

# Northern Colorado Continuum of Care

## Governance Charter

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## Introduction

Continuums of Care are federally designated regions tasked to promote community wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness. The Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC) covers Larimer and Weld Counties, Colorado, and works diligently to coordinate the regions policies, strategies, and activities for quickly rehousing individuals and families, aligning homeless funding objectives, and promoting equitable access to housing resources through Housing First best practices. The NoCO CoC is covered by four Consolidated Planning jurisdictions: The cities of Fort Collins, Loveland, and Greeley, and Weld County.

## Vision Statement

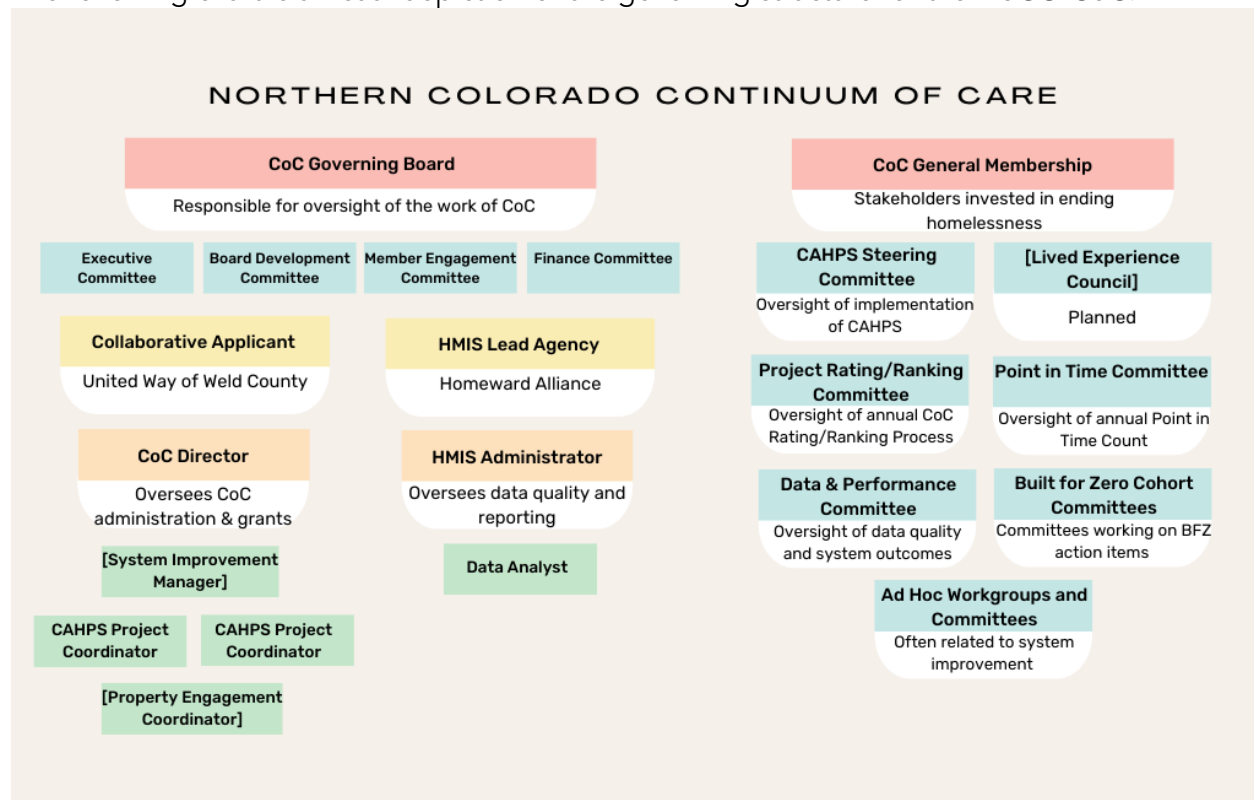
The vision of the NoCO CoC is to ensure homelessness in Northern Colorado will be rare, short-lived, and non-recurring using best practices.

## History of the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care

After many years of being designated as a sub-region within the Balance of State CoC, in 2018, the Voting Membership of the NoCO CoC voted to pursue the formation of a distinct Northern Colorado Continuum of Care. The NoCO CoC was recognized by the Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) as its own Continuum of Care region (CO-505) in January 2020. This Governance Charter captures the structure needed to comply with expectations from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for Continua of Care, as outlined in 24 CFR Part 578 (CoC Program Interim Rule) and other supporting documents.

## NoCO CoC Composition and Structure

The following chart is a visual depiction of the governing structure for the NoCO CoC.



### ***Governing Board***

The Northern Colorado CoC Governing Board acts on behalf of the membership of the NoCO CoC. The Governing Board will formally approve any decisions recommended by the membership (voting members and stakeholders) or committees as well as be responsible for ensuring the CoC is compliant with requirements of HUD and the CoC process. All CoC Partners or Stakeholders will be eligible to participate on the NoCO CoC Governing Board and a call for interested candidates to serve on the Governing Board will be made at the General Membership meetings and/or through the NoCO CoC list-serve and website at least once annually. Governing Board members are voted on by the full membership.

### ***Committees and Workgroups***

Much of the work of the NoCO CoC will occur in committee and workgroup meetings. Specific committees will be established as needed to fulfill the expectations and requirements of the CoC process, as well as make progress towards locally established goals. Decisions or recommendations made by committees will be confirmed and finalized by the Governing Board. All CoC members or stakeholders will be eligible to participate on NoCO CoC committees and a call for interested CoC members to serve on committees will be made at general membership meetings and/or through the NoCO CoC list-serve and website. Descriptions of the responsibilities and duties of permanent committees of the NoCO CoC will be included in the "Committee" section of this Governance Charter.

### ***General Membership***

*CoC Partners:* Participation in the CoC is open to any individual or agency choosing to be regularly involved in the NoCO CoC's work. CoC Partners are expected to be those entities or individuals who have an interest in or affiliation with Northern Colorado communities and/or organizations, and whose work is a part of the overall response to homelessness in the region. Individuals and Agencies become formal CoC Partners by signing a CoC Membership Agreement. CoC Partners may join the NoCO CoC at any time, and will be required to renew their membership every two years. CoC Partners must designate one person to serve as the CoC Voting Member, but are encouraged to identify multiple individuals to participate as Non-Voting Members in the work of the CoC. There is no minimum or maximum number of Members for the NoCO CoC. There are no term limits for Voting Members.

At a minimum, Voting Members commit to regularly participating in general membership meetings, as scheduled, and/or committee meetings. To ensure diversity and broad representation, Non-Voting Members are also encouraged to attend general membership meetings and participate in committee work.

*Stakeholders:* Stakeholders are those individuals and agencies wanting to be informed of the work of the NoCO CoC, but have not signed a CoC Membership Agreement or designated a Voting Member. All individuals and agencies requesting to be on the NoCO CoC email list comprise the stakeholder group. Stakeholders are invited to all general membership meetings of the NoCO CoC but are not permitted to vote, if a vote is requested of the membership (e.g. annual voting for Governing Board members).

The membership of the NoCO CoC strives to include representatives from all of the following entities/sectors.

- Nonprofit homeless service providers

- People with Lived Experience of Homelessness
- Domestic violence victim service providers
- Faith-based organizations
- State government
- County government
- City government
- Community Leaders
- Public housing authorities
- Affordable housing developers
- Organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans
- BIPOC and People from Marginalized Communities
- ESG recipient agencies
- CoC recipient agencies
- Funders
- Law Enforcement
- Landlord (associations)
- Hospitals or Healthcare Providers
- Universities
- Mental Health Agencies
- School Districts (McKinney Vento Programming/Homeless Education Liaisons)
- Youth service providers

***CoC Partner “General Membership” Meetings:*** CoC Partner or “General Member” meetings will occur at least four times per year, but ideally every other month. These meetings are intended to provide relevant information, training, and education related to CoC activities and priorities, funding opportunities, best practices, etc. CoC Partner meetings are open to any person interested in participating, but should be attended at minimum by CoC Partner Voting Members. Notification of meetings will be shared in advance to the CoC notification list, as well as information on how to participate in partner meetings will be posted on the CoC website. Voting Members are strongly encouraged to attend at least 75% of all General Member meetings. If the Voting Member is unable to attend, they should ensure another agency representative is attending in proxy whenever possible; the proxy representative should indicate this in the meeting chat (virtual) or sign in sheet (in person).

### ***CoC Staff***

The CoC will designate one or more organizations to fill three distinct “lead agency” roles described by HUD to provide staffing to the CoC: Collaborative Application responsible for CoC operations and administration, HMIS Lead responsible for HMIS administration, and Coordinated Entry Lead responsible for operating the CoC’s coordinated entry system (known locally as CAHPS). The designated agency(ies) will employ a staff person to fill the roles of CoC Director, HMIS Administrator, and CE Lead respectively. Other staffing positions necessary to advance CoC priorities will be determined based on available funding and budget, through consultation between the CoC Director and/or HMIS Administrator and the Governing Board.

### ***Lived Experience Council***

The policies, priorities, and homeless system response strategies of the NoCO CoC will be informed by a Lived Experience Council (LEC), made up of individuals with recent or current lived experience of homelessness. LEC members are compensated by the CoC for their

contributions on the council. At least one member of the LEC will be identified to serve as Council Liaison to the CoC Governing Board.

### ***Membership Contributions***

In order to ensure sustainability for the NoCO CoC, membership contributions will be requested and accepted annually by any agency (stakeholder, voting member, etc.) that is financially able to do so, with suggested annual contributions recommended by the Governing Board. Membership Contributions are an essential part of funding the work of the CoC, including but not limited to implementing a regional Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), Coordinated Assessment Housing Placement System (CAHPS), as well as CoC planning, advocacy and administrative activities. Allocation and use of funds will be determined annually via a vote from the NoCO CoC Governing Board, unless an agency designates their funds for a particular use, in which case the funds will be utilized for those designated activities.

### **CoC Decision-Making Processes**

Decision-making authority for the NoCO CoC rests with the Governing Board, with three exceptions.

First, the Voting Membership is responsible for appointing Board Members. When electing Board members, 51% of voting members must be present to constitute a quorum. For a motion to pass, 2/3 majority of the quorum must vote in favor. The vote may be sent via e-mail correspondence to all Voting Members of the General Membership. Second, with a recommendation from the Governing Board, the Voting Membership is responsible for voting on and confirming a Collaborative Applicant. Third, with a recommendation from the Governing Board, the Voting Membership is responsible for voting on and confirming an HMIS Lead.

Outside of the above stated exceptions, the Governing Board is ultimately responsible for approving or finalizing any decisions of the NoCO CoC outlined in the CoC Interim Rule ([24 CFR 578](#)). Major decisions may be taken to the general membership or to a specific committee, at the discretion of the Governing Board, for recommendations. Committees or the general membership will engage in a thorough discussion regarding the issue at hand with the intention of building consensus for or commitment to the proposed decision. Chairs of committee meetings may request a vote of the Voting Membership or committee on any identified issues. In these instances, as in all others, 51% of Voting Members must be present to constitute a quorum. For a motion to pass, 2/3 majority of the quorum must vote in favor.

The Governing Board is also expected to engage in a thorough discussion regarding any issue at hand, with the intention of building consensus for, or commitment to, the proposed decision. To establish a quorum for a vote, at least 2/3 of the Governing Board members must be present. For a motion to pass, a 2/3 majority of the quorum must vote in favor.

The Governing Board shall review, and amend if necessary, the Governance Charter at minimum annually. The revised Charter will be shared with the General Membership for a comment period, after which the Governing Board will make additional revisions if needed based on Voting Member recommendations and hold a Board vote to approve. The

Governance Charter shall be made publically available to the General Membership, on the NoCO CoC website.

The Governing Board may defer certain board decision-making responsibility to the CoC Director, HMIS Administrator, and/or CoC Committees as appropriate and reasonable for the effective functioning of the CoC.

### **Governing Board Structure**

**Composition:** The NoCO CoC Governing Board (“the Board”) will be composed of no fewer than 9 and no more than 17 members who serve on a volunteer basis. The Board will not be incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and will not be a legal entity.

Paid employees of the Collaborative Applicant/HMIS Lead who directly oversee the work of the NoCO CoC (e.g. Director, HMIS Administrator) are not eligible to serve on the Board while employed in that role or for up to one year after ending their employment. Rather they will support the board in accomplishing the mission and vision of the NoCO CoC.

The following guidelines exist to inform the composition of the Board:

- To ensure geographical representation, the Board shall hold five (5) Reserved Seats for the following municipal and jurisdictional entities:
  - Four (4) Consolidated plan Jurisdictions within the NoCO CoC
    - Cities of Greeley, Fort Collins and Loveland, and Weld County\*
  - Larimer County\*
    - \*County representatives shall represent rural communities
- There will be two (2) Reserved Seats for representatives of the HMIS Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant
- In order to advise and represent the interests of the State of Colorado, one State-level representative will occupy a reserved *non-voting* seat that does not count toward the total number of board members
- The remaining seats shall be Elected Seats, diverse in perspective and sector.
- The Board shall have at least one (1) and no more than six (6) members who are CoC- or ESG-funded
- The Board values diversity of experience and background; to support this the Board shall:
  - Prioritize recruitment of members from diverse racial, ethnic, and other traditionally marginalized communities
  - Have at minimum one (1) representative with the lived experience of homelessness
- The Board shall have diversity of sector, including representatives from the public, non-profit, and private sectors, including at least one (1) representative from the private sector

**Selection:** Board Members representing agencies entitled to a Reserved Seat are appointed to the Board by their respective agency. All other Board Members are nominated, either through self or third-party nomination, and elected by the Voting Members of the General Membership. Board recruitment is managed by the Board Development Committee, with a public call for Board nominations to be conducted at least once annually in the first quarter of

the calendar year. The election and voting process may occur during a General Membership meeting or electronically via email or other online forum.

**Terms:** Governing Board members serve two (2)-year terms, with the ability to serve three (3) consecutive terms, for a total of six (6) years. Board Members representing agencies holding a Reserved Seat are exempt from term limits, but are encouraged to appoint a new representative to the Board after six (6) years of service when possible. When a Member representing a Reserved Seat is vacated, that agency shall appoint a new Board Member as soon as possible. If an Elected Seat is vacated in the middle of their two-year term, this seat will be considered Open and will be filled during the next Board election cycle. Elected Board Members seeking a second or third two-year term, do not need to be re-elected by the Voting Members but shall notify the Chair of the Board Development Committee and the CoC Director of their intention to serve a subsequent term. Conversely, if an Elected Board Member declines to serve a second or third term, they shall notify the Chair of the Board Development Committee and the CoC Director at least one month prior to the end of their term.

**Board Meetings:** The Board and Board Committees will meet at minimum quarterly, with one Board Retreat occurring at least once annually. Meetings may be held in person or virtually. Governing Board meetings will be open to all General Members of the NoCO CoC, with meeting information posted on the NoCO CoC website and meeting minutes available to General Members upon request.

**Board Positions:** The work of the Board will be supported by the following Board Positions:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Immediate Past Board Chair

These Positions are nominated and elected by the Board, and may serve up to two consecutive one (1) year terms. **Board Committees:** The work of the Board will be further supported by these standing Board Committees:

- Executive Leadership Committee
- Board Development Committee
- Member Engagement Committee
- Finance Committee

Additional standing or ad hoc Board Committees may be constituted at the direction of the Board.

#### Duties of the Governing Board

The Governing Board has the following purview, either directly or to delegate to CoC-focused staff:

1. To convene regular meetings of the full Continuum of Care general membership;
2. To establish standing committees; Governing board members should, as appropriate, serve on at least one CoC committee;
3. To approve or deny any committee or general membership recommendations;



4. To provide a recommendation to the Voting Membership of a designated “Collaborative Applicant” that prepares and submits the annual consolidated application for HUD Continuum of Care funds. This designation is reviewed annually via monitoring by the Governing Board. A competitive RFP process to determine a Collaborative Applicant will happen every at least 5 years, or as needed;
5. To provide a recommendation to the Voting Membership of a designate a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agency to manage all aspects of the HMIS database. This designation is reviewed annually via monitoring by the Governing Board. A competitive RFP process to determine the HMIS Lead Agency will happen at least every 5 years, or as needed;
6. To consult with recipients and subrecipients of HUD funds to establish program and system performance targets, monitor recipient and subrecipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and provide support for poor performers - with support from the Collaborative Applicant;
7. In consultation with recipients of Emergency Solutions Grants program funds, to establish written standards for providing homeless assistance using HUD Continuum of Care funds (also known as CoC Written Standards);
8. To consult with Emergency Solutions Grants program recipients on: (a) the plan for allocating ESG program funds; and (b) evaluating the performance of ESG program subrecipients.
9. To evaluate the outcomes of projects funded under the Emergency Solutions Grants program and the Continuum of Care program;
10. To coordinate the implementation of a housing and service system that meets the needs of homeless families and individuals, including unaccompanied youth. This Continuum of Care system includes at least the following elements:
  - a. (Street) Outreach, engagement and assessment
  - b. Emergency Shelters (ES)
  - c. Transitional Housing (TH)
  - d. Rapid Rehousing (RRH)
  - e. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
  - f. Homelessness Prevention (HP) and Diversion
  - g. Discharge Planning
  - h. Supportive Services
  - i. Ongoing Support in Housing
11. Members of the Governing Board that represent Consolidated Plan jurisdictions are required to provide information needed to complete the Consolidated Plans within the geographic area of the Continuum of Care. The NoCO CoC is covered by four Consolidated Planning jurisdictions: the cities of Fort Collins, Loveland, and Greeley, and Weld County.
12. In conjunction with the Collaborative Application, the Governing Board will hire and evaluate the performance of the CoC Director.

### *Governing Board Positions and Standing Committees*

*Governing Board Officer Positions:* The following positions will provide guidance to the CoC Director and leadership on the Board. Officer Positions are selected by a 2/3 majority vote of the Governing Board and serve an initial term of one year, beginning after the yearly Board Member election process. Officers may serve up to two consecutive terms.

### *Chair*

The position of Chair of the NoCO CoC Governing Board will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Participate in monthly Executive Leadership meetings, consisting of other board officers and the CoC Director
- Lead Board Executive Leadership Committee
- Assist in facilitation of board and general member meetings as needed/requested by CoC Director
- Attend HUD-related trainings and/or webinars as appropriate or requested by CoC Director as well as engaged with HUD Technical Assistance as needed
- Attend key community meetings or functions on behalf of the NoCO CoC, as appropriate or requested by the CoC Director
- Participate in the interviewing process for new CoC staff
- Engage and assist in onboarding new board members
- Inform CoC Director of items that could or should be included in CoC general communications.
- Report Board updates to the CoC General Membership

### *Vice Chair*

The position of Vice Chair of the NoCO CoC Governing Board will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Chair the Board Development Committee
- Serve on the Executive Leadership Committee
- Fill in and lead when the Chair is unable to do so
- Assist the CoC Director and Chair with new board member recruitment and onboarding
- Manage the strategy in ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion within the CoC board structure
- Have a deep knowledge of the charter to ensure compliance during meetings
- Review drafts and revisions of the CoC Policies and Procedures as requested by the CoC Director

### *Secretary*

The position of Secretary of the NoCO CoC Governing Board will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Participate in monthly Executive Leadership meetings, alongside other board officers and the CoC Director
- Assist the CoC Director in preparing the board meeting agendas and manage CoC communications
- Acts as timekeeper during meetings
- Takes meeting minutes and prepares them for timely distribution
- Tracks votes and outcomes during meetings

- Tracks board member terms and assists CoC Director with managing board member nomination and confirmation process
- Ensure maintenance and regular distribution of CoC General Member interest survey as well as oversee plan to engage general members with CoC activities

#### *Treasurer*

The position of Treasurer of the NoCO CoC Governing Board will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Chair the finance committee
- Participating in monthly Executive Leadership Committee meetings
- Represent the NoCO CoC Governing Board to the Collaborative Applicant
- Assist in the preparation and review of the annual CoC/CAHPS/HMIS budget
- Review CoC financial reports and provide pertinent financial information to the Governing board and general membership
- Assist CoC Director with ensuring CoC is fulfilling all legal responsibilities regarding finances
- Led work around proposed annual CoC member contributions including the tracking of committed funds.
- Lead research regarding necessary requirements for the NoCO CoC to obtain non-profit status
- Assist in budget forecasting for CoC-focused staffing needs.

*Standing Board Committees:* Standing Committees of the Governing Board will provide guidance to the general work of the Continuum of Care and the Board. Board Members are expected to serve on at least on Standing Board Committee and/or other standing CoC Committee. Committee members are confirmed following the annual Board Member election. These Standing Governing Board Committees are responsible for the following:

#### *Executive Leadership Committee:*

- Led by Board Chair
- Includes vice chair, secretary, treasurer, and prior Board Chair
- Assists CoC Director with identification of topics for Board Meeting Agenda
- Conducts the annual audit of the charter including recommending and overseeing revisions
- Conducts the annual and as needed review of the CoC Director
- Maintains understanding of the board committee activities
- Engages with HUD Technical Assistance as necessary on issues related to board development and governance

#### *Board Development:*

- 3-4 members, led by Vice Chair and advised by prior Board Chair
- Annually reviews the Charter with a focus on issues of board and general membership structure and representation

- Engages with HUD Technical Assistance as necessary on issues related to board development and governance
- Develops a board recruitment strategy to ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion within the CoC board structure
- Assists CoC Director with new board member recruitment and onboarding
- Members to assist with maintaining compliance with NoCO CoC charter during meetings
- Review drafts/revisions of CoC policies and procedures as requested by CoC Director

*Member Engagement:*

- 3-4 members, led by the Board Secretary
- Committee open to non-board members
- With input from CoC Director, plan General Member meeting agendas and presentations
- Plan and execute yearly Stakeholder Event
- Assist CoC Director with identifying content for CoC communications, such as CoC Newsletter and website, including training opportunities, relevant articles, CoC spotlights, etc.
- Rotating member of committee to co-facilitate General Member meeting with CoC Director
- Assist in recruitment efforts for new General Members/CoC partners
- Create, evaluate, and distribute the CoC General Member interest survey. Distribute results to Board Committees and CoC Committees.

*Finance Committee:*

- Chaired by the Treasurer
- 3-4 members, Committee open to non-board members with financial expertise, a representative for the collaborative applicant will sit on the committee
- Understand the financial status of the NoCO CoC and communicate to the governing board and general membership regarding the finances of the NoCO CoC
- Assist in the preparation of yearly CoC/CAHPS/HMIS budget and presentation to the Governing Board.
- Create a financial forecasting plan for expected CoC growth/goals, including creation of financial calendar, to be used annually.
- Report the financial forecast to the Governing Board including the future of projects and positions.
- Identifies grants, foundations, and other potential revenue streams applicable for CoC Administration
- Recommend suggested annual CoC member contributions
- Assist with exploration of path for NoCO CoC to obtain non-profit status

**Collaborative Applicant**

HUD requires each Continuum of Care to select a “Collaborative Applicant” to prepare and submit the annual consolidated application for HUD Continuum of Care funds. The Governing

Board will release a Request for Applications and select a Collaborative Applicant from those applications received.

Every five years the CoC will publish a request for proposal (RFP) for the Collaborative Applicant. Respondents to the RFP will be evaluated based on:

- Capacity
- Alignment with strategic plan
- Previous experience
- Commitment to ending homelessness in Larimer and Weld county

The Governing Board will review all responses to the RFP and make a recommendation to the Voting Membership. The membership must then vote to approve the board's recommendation by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of members. The board may negotiate and make necessary modifications to the contract with the Collaborative Applicant by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote of a quorum of the Governing Board.

The Collaborative Applicant will be responsible for the following:

1. Serving as the "Collaborative Applicant" for purposes of the annual HUD CoC grant application
2. Managing the annual grant competition and preparing the annual consolidated grant application;
3. Submit CoC's Consolidated Application to HUD in annual CoC Competition
  - Project Ranking to be developed by a committee designated by the Governing Board
4. Prepare and submit CoC Planning Grant application in annual CoC Competition.
5. To the extent possible, provide technical assistance on HUD's electronic grant application to independent project applicants
6. Serving as the "CoC primary contact" as defined by HUD
7. To consult with recipients and subrecipients of HUD funds to establish program and system performance targets, monitor recipient and subrecipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and provide support for poor performers - with support from the Governing Board;
8. Planning, coordinating and submitting Housing Inventory Count and Point-in-Time Count in accordance with annual requirements published by HUD.
10. Coordinate and provide staff support for Governing Board and general membership meetings.
11. Provide staff support to all CoC committee meetings to ensure knowledge of all CoC committee activities.
12. Managing shared communications amongst CoC stakeholders and members via website and email.
13. Participate in sub-committees and meetings as required/appropriate, including the HMIS Statewide Governance Committee and NoCO CoC committees
13. Prepare annual Grant Inventory Worksheet (GIW)
14. Study HUD guidance on system-wide performance, work with HMIS Lead to identify bright spots and areas for improvement, and use results in annual CoC grant application
15. Maintain compliance for planning grant requirements

16. Provide general direction, oversight and vision for the NoCO CoC, specifically related to new/emerging best practices and opportunities from HUD and other experts.
17. Maintain CoC's website
18. Maintain records of all general membership and Governing Board meetings, including voting decisions, and any other important CoC records in accordance with requirements in CoC interim rule.
19. Post and distribute agendas in advance of general membership and Governing Board meetings
20. Act as the grant applicant for non-CoC-funded grant opportunities to support CoC activities
21. Ensure CoC recruits new Voting Membership annually in accordance with requirements in CoC Interim Rule
22. Ensure CoC reviews governing board selection process at least every 5 years in accordance with requirements in CoC Interim Rule
23. Provide updates upon request to Governing Board and general membership about the duties described here.
24. Participate in sub-committees and meetings as required/appropriate
25. Hire CoC Director and other CoC-focused staff
26. Hold a seat on the Governing Board.

### Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead

The Northern Colorado CoC envisions a locally-controlled HMIS system that exceeds HUD's reporting expectations. Our vision is that clients, agencies, and the community benefit from a streamlined approach to referrals, intakes, and assessments across the entire service delivery system which the HMIS Lead, in partnership with the NoCO CoC general membership, will build. We envision that such a system will offer the following benefits:

- Ensure that the CoC's Lead Agency is in regulatory compliance with HEARTH Act and HUD system requirements as outlined in current HUD Data Technical Standards;
- Coordinate case management across agencies, programs, and services;
- Track and measure outcomes achieved by the CoC and programs within it;
- Coordinate services within the CoC and across the Statewide CoCs;
- Share actionable data with funders, boards, and other stakeholders; use data to identify service gaps and advocate for the development or modification of policies; and
- Track and measure outcomes for the goals outlined in federal, state and local plans to end homelessness.

The HMIS lead agency is selected by the CoC Voting Membership based on a recommendation from the CoC Governing Board as per the "Duties of the Governing Board" section. Per the HUD "HMIS System Administrator Checklist" (published April 2019), that agency is responsible for the following (note: this list is not exhaustive):

- **Project Management:** Oversee the general management of the HMIS project. May also supervise HMIS staff. Usually interacts with CoC leadership, program leadership, and the HMIS Lead agency's leadership. Tasks include but are not limited to:
- **System Administration:** Manage the technical aspects of the day-to-day operations of the HMIS. Work directly with the end users and the HMIS software vendor to ensure authorized access to client information, accessibility of the HMIS software, software

performance, correct set up and monitoring of system security, and adherence to CoC privacy policies within the software. Tasks include but are not limited to:

- Work with HMIS staff to implement an HMIS operations plan to ensure all responsibilities are fulfilled in a timely manner;
  - Maintain a calendar of events, such as report due dates, training dates, monitoring dates, data committee meeting dates, annual recertification due dates, to support ongoing and cyclical HMIS operational activities;
  - Ensure the HMIS network infrastructure is up and running;
  - Ensure hosting, storage, and back-up procedures are completed in accordance with CoC expectations (if a vendor function, the system administrator should verify);
  - Add, remove, or update user account information, reset passwords, set and monitor end user access levels;
  - Ensure correct set up of projects in the HMIS;
  - Customize/configure workflows within the capacity of the software, as authorized by the CoC, and in accordance with the CoC Privacy Plan, Privacy Notice, and data use and disclosure agreements;
  - Assess and conduct HMIS software performance for improvement;
  - Work with HMIS staff and software vendor to develop and implement custom project work plans;
  - Manage HMIS software updates;
  - Test, monitor, and validate software fixes;
  - Ensure technical requirements are incorporated into planning for special software projects;
  - Ensure the existence of current software technical documentation, such as system configuration and a local HMIS specific data dictionary;
  - Remove or archive client data from HMIS as authorized by the CoC;
  - Work with software vendor/ensure presence of a disaster protection and recovery plan for data hosting sites, including back-up sites and accessibility protocols;
  - Develop and manage a disaster recovery protocol for System Admin/HMIS Lead paper and electronic HMIS documents and agreements;
  - Support non-HMIS programs with a comparable database; and
  - Install and configure new hardware and software related to the HMIS for the HMIS Lead;
- **Training:** Develop, conduct, and document training for HMIS users and data collectors. Tasks include but are not limited to:
- Develop and implement a regular training plan for HMIS end-users, that ensures all required HMIS participants have received training and orientation on regulations pertaining to their funding;
  - Develop and implement a regular training plan for HMIS software data entry and capabilities;
  - Provide training on system security, privacy, and HMIS policies and procedures; and
  - Provide training on report generation, relevant to audience (CoC Annual Performance Report, System Performance Measures, Emergency Solutions Grant Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report);

- **Security and privacy:** Help establish and oversee policies related to the HMIS system security and privacy. Tasks include but are not limited to:
  - Establish policies, procedures, and conduct security standard monitoring, including HMIS related hard copy documents, such as completed intake forms, printed By Name Lists, printed documents with Personal Identifying Information (PII), and filing systems used to house these documents;
  - Create and implement a system security plan;
  - Implement technical safeguards to protect HMIS data, assuring devices used for HMIS are password protected, have up-to-date antivirus software, have locking screensavers, have individual or network firewalls, and physical device locations are secure;
  - Ensure that the HMIS software is configured correctly to ensure compliance with CoC established security policies and procedures;
  - Monitor audit logs for unauthorized access to client records and report deviations from security protocol according to an established channel of communication;
  - Ensure security of data during any electronic transfer of data;
  - Conduct security standard monitoring in accordance with established policies and procedures;
  - Establish policies, procedures, and monitoring plan for the Privacy Notice; client authorization form (Release of Information); and electronic and paper documents containing personal identifying information (i.e. intake forms, assessment tools, By Name Lists, referral forms, etc.);
  - Ensure that the HMIS software is configured correctly to ensure compliance with CoC established privacy policies and procedures; and
  - Conduct monitoring for compliance to established policies, procedures, and plans and report deviations from privacy protocol according to an established channel of communication;
- **Technical support:** Receive, triage, and resolve technical issues in the HMIS experienced by the end users. Work with the system administrator to identify HMIS software issues and with HMIS training staff to identify end user training needs. Tasks include but are not limited to:
  - Develop and establish HMIS support structure, helpdesk, HMIS Policies and Procedures;
  - Conduct HMIS support and help desk activities within the scope of established HMIS policies, procedures, and protocols;
  - Respond to technical queries and assist end users;
  - Troubleshoot and resolve HMIS issues/bug/default tracking with HMIS software vendor;
  - Monitor data collection and review report compliance with HUD standards and federal partner requirements, when applicable;
  - Manage communication with the HMIS software vendor; report ongoing issues in accordance with HMIS Policies and Procedures;
  - Work with HMIS software vendor to plan and implement software upgrades and fixes; and
  - Design and implement a customer feedback forum (HMIS User group);
- **Data Quality**
  - Establish and maintain data quality policies and procedures;



- Develop and maintain a data quality improvement/ maintenance plan;
- Test, monitor, validate, and verify the HMIS software can collect required data elements;
- Monitor data quality in accordance with CoC established Data Quality Management Plan;
- Work with end users to identify and resolve data quality issues;
- Perform data integrity maintenance, such as record deduplication/merger, as authorized by the CoC;
- Develop and operate a data quality monitoring plan to ensure the HMIS collects required data as per the most recent HUD specifications, including federal partner requirements; and
- Establish, maintain, and monitor data and hardware disposal policies and procedures;
- **Data analysis and reporting:** Analyze data for the CoC, including non-HMIS data. Interprets, visualizes, and presents data to the CoC. Ensure CoC reporting requirements are met. Tasks include but are not limited to:
  - Manage data imports and exports;
  - Create and maintain documentation of custom reports;
  - Extract, compile, and analyze HMIS data, in accordance with CoC policies and procedures, including creation and submission of HUD required reporting on behalf of the CoC;
  - Extract, compile, and analyze HMIS data, in accordance with CoC policies and procedures, to support service program staff in the creation and submission of federal project reports; and
  - Contribute to and/or prepare and submit the HMIS APR;
- **Communications:** Disseminate information to the community and manage communications related to data on behalf of the CoC. Tasks include but are not limited to:
  - Manage HMIS public website and community dashboard reporting; and
  - Support the HMIS Lead and CoC leadership’s outreach to project and community leadership to cultivate and maintain support and understanding of HMIS.
- Participate in sub-committees and meetings as required/appropriate, including the HMIS Statewide Governance Committee and NoCO CoC committees
- Hold a seat on the Governing Board.

The Northern Colorado CoC, in partnership with the HMIS Lead intends to do all of the above listed activities in coordination with the CoC program, ESG program, the Colorado Statewide HMIS Collaborative and other entities/funders that have HMIS requirements.

### **Colorado Statewide HMIS Collaborative**

The NoCO CoC will nominate and confirm four representatives to serve on the Colorado Statewide Collaborative. These members may be nominated among interested candidates from the general membership.

Representatives from the NoCO CoC will participate in the Colorado Statewide HMIS Collaborative. As outlined in the Colorado Statewide HMIS Collaborative Framework, the

“Collaborative is responsible for providing counsel and assistance to the HMIS Lead Organization(s) staff members, CoC governing bodies, and contributing providers within each of the three participating CoC on all matters regarding homeless service data and HMIS. These activities are binding insofar as the recommendations made by the Collaborative cannot be altered, revised, or otherwise edited by any CoC, and shall be implemented within each CoC as determined by the Collaborative. These binding activities address the common HMIS policy and governance issues that affect each CoC individually and collectively.”

The Governing Board may designate an HMIS for Northern Colorado. The process of selecting a specific HMIS will occur through the work of the Statewide HMIS Collaborative, and the NoCO CoC board will vote on the recommendation provided by the Collaborative. The HMIS designated by the NoCO CoC is BitFocus Clarity.

### **CoC Committee Structure**

The Northern Colorado CoC will have a robust committee structure to advance CoC priorities through advising and making recommendations to the board, completing CoC-related tasks and activities, and make certain CoC-related decisions as empowered by the board. The formation of a committee may be recommended by the Governing Board, CoC-focused staff or the general membership. To ensure adequate geographic representation from all parts of the CoC, committees should be made up of members from the larger cities in Northern Colorado and there should also be an effort to include representatives from the more rural parts of Larimer and Weld counties. Governing Board members are expected to participate in at least one committee as appropriate, and general members will be encouraged to participate on one or more committees. Some committees may be ad-hoc and/or may be seasonal while others may meet several times per month. Frequency of meetings is determined by committee members to meet the objectives and needs of the committee. Each committee will have a chair and will report activities back to the Governing Board and general membership on an as needed basis, but at least annually. Additionally, committees may meet as needed with other committees to better coordinate the work of the CoC. The specific functions and structure of each committee are outlined in supplemental appendices to the governance charter.

### **Conflict of Interest Policy**

The purpose of the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC) membership conflict of interest policy is to protect the NoCO CoC and to emphasize the CoC’s commitment to the highest standards of integrity, fairness, and conduct to ensure the maximum public trust. The NoCO CoC conflict of interest policy will serve as a model for the community and the individuals served by the CoC.

This policy is intended to supplement, but not replace, any applicable state and federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations. The NoCO CoC Governing Board follows the Federal Regulation for Title 24- Urban and Housing Development (578.95) for matters relating to conflicts of interest.

Parties with conflicted interest should remove themselves from decision-making in such situations. The following describes in detail:

- What constitutes a conflict of interest
- Who can be considered a conflicted party

- Actions conflicted parties should take, such as recusal
- Procedures for determining and documenting conflict of interest

A *conflict of interest* may exist when the interests or activities of any Governing Board member may be seen as competing with the interest and activities of the NoCO CoC; or when a member derives a financial or other material gain as a result of a direct or indirect relationship. Such conflicts are presumed to exist in those circumstances in which a member's actions may have a preferential impact upon the agency or entity employing the member. Such actions are presumed to include, but are not limited to, the development of policies in which a self-serving bias may be present as well as in decisions affecting the allocation of resources.

No Northern Colorado CoC member shall participate in or influence discussions or resulting decisions concerning the award of grants or other financial benefits that:

1. Directly benefit the NoCO CoC Governing Board member as an individual, or an immediate family member;
2. Directly benefit any organization in which the NoCO CoC Governing Board member has a direct financial interest;
3. Directly benefit any organization with which the NoCO CoC Governing Board member is affiliated in an official capacity; or
4. Directly benefit any organization from which the NoCO CoC Governing Board member derives financial benefit, exclusive of stipends.

Examples:

1. *Annual CoC Program Competition:* NoCO CoC Governing Board members whose organizations have projects that are ranked during the competitive CoC Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) process shall not participate in final voting and decisions on ranking policies, and shall not participate in discussions or final decisions (votes) regarding project rankings or funding recommendations. Such members may participate in the development of performance targets and evaluation tool(s).
2. *Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Funding:* NoCO CoC Governing Board members whose organizations who have applied to receive ESG funding directly from the NoCO CoC shall not participate in discussions or final decisions (vote) regarding funding recommendations. Such members may participate in the development of performance targets and evaluation tools.
3. *Receipt of Services:* A potential conflict arising from persons with lived homeless experience receiving services from an organization that may directly benefit from a funding decision shall not preclude discussion or voting on funding decisions.

*Covered persons*- any member who is in a position to participate in a decision-making process or gain inside information with regard to activities pertaining to the NoCO CoC and its partners, as well as any NoCO CoC members receiving federal, state, or local funding.

It is the responsibility of CoC members to avoid any actual conflict of interest and the appearance of a conflict of interest in their activities on behalf of the NoCO CoC. All members should act on a matter if a reasonable person who knew the circumstances of the situation could legitimately question the CoC member and CoC's fairness.

*Confidentiality* - It is the policy that Northern Colorado Continuum of Care Governing Board members will not disclose confidential information belonging to, or obtained through their affiliation with the Northern Colorado CoC to any person, including their relatives, friends, and business and professional associates, unless Northern Colorado CoC has authorized disclosure. Members must maintain the highest standards of confidentiality regarding information obtained directly or indirectly through their involvement with the NoCO CoC, this includes but is not limited to, sensitive information about members and their organizations and funded agencies.

*Duty to Disclose* - NoCO CoC Governing Board members have a duty to disclose any potential or actual conflicts of interests. NoCO CoC Governing Board members shall disclose potential conflicts of interest that they may have regarding any matters that come before the NoCO CoC in all CoC meetings and decision-making processes, including Board meetings, general membership meetings, and committee meetings. NoCO CoC members must disclose any relationship, financial interest or other information that presents an actual or potential conflict of interest. NoCO CoC Governing Board members will disclose conflicts of interest annually through annual statements, as well as when conflicts of interest arise.

#### *Annual Statements*

1. Each NoCO CoC Governing Board member shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:
  - a. Has received a copy of the Conflict of Interest policy
  - b. Has read and understood the policy; and
  - c. Has agreed to comply with the policy
2. Each NoCO CoC Governing Board member shall annually sign a statement, which declares whether such person is an independent member.
3. If at any time during the year, the information in the annual statement changes materially, the NoCO CoC Governing Board member shall disclose such changes and revise the annual disclosure form at the earliest opportunity.
4. The NoCO CoC Governing Board shall regularly and consistently monitor and enforce compliance with this policy by reviewing annual statements and taking such other actions as are necessary for effective oversight.

NoCO CoC Governing Board members will complete the form titled "Northern Colorado Continuum of Care: Conflict of Interest Form" at the first meeting each new year.

*Recusal*- All individuals identified as having a conflict of interest will recuse themselves from participating in the discussion and in the vote for which the conflict of interest is identified. Northern Colorado CoC members shall not participate in or influence discussions or resulting decisions concerning implementing corrective actions concerning the member or the member's organization in which potential or actual conflict of interest exists.

*Determining whether COI exists*- After the disclosure of a potential or actual conflict of interest, the board will discuss all factors of the potential case of conflict of interest and will discuss with the person in which the conflict of interest has arisen. The interested person will leave the NoCO CoC meeting and the board will discuss the possible conflict of interest. Any matter in which NoCO CoC Governing Board members have an actual or potential conflict of interest will be decided by a vote of members with no actual or potential conflict of interest.

### *Violations and Exceptions*

If the Board has reasonable cause to believe a NoCO CoC Governing Board member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

If, after hearing the NoCO CoC Governing Board member's response, and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstance, the Governing Board determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, the Board shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action via discussion and majority vote by the Governing Board. Corrective action includes, but is not limited to, a statement of reprimand or censure recorded in the notes of the NoCO CoC Governing Board meeting, and/or revocation of Board membership.

The NoCO CoC, through the Governing Board reserves the right to make an exception to this policy and procedures based on communication from HUD that impact the CoC's ability to carry out the policy and procedures as described above.

*Records of Proceedings:* The minutes of any meeting will reflect if any conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest regarding any business of the NoCO CoC and its partners were included in the meeting's agenda. The notes of the NoCO CoC Governing Board shall contain:

1. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a relationship or financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the relationship or financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the NoCO CoC Governing Board's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
2. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC) is committed to making homelessness rare, short-lived, and non-recurring for all people experiencing homelessness and housing instability. Additionally, the NoCO CoC is committed to creating an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, as well given equal treatment and opportunity. In order to do so the NoCO CoC and all of its partner organizations (included the staff, volunteers, and contractors at partner organizations), including CoC and ESG funded organizations, shall not discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic, including race, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, ancestry, religion, sex, familial status, age, gender identity, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, etc) status, marital status, domestic or sexual violence victim status, or sensory, mental, or physical disability. All individuals benefitting from homeless system services are ensured reasonable accommodations and reasonable modifications under the Fair Housing Act. The NoCO CoC and its partners must abide by any non-discrimination and equal opportunity policies of federal civil rights laws.

Additionally, the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care is committed to providing equal access to all persons, especially those least likely to seek or receive services and those who historically had the most difficulty receiving and accessing resources and services, to the Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement System (CAHPS). This includes, but is not limited to, all applicable civil rights and fair housing laws and regulations, including HUD's Equal Access and Gender Identity Rules. Further policies and procedures related to non-discrimination in coordinated entry are documented in detail in the CAHPS Policies and Procedures.

### *NoCO CoC Equal Access Procedures*

In order to ensure equal access, the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care will:

- Provide annual and as-needed training to service providers and others regarding the HUD Equal Access and Gender Identity Rules and related requirements.
- Use appropriate inclusive language in communications, publications, training events, personnel handbooks and other policy documents that affirms the CoC's commitment to serving all eligible clients in adherence with the HUD Equal Access and Gender Identity Rules.
- Support all clients in understanding their privacy rights and the implications of releasing information.
- Regularly monitor CoC-funded and ESG-funded agencies and regional coordinated entry systems to ensure compliance with HUD's Equal Access and Gender Identity Rules, and other applicable civil rights and fair housing laws and regulations.
- Facilitate and encourage service providers to use an equity lens when reviewing policies and procedures

The NoCO CoC strongly encourages all service provider partners to:

- Make sure that staff and volunteers understand that a client may present their gender differently than the way staff and volunteers identify their gender.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers maintain the confidentiality of a client's legal name and sex at birth and understand the potential impact that disclosure can have on a client's progress toward self-sufficiency.
- When possible, ensure that new construction and rehabilitation includes and promotes privacy and safety in sleeping areas, bathrooms and showers.
- Take prompt action to resolve inappropriate behavior, treatment, harassment, or any other equal access issues by staff, volunteers or clients.
- Include policies and procedures in employee handbooks and training that prohibit discrimination and provide guidance to staff to ensure that all persons have equal access to the agency's services.
- Review policies and procedures with an equity lens to ensure that the agency is not creating barriers to services

The NoCO CoC strongly encourages all direct service staff partners to:

- Do their best to ensure client safety and prevent harassment.
- Not consider a client or potential client to be ineligible for services because their appearance or behavior does not conform to gender stereotypes.

- Not ask questions or seek information concerning a person’s anatomy or medical history beyond that necessary to determine program eligibility.
- Not require a person’s gender identity to match the gender listed on an ID or other documents.
- Help clients understand the resources available to help them obtain legal identification documents.
- Use the clients preferred gender and pronoun.
- Keep clients’ transgender status confidential, unless the client wants to share this information.
- Treat clients’ gender identity and sex at birth as confidential medical information that will not be disclosed without written time-limited consent.
- Provide services to client’s despite race, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, ancestry, religion, sex, familial status, age, gender identity, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, etc) status, marital status, domestic or sexual violence victim status, or sensory, mental, or physical disability.

### **Process for Reviewing and Amending the Governance Charter**

This governance charter is reviewed at least annually by the Governing Board and updated/revised as needed. The Governing Board is responsible for amending the governance charter as needed; however the general membership will have the opportunity to review and offer suggestions of modifications to the charter annually. The annual review, in consultation with the Collaborative Applicant and HMIS Lead may include the following:

1. Review of the status of the Collaborative Applicant
2. Review of the status of the HMIS Lead Agency
3. Full review of every section of the governance charter
4. Review and update committee responsibilities
5. Review current decision-making processes

The board may amend this governance charter at any time, using the procedure described above under “Governing Board Decision-Making Process.”

## Appendix A

### Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement System (CAHPS) Steering Committee

The CAHPS Steering Committee is the primary driver of building capacity in the Northern Colorado coordinated entry system with the goal of reaching functional zero homelessness throughout the region. This is a working committee and members are expected to not only attend committee meetings but also contribute time and effort to the work of the committee between meetings.

Some core activities of the CAHPS Steering Committee are to develop and implement CAHPS policies and procedures, as well as support, recruit, and train community partners on issues related to coordinated entry. Additionally, the committee will facilitate the annual HUD system performance evaluation as well any additional evaluation of the system as needed.

#### *Membership:*

This committee is comprised of individuals from NoCO CoC general member agencies who additionally can bring specific knowledge, skills, and relationship building needed to strengthen and guide a successful coordination of homelessness services. Members of the CAHPS Steering Committee should be balanced among the geographic areas of the CoC. Representatives should also reflect different sectors and organizations that participate in CAHPS. These include, but are not limited to: Veterans, Youth, Single Adults, Funders, Families, Housing Providers, Mental Health Professionals, and those with lived experience. The committee size should meet the needs of the work and may fluctuate; however, the ideal committee size is no less than 7 and no more than 10 people. The CAHPS Steering Committee will elect a chair who will set the agenda and lead the committee meetings in consultation with the CAHPS Coordinator. The CAHPS Coordinator, a paid staff position through United Way of Weld County, will be a non-voting member of the CAHPS Committee.

Membership will be re-evaluated yearly to ensure that this committee stays active and properly representative. Prospective members should submit a letter of interest to the steering committee that details applicable knowledge and skills that will benefit the work of the committee. Current steering committee members will vote on the inclusion of prospective candidates.

#### *Meetings:*

The CAHPS Steering Committee will meet monthly, with the option to meet more often as needed. In consultation with the CAHPS Coordinator, the CAHPS Committee chair will set the agenda for steering committee meetings and will help ensure the priorities and objectives of the committee continues to move forward.

#### *Voting:*

The CAHPS Steering Committee will have the authority to vote on issues related directly to the implementation of the coordinated entry system; however any decisions that will have a wide-ranging impact on the CoC as a whole should be directed to the NoCO CoC Governing Board



and/or the General Membership for a vote. There should be a quorum of steering committee members for any vote; passing votes should have 51% approval.

*Additional Expectations:*

Steering Committee members are required to attend no less than one case conference a month and should attend at least 75% of all Steering Committee meetings each year.

## **Appendix B**

### Data and Performance Committee

High quality and in-depth data is necessary for the operation of the Continuum of Care. The Data and Performance Committee is responsible for the monitoring and improvement of the NoCO CoC data. This includes: ensuring there is a process in place to monitor the HMIS Lead; making a recommendation on the effectiveness of the HMIS Lead to the NoCO CoC Governing Board; partnering with the HMIS Lead to monitor data of CoC funded agencies in HMIS as well as non-CoC funded agencies providing services to people experiencing homelessness regardless of their software system. The Data and Performance Committee will work to coordinate and standardize data collection related to people experiencing homelessness across the region. The Committee will also be responsible for assisting the community in how to use and communicate homelessness data for purposes of improvement of service provision, community education, and accessing funding. Additionally, this Committee will support other NoCO CoC committees as needed during critical times, such as preparation of the NOFA, Point in Time Counts, and during Project Rating and Ranking.

*Membership:*

The Data and Performance Committee will maintain adequate representation from the NoCO CoC region, including at least one member from each of the major cities in the region. The Committee should have between six and ten members. New members will be confirmed through consensus from current Data and Performance Committee members. The Committee will designate a Chair who will be responsible for setting the agenda and facilitating monthly meetings and a Secretary who will be responsible for taking meeting minutes and reporting them to the rest of the committee and the Governing Board. The Committee Chair and Secretary positions will be up for re-election each January; there are no term limits for these positions.

As much as possible, the membership of the Data and Performance Committee should reflect the following:

- Representative from Fort Collins
- Representative from Loveland
- Representative from Greeley
- Representative from HMIS Lead agency
- CoC-funded provider
- Non-funded CoC provider
- Shelter provider
- Housing provider
- Non-housing specific provider, such as healthcare or local government

### *Meetings:*

Meetings will be held at least one per month in a centralized location, but the Committee may decide to meet more frequently during critical times, such as during preparation of the NOFA or during Project Rating and Ranking. Committee members should attend at least 75% of yearly meetings to be considered an “active” member.

### *Collaboration with Other CoC:*

At least one member of the Data and Performance Committee should also sit on the Statewide HMIS Collaborative Board and act as a data liaison with the other Colorado CoC’s. Additionally, the Committee will report on its activities to the General Membership at least once per year and to the Governing Board at least twice a year. During critical periods, such as during preparation of the NOFA, during Project Rating and Ranking, and during the Point in Time Count, the Data and Performance Committee will select an appropriate number of members to assist the data-related work of those committees.

## **Appendix – CoC Equal Access to Education Policy**

The Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC) is dedicated to ensuring that all children and young adults, accompanied or unaccompanied, have access to education as protected under federal law. The NoCO CoC is committed to ensure that all children, families, and young adults understand their educational rights established under Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and Every Student Succeeds Act; to ensure that children and young adults are immediately enrolled in school, as required by federal law, and to ensure that students are connected to transportation and educational services to help them succeed in school.

### **Access to Education for Children Experiencing Homelessness in the NoCO CoC**

There are 17 school districts within the two counties of the NoCO CoC. The NoCO CoC has working relationships with the three largest districts: Poudre R-1 School District (Fort Collins urban area- Larimer County), Greeley-Evans School District 6 (Greeley urban area- Weld County), and Thompson R2-J School District (Loveland- Larimer County). Each school district has a designated McKinney-Vento specialist, in addition each school within the districts have a homeless liaison to the McKinney-Vento team that works collaboratively with the McKinney-Vento specialist. The McKinney-Vento specialists conduct professional development each semester for all staff in the school district to identify children and young adults who may be eligible for McKinney-Vento services as well as the referral process.

The school districts within the NoCO CoC include questions in their registration paperwork that indicate if children may be experiencing homelessness or housing instability. These questions include:

1. “Is your family experiencing housing instability” (with examples of what housing instability is)
2. “Please indicate where the child is living” (answers include: living with friends, living in shelters, living in hotel/motel, or unsheltered)

### 3. "Cause of housing instability"

When the registration paperwork includes an answer that indicates homelessness or housing instability, the McKinney-Vento specialist is then notified of the child.

In addition, the McKinney-Vento specialist receives referrals from community partners (particularly emergency shelters, domestic violence service providers and other homeless service providers). All districts have a relationship with the service providers in their jurisdiction and have local process to ensure quick identification and referral to educational services.

McKinney-Vento specialists also receive referrals from other staff in the school district sometimes through the liaisons at each school as well as self-reporting by some families.

When the McKinney-Vento specialist receives a referral, they then contact the family via phone or email. During the phone call or email, the McKinney-Vento specialist assesses the needs of the child and family to meet them where they are at. The McKinney-Vento specialist initially reviews the family's needs regarding enrollment, transportation, the right to attend school of origin, and the right to accompany. Posters regarding family and student's McKinney-Vento rights are posted at community agencies and at every school. Further explanation of rights is given as additional barriers arise for the child and family.

McKinney-Vento specialists in the NoCO CoC are working on destigmatizing homelessness. Within the McKinney Vento numbers are many children who are "doubled up" and therefore do not meet the HUD Category 1 definition of literally homeless. The districts are working on educating families on the impacts of homelessness and doubling up on their children's education and development so as to help provide sustainable solutions for students.

#### **NoCO CoC's Responsibilities in regards to Children and Young Adult's Education**

1. Educate CoC partners on McKinney-Vento rights of children and young adults to education as well as what educational services children and young adults are available.
2. Encourage local school districts' homeless liaisons and McKinney-Vento teams participation in the coordinated entry process (CAHPS) for connecting homeless families and young adults to available housing resources and helping to resolve any issues that may arise in linking eligible households to those resources
3. Support access to education of children experiencing homelessness through advocacy when appropriate.

#### **Responsibilities of Recipients/Sub-recipients of CoC and ESG Funds**

1. Help identify children and young adults who are eligible for educational services, specifically children and young adults who do not have a fixed, regular, and adequate place to sleep at night, he or she is in transitional housing, motels/hotels, campgrounds, in doubled-up situations, or in housing that lacks utilities, is infested or has other dangerous conditions.
2. Refer or ensure all children and young adults are connected with the McKinney-Vento specialist in their district.
3. Help to ensure that all children, young adults, and families are informed about their educational rights and their eligibility for educational services and that they receive those services.
4. Enroll families with children and unaccompanied youth in CAHPS when appropriate.

5. Ensure that significant consideration is given to the educational needs of children, including placing children as close as possible to schools of origin and early childhood education programs, when looking at emergency, transitional, or permanent housing.
6. Ensure that no policies, procedures, or practices are inconsistent or interfere with the educational rights established under federal law.

**Larimer County School Districts:**

- Poudre R-1
- Estes Park R-3
- Thompson R2-J
- St. Vrain Valley R 1J

**Weld County School Districts**

- Ault-Highland RE-9
- Pawnee RE-12
- Eaton RE-2
- Briggsdale RE-10
- Windsor RE-4
- Greeley-Evans District 6
- Johnston Milliken RE-51
- Weld County RE-1
- Platte Valley RE-7
- Weld County School District RE-3J
- Weld RE-8 Schools
- St. Vrain Valley RE 1J
- Thompson R2-J
- Wiggins RE-50(J)