITTEE***

Assist the Collaborative Applicant to plan and conduct regular training opportunities for the Anne Arundel County CoC at least annually on topics including but not limited to: Anti-Discrimination Policies and Procedures, Trauma-Informed Care, Working with Survivors of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking, Equal Access Rules, Mainstream Benefits and Other Assistance, Emergency Preparedness, HMIS and other Systems, and Capacity Building and Professional Development.

#### ***STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE***

Oversight of the Collaborative Applicant, HMIS Lead, ESG Program, and other CoC funded projects. Monitor and evaluate the quality of services and provide oversight of the recipients based upon documented outcomes. Review the Annual Performance Reports of the above responsible organization and/or programs and provide strategic recommendations regarding performance and compliance to the board.

#### **SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

Special committees shall be established to accomplish a particular task or to oversee a specific area. Many are research or coordination committees in type or purpose and may be temporary or change over time. Committees will be concerned with the communication of information and with assisting the leadership in the decision-making process by providing needed information. Committees may meet on a regular basis, such as weekly or more often, or meetings may be called irregularly as the need arises. The frequency of the meetings depends on the work of the committee and the needs of the CoC.

#### **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The CoC shall establish and approve policies and procedures for the operation of Anne Arundel County and City of Annapolis' Continuum of Care, to be set forth in separate Policy and Procedure manual (Appendix A) incorporated herein by reference and made a part of this Governance Charter. Such policies and procedures may include but are not limited to HMIS Policies, Procedures for the operating of the CoC's Coordinated Assessment, and permanent housing prioritization policies as well as other policies required by HUD.

These procedures may be altered, amended, repealed, or added to by an affirmative vote of the members.

#### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

No Anne Arundel County CoC Board members may participate in or influence discussions or resulting decision concerning the award of a grant or other financial benefits to the organization that the member represents. Disclosures of conflicts of interest shall occur annually and at any point in the interim should new or changing conflicts arise and always prior to discussion or any such issues. Volunteers of an organization applying for funds are generally not considered to have a financial interest unless they serve on the Board or in an otherwise official capacity. Board members must recuse themselves prior to and abstain from any vote concerning the award of a grant or provision of other financial benefits to their affiliated organization.

A CoC member who is a grant applicant, representative or employee of a grant applicant, or who otherwise has a financial interest in a grant applicant cannot participate in the decision concerning the award of the grant or provision of other financial benefits to the member

organization. No member organization employee or representative shall participate in or influence discussions or resulting decisions that directly affect the fiscal interests of that individual, his/her immediate family, his/her employer, or other businesses for which they serve on their board or have a financial relationship. Anne Arundel County CoC members must recuse themselves prior to and abstain from any vote concerning the award of a grant or provision of other financial benefits to their affiliated organization.

No member of the CoC Board shall vote upon any matter which shall have a direct financial bearing on the organization that the member represents. This includes all decisions with respect to funding, contracting, awarding, and implementing corrective actions.

### **DESIGNATING A COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT**

The Anne Arundel County CoC designates Arundel Community Development Services, Inc., a 501(c)(3) legal entity, as the Collaborative Applicant to design, operate, and follow a collaborative process for the development of applications and approve the submission of applications in response to a NOFA published by HUD, including applying for CoC Planning Dollars (Activities). The Collaborative Applicant has the following responsibilities:

1. Collect and combine information, complete, and submit the consolidated plan for the CoC Program Competition NOFA, which includes HUD and MD DHCD.
2. Apply for CoC Planning Dollars (Activities) under the direction of the CoC Board.
3. In consultation with the Anne Arundel County CoC and HMIS Lead, develop, follow, and update annually this governance charter – the CoC Membership must approve any amendments.
4. Create and maintain a CoC page on the website.
5. Custodian of all CoC records and documents.
6. Provide administrative support for the CoC as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
7. In coordination with the CoC Membership and under the direction of the CoC Board, responsible for CoC Planning that includes:
  - a. Developing and coordinating the implementation of a Housing and Service System called the Anne Arundel County Strategic Plan to End Homelessness.
  - b. Planning for and conduction of at least biennially, a point-in-time count of homeless persons in Anne Arundel County.
  - c. Consult with ESG program recipients in Anne Arundel County on the plan for allocating ESG program funds and reporting on and evaluating the performance of ESG program recipients and sub-recipients.

ACDS is under contract with Anne Arundel County to manage, administer, and operate the County's federal HUD funds including CoC funds, Emergency Solution Funds, Community Development Block Grant funds, HOME, and HOPWA funds. ACDS exercises these responsibilities with guidance from the CoC's Board of Directors and Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services. These and any additional responsibilities are documented in the Anne Arundel County CoC Collaborative Applicant MOU.

### **DESIGNATING AN HMIS LEAD**

The Anne Arundel County CoC membership designates the Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services (DSS) as the HMIS Lead to manage the CoC Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). DSS executes an MOU with ACDS, on behalf of the County, to manage, administer, and operate the County's HMIS system. The HMIS Lead has the following responsibilities:

1. Develop and revise a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan for the HMIS.
2. Develop plans, policies, and procedures for review and approval by the CoC.
3. Execute participation and user agreements with every contributing HMIS organization.
4. Ensure consistent participation of recipients and subrecipients in the HMIS.
5. Ensure the HMIS is administered in compliance with requirements prescribed by HUD.
6. Conduct and coordinate training for all recipients and subrecipients in the HMIS.
7. In consultation with the Collaborative Applicant, develop, follow, and update annually this governance charter. The CoC Membership must approve any amendments.
8. Coordinate and support operations related to implementation of Coordinated Entry.

### **DESIGNATING A COORDINATED ENTRY LEAD AGENCY**

The Anne Arundel County CoC designates the Anne Arundel Department of Social Services (DSS), a government entity, to establish and operate a coordinated assessment system that provides an initial, comprehensive, standard assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services that meets current HUD requirements. The system will map out the resources and delivery processes used to prevent homelessness and rapidly re-house individuals and families that are homeless. The outcome goals of the system include diverting entry into a shelter by finding alternative housing or sustaining existing housing, decreasing the average length of a homeless episode, and aligning scarce community resources using a prioritization tool.

The coordinated assessment system covers and is accessible via telephone to all of Anne Arundel County. The system must have specific policies that address the needs of victims of

domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, but who are seeking assistance from nonvictim service providers.

## **DESIGNATING A FIDUCIARY FOR ESG PROGRAM FUNDS**

ACDS is the designated recipient entity of the federal HUD ESG funds on behalf of Anne Arundel County and has contractual duties regarding the administration of these funds to ensure regulatory compliance.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The members, officers, committee members, and contractors of the Anne Arundel County CoC will be selected entirely on a nondiscriminatory basis with respect to race, color, national origin, age, disability, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or other federal, state, or locally protected group.

*This Governance Charter was adopted by the Anne Arundel and Annapolis Coalition to End Homelessness on January 24, 2014.*

*\*Revised and Approved: June 7, 2024*