

Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC Governance Charter

Prepared by Info Line, Inc.

Approved by the Executive Directors Committee

2015

This document summarizes the Responsibilities and Authorities for Operation and Governance of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County Continuum of Care for the Homeless

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Revised per approval (TBD)

Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC Governance Charter

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RECITALS

NAME: Akron/Barberton/Summit County Continuum of Care for the Homeless (CoC)

ADDRESS: The OH-506 CoC is located in the County of Summit within the State of Ohio. The OH-506 CoC office of record will be the address and point of contact of the identified HUD Collaborative Applicant. Currently: City of Akron, Comprehensive Planning Division, 161 South High Street, Room 201, Akron, Ohio 44308.

ARTICLE I. OH-506 CoC GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES

1.01. BOUNDARIES

The Akron/Barberton/Summit County Continuum of Care (or OH-506 CoC) includes all of the geography within the County of Summit, including thirteen (13) incorporated cities, nine (9) townships, and nine (9) villages. The physical bounds of this geography are consistent with the boundaries inclusive of these areas. These boundaries contain other Housing and Urban Development (hereinafter referred to as “HUD”) designated program components, including one (1) Housing Authorities, four (4) HUD geocode areas, one (1) local Emergency Solutions Grant Program (hereinafter referred to as “ESGP”) Area, as well as federally designated Community Development Block Grant (hereinafter referred to as “CDBG”) entitlement areas, Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA), HOME, and Veterans Administration service areas. The CoC primary area of operations within the CoC geography includes the areas served by the program components listed above. This geography is referred to as Akron/Summit County. Various subdivisions are recognized within the CoC. For CoC purposes the Region is often described as the City of Akron and the Outlying County, or as composed of five sub regions, Central, East, South, North, and West areas. The geography covered by the CoC will herein be referred to as the “Akron/Summit County.”

ARTICLE II. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CoC

2.01. OVERVIEW

Homelessness is a social issue that impacts all of our cities and communities in Summit County. It requires a countywide, shared responsibility in planning and development of solutions to the complex problems that lead to homelessness. This requires coordinated services directed to specific populations that are homeless or the most at risk of becoming homeless. The concept of a “Continuum of Care’ (CoC) began in 1994 when the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) began encouraging communities to address the problems of housing and homelessness in a coordinated, comprehensive and strategic fashion. This concept is designed to help communities develop the capacity to envision, organize and plan comprehensive, long-term solutions that address the needs of those populations that are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless and by using a collaborative approach that results in a set of goals that can be shared by a broad range of participants in the community.

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A fully developed CoC system includes homeless prevention, outreach, emergency shelter, rapid re-housing, health and mental health services, transitional housing, special needs housing, permanent housing, supportive services and advocacy. An effective CoC plan includes strategies to:

- Identify those that are most at risk of becoming homeless and assess their needs.
- Advocate for more effective linkages between housing, supportive services systems, education, financial assistance and job training programs.
- Reach those that are homeless and link them with services that meet their needs.
- Assist those making the transition from the street to maximum self-sufficiency.
- Prevent a return to homelessness.

The CoC is an on-going, yearly process which culminates in a funding document being submitted to HUD requesting funding support for locally determined projects addressing the causes and needs of the homeless. The planning process includes a broad coalition of organizations and individuals working collaboratively to share information, discuss emerging issues, prioritize community needs, plan solutions and establish goals, monitor progress, identify gaps, develop the McKinney-Vento funding proposals for submission to HUD, and prepare the annual Continuum of Care Plan.

In 2009, HUD codified into law the Continuum of Care process and mandated communities that receive funds under the Homeless Continuum of Care Program (hereinafter referred to as “CoC Program”) of the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act (HEARTH Act) with specific responsibilities. Section 578.5 of the HEARTH Interim Rule published in July 2012 (Interim Rule), defines a Continuum of Care (CoC) as “the group organized to carry out the responsibilities required under this part and that is composed of representatives of organizations, including nonprofit homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and homeless and formerly homeless persons to the extent these groups are represented within the geographic area and are available to participate.” Relevant organizations in the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC established the CoC Steering Committee in 2000, which has served as the CoC coordinating body acknowledged by HUD.

The four primary responsibilities outlined in the Interim Rule are:

1. Operating the CoC
2. CoC planning
3. Designating and operating an HMIS
4. Preparing the application for CoC program funds

The Summit County CoC accomplishes these tasks by assigning them to various standing subcommittees. These subcommittees meet at regularly scheduled times to set and plan goals and action steps and then make regular reports to the CoC Community Meeting for comments and input.

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ARTICLE III. MISSION AND PURPOSE

3.01. MISSION [FB1]

The mission of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County Continuum of Care for the Homeless is to engage organizations in a community-based process that works to end homelessness for all individuals and families throughout Akron/Summit County and address the underlying causes of homelessness and to lessen the negative impact of homelessness on individuals, families and communities.

3.02 VISION STATEMENT

Akron/Summit County is a community in which homelessness has been eliminated. Everyone has access to resources and support needed to obtain and maintain decent, safe and affordable housing that enhances quality of life

3.03. SPECIFIC PURPOSES

The CoC is organized to provide a comprehensive coordinated housing and services delivery system called a continuum of care for homeless persons and those in danger of becoming homeless to make the critical transition from crisis point to access education, health and mental health services, employment training, and life skills development and to move into independent or supportive permanent housing. The fundamental components of a continuum of care are:

- Homeless Prevention Advocacy
- Rapid Re-housing
- Outreach and assessment
- Emergency housing
- Transitional housing
- Mental Health services
- Substance abuse services
- Supportive services
- Permanent and supportive housing
- Health Services

ARTICLE IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OH-506 CoC

4.01. OPERATING THE CoC

The CoC will:

- A. Hold meetings of the full membership, with published agendas, at least semiannually;
- B. Issue public invitation for new members to join at least annually;
- C. Follow and update annually a governance charter;
- D. Continue development of governance charter to include all procedures and policies including those required by all funding sources including written standards for funding assistance, strategic planning project evaluation, and HMIS requirements;
- E. Follow *'Board Member Selection Process'* hereto outlined in Section 6.05 to select a board to act on behalf of the Continuum of Care. The process will be reviewed, updated (as applicable), and approved annually by the Continuum as part of its charter;
- F. Follow *'Process for Selection of Infrastructure Organization(s)'* hereto outlined in Section 10.02 to select organization(s) to assume operational responsibilities including HUD CoC Program Collaborative Applicant, HMIS Lead, Staff, Project Monitoring, and preparing the HUD COC Application;
- G. Actively seek to engage key government representatives to end homelessness in Akron/Summit County;
- H. Appoint Advisory Committees, subcommittees, or workgroups;

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- I. Consult with recipients and sub-recipients to establish performance targets appropriate for population and program type, monitor recipient and sub-recipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and take action against poor performers;
- J. Evaluate outcomes of projects funded under the Emergency Solutions Grants program and the Continuum of Care program, and report to HUD and other funders;
- K. In consultation with recipients of HUD CoC Program and Emergency Solutions Grants program funds within Akron/Summit County, establish and operate a centralized assessment system that complies with any requirements established by HUD by notice; and
- L. In consultation with recipients of HUD CoC Program and Emergency Solutions Grants program funds within Akron/Summit County, establish and consistently follow written standards for providing Continuum of Care assistance.

4.02. CoC PLANNING

To serve as the coordinating body to end homelessness in Akron/Summit County, the CoC will:

- A. Coordinate the implementation of an effective housing and service system including outreach, engagement, assessment, prevention, shelter, housing, and supportive services within Akron/Summit County;
- B. Plan for and conduct an annual Point-In-Time Count (PIT Count) of homeless persons within Akron/Summit County;
- C. Conduct an annual gaps analysis of the homeless needs and services available within Akron/Summit County;
- D. Provide information required to complete the Consolidated Plan(s) within Akron/Summit County; and
- E. Consult with State and local government Emergency Solutions Grants program recipients within Akron/Summit County on the plan for allocating Emergency Solutions Grants program funds and reporting on and evaluating the performance of Emergency Solutions Grants program recipients and sub-recipients.

4.03. DESIGNATING AND OPERATING HMIS

The CoC will:

- A. Designate a single Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for Akron/Summit County;
- B. Designate an eligible applicant to manage the Continuum's HMIS, known as the HMIS Lead;
- C. Review, revise, and approve (i) privacy, (ii) security, and (iii) a data quality plan for the HMIS;
- D. Ensure consistent participation of recipients and sub-recipients in the HMIS; and
- E. Ensure the HMIS is administered in compliance with requirements prescribed by the Akron/Summit County HMIS Policies & Procedures and HUD regulations.

4.04. PREPARING APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDS

The CoC will:

- A. Design, operate, and follow a collaborative process for development of applications for funding;
- B. Approve submission of applications in response to a HUD CoC Program notice of funding availability (NOFA) among other funding opportunities;
- C. Establish priorities for funding projects;
- D. Ensure that only one application for HUD CoC Program funds be submitted and collect and combine required application information from all approved projects within Akron/Summit County; and
- E. Seek and secure funding for the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC operations and infrastructure, including but not limited to HUD Planning grant funds.

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4.05. ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Akron/Barberton/ Summit County CoC shall have additional responsibilities, including but not limited to:

- A. Engage organizations in a community-based process;
- B. Convene regular meetings of interested stakeholders;
- C. Work to address the underlying causes of homelessness;
- D. Lessen the negative impact of homelessness on individuals, families, and communities;
- E. Promote the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC;
- F. Foster collaboration;
- G. Develop a permanent system to end homelessness;
- H. Provide access to quality services throughout the geographic footprint of the CoC;
- I. Ensure access to services to all subgroups;
- J. Ensure access to a full range of services from street outreach to permanent housing;
- K. Facilitate sharing of provider expertise and intervention strategies;
- L. Create, inform, and support the development of CoC plans;
- M. Provide a consistent source of data regarding the needs for homeless persons;
- N. Educate stakeholders about regulatory actions and other conditions impacting the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC.
- O. Advocate for policies and essential services that promote fair housing, client well-being, and rights and protections under the law;
- P. Assist homeless service providers in acquiring funds dedicated to homelessness.

4.06. LIMITATIONS

- A. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC will not engage in activities in favor or against any political campaign on behalf of candidates for public office, except as the law affords to as the rights and privileges of its members; and
- B. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC will not convene members to conspire or to promote the support of activities that are deemed illegal activities under the law.

ARTICLE V. CoC MEMBERSHIP

Membership: General membership shall consist of homeless individuals or advocates, interested community members, government agencies, and organizations that provide supportive services and supportive housing to the homeless, businesses, health organizations, public housing, law enforcement, faith-based organizations, and hospitals. Member agencies must maintain good organization standing as defined by regular attendance and participation at meetings.

1. Enrollment of members: New members may enroll as members throughout the year.
2. General membership meetings: General membership meetings shall occur on a semiannual basis throughout the year with the date, time and place of the regular membership meeting set by the CoC Lead Agency.
3. Notice: Notice of each meeting shall be given to each member by mail, e-mail or verbally, not less than five days before the meeting.

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- 4. ATTENDANCE: IN ORDER TO REMAIN IN GOOD STANDING, A MEMBER MUST ATTEND 75% OF COC COMMITTEE MEETINGS (SCHEDULED AND AD HOC) THROUGHOUT THE YEAR (IF RECEIVING COC, ESGP, HCRP, HSP, SHP, SRO, OR SSO FUNDING).**

5.01. STAKEHOLDERS

The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC shall garner community-wide commitment to ending and preventing homelessness in all parts of the county through inclusion of representation from the entire Summit County geographic area. In addition the Akron/Barberton/ Summit County CoC membership includes a variety of other community stakeholders to the extent that they are invested in ending homelessness and present in Summit County. Examples of additional stakeholders include private foundations, philanthropists, fraternal organizations, employment development, organized labor, and private health service organizations.

5.02. APPLICATION PROCESS

Membership in the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC is open and there is no formal application process. Interested persons or entities must express interest by attending a regularly scheduled meeting, submit a letter expressing interest in joining the CoC to the CoC Lead or CoC Chair which demonstrates their vested interest in ending homelessness, and committing to participate in the work of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC to achieve stated purposes and goals. Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC members obtain and retain voting privileges through attendance and participation in accordance with established policies.

New organizational members verify the required commitment to the work of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC by preparing a written statement which identifies the components of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC work that the organization will participate in. An organizational member may designate up to three (3) persons annually who are authorized to represent the organization at Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC meetings. Any one organization can only have one vote, regardless of committee participation.

An organization representative may represent only one organization. Individuals may also become members of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC. Individuals provide a similar commitment statement as part of the membership application to the Akron/Barberton/ Summit County CoC; however, Individual members may not designate additional persons to represent them. Individuals who have a recognized role in a member organization (such as employees, board members, consultants, or current service recipients) may become individual members of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC but may not vote. Individuals with formal organizational affiliations such as those noted above may be selected to represent the organization with which they are affiliated. This provision creates an opportunity for individual stakeholders to participate in the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC without duplicating organizational representation.

5.03. MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC member responsibilities include:

- A. Review and approve Governance Charter and all amendments at least annually;
- B. Attend semiannual Community meetings and other required meetings;
- C. Ratify full slate of Board of Director members annually;
- D. Voluntarily participate on Advisory Committees; and
- E. Elect Full Membership Liaison Representative from the board [FB2].

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5.04. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Membership is open to organizations and individuals who support the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC's mission. Those seeking membership must complete an application, as outlined in section 5.02, and make their request at any meeting of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC. At the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC, all membership requests from organizations or individuals made at the prior meeting will be assumed as valid for purposes of determining voting rights.
- B. There shall be two categories of Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC members: organizational members, and Individual members.
- C. All members shall have the right to speak at meetings; to vote on matters before the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC, subject to the voting privileges set forth herein; and to participate in Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC activities.
- D. There will be an unrestricted number of organizational members. However, only one (1) representative from each organizational member may vote on behalf of that organization on any given issue; representatives are based on authorization from the organization. Each organization shall indicate in writing the names of up to three (3) persons annually who may represent the organization[FB3].
- E. There will be an unrestricted[FB4] number of individual or community-at-large members representing the general community. However, any such members must reside in Summit County and may not be involved with organizational members as employees, board members, consultants, or current contractors.
- F. Nonvoting Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC memberships are available for members who self-identify as a nonvoting member.
- G. All Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC members are encouraged to actively recruit additional membership engaged in ending homelessness in Summit County.

5.05. MEETINGS AND MEETING SCHEDULE

Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC Attendance

Each member of the Continuum is required to be present to a minimum of 75% of all scheduled and ad hoc meetings in order to be considered an active member. The list of scheduled meeting dates, times and locations will be distributed after the last full membership meeting of the year upon full approval of the full membership.

The CoC board chair and the lead agency will sign the Certification of Collaboration form, provided the partner agency meets the minimum requirements of this policy. The Certification of Collaboration form will not be completed for those agencies that do not meet the minimum requirements. Failure to meet the minimum requirements will result in sanctions and may cause a reduction or elimination of funding. In most cases, once funding is cut or eliminated, it cannot be restored.

The Attendance Policy became effective January 1, 2013

- A. Meetings of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC shall not be subject to ORC 121.22. However, all meetings shall be open to the public except as otherwise determined by the board for reasons, including, but not limited to, discuss anticipated or pending legal or personnel matters. Any person who attends an Akron/Barberton/ Summit County CoC meeting may be asked to leave if the person is verbally or physically disruptive.
- B. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC annual calendar will establish regular meeting dates, times, and locations for the following calendar year.
- C. The full membership shall convene at least semiannually for the purpose of transacting the business of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC.

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5.06. ANNUAL MEETING

- A. The full Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC membership shall meet annually to ratify the roster of new board members, elect the member liaison board representative, review and approve Governance Charter, and receive annual meeting calendar.

5.07. SPECIAL AND EMERGENCY MEETINGS

- A. Special meetings of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC may be requested and notice provided by email to each member at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.
- B. Special and emergency meetings of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC may be called at any time by the board of directors or upon the request by ten (10) or more members.

5.08. MEETING NOTICES

- A. An annual calendar of regular quarterly meetings shall be presented at the annual meeting and shall be distributed to all members electronically and published to the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC website.
- B. The notice of annual meeting shall be published on Akron/Barberton/ Summit County CoC website and distributed electronically to all members at least seven (7) days prior to the scheduled meeting.

5.09. QUORUM

- A. A quorum, defined as 51 percent of the membership present, must be present before business can be transacted or motions made or passed.
- B. No business may be officially transacted without a quorum.

5.10. VOTING

- A. At all meetings of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC, members who have met attendance requirements set forth by the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC may vote. Voting privileges are limited to one vote per member, in accordance with attendance policies.
- B. In the interest of informed decision-making, each organizational member may designate up to three persons annually to represent such organization at Akron/Barberton/ Summit County CoC Meetings. Only attendance by one of the designated representatives is considered in meeting the attendance requirement associated with voting privileges.
- C. Each organizational member and individual member may have only one vote for any one motion on the floor, except items that alter the Governance Charter, or specified in this Governance Charter, a majority of votes shall carry or defeat a motion regarding general business.
- D. Voter privileges are extended to those individual members and organizational members that have been represented by a designated member at two (2) of the most recent full membership meetings.
- E. New members must have attended at least one (1) meeting before being eligible to vote.
- F. Upon ratification of this charter new voting privileges became effective. Existing Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC members who have secured voting privileges under previous rules will maintain privileges for the first meeting.
- G. Votes may be conducted electronically when permission is granted by the full body or when 'time is of the essence' and delay or failure to act would prevent compliance with regulations of governing or funding sources or substantially impair the implementation /achievement of Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC approved goals and objectives.
- H. All members must declare any conflict of interest they or their organization has on any voting issue. Organizational members and individual members shall abstain from voting on any issue in which they, or their organizations, have a conflict of interest.

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- I. The Governance Charter may be amended upon majority vote of the members of the full Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC who are eligible to vote who are present at a meeting called for such purpose, provided that notice is given provided seven (7) calendar days prior to the meeting. Any such vote shall be conducted in accordance with the established Policies and Procedures of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC. Absentee voting is not permitted.

5.11. MEETING MINUTES

- A. Minutes of the meetings will be produced and maintained by Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC staff or other individual designated by the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC.
- B. Meeting minutes shall be electronically distributed to all Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC members and posted on the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC [website](#)^[FB5].

5.12. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

- A. Robert's Rules of Order Abridged-Revised will guide the process during meetings of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC.

ARTICLE VI. COC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

6.01. OVERVIEW

The board of directors acts on behalf of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC and is representative of the relevant organizations and of projects serving homeless subpopulations within Summit County. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC board is charged with important responsibilities and authorities on behalf of the community of stakeholders. Representation of a broader array of stakeholders on the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC board will enhance the capacity to coordinate and leverage resources from various community sectors throughout Summit County. To this end, the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC will strategically comprise a board of directors that represents the array of stakeholders, the diverse geographic footprint, and the constituency for whom each seat is designated. HEARTH regulations require the board be representative of the relevant organizations and of projects serving homeless subpopulations within the CoC's geographic area and that includes at least one homeless or formerly homeless individual to act on its behalf.

6.02. ESTABLISHMENT OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- A. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC has established a board of directors to include representatives from relevant stakeholders, private and public officials, philanthropic representatives, advocates, businesses and service organizations and projects serving homeless subpopulations. Subpopulations include but are not limited to persons with substance use disorders; persons with HIV/AIDS; veterans; the chronically homeless; families with children; unaccompanied youth; the seriously mentally ill; and victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The board will include a broad representation of key stakeholder groups found within Summit County.
- B. One board member may represent more than one subpopulation or affiliation.
- C. The board shall include at least one homeless or formerly homeless individual.
- D. Seats will be designated by affiliation, community sector, subpopulation, and geography.
- E. Board leadership will consist of a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and treasurer to be elected by the Executive Director Committee upon ratification of the CoC Governance Charter by the full CoC membership.
- F. Approximately, but no fewer than, twenty percent (20%) of board seats will be occupied by homeless service providers with geographic representation to include *all* Summit County.

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- G. The board of directors is instituted as an unincorporated association. Any change to formal legal structure would require amendment to the governance charter.

6.03. BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

The board has authority not retained by the membership in the charter including the following:

- A. CoC Planning: Set CoC goals and priorities for ending homelessness in Summit County;
- B. Monitor Performance: Monitor community progress in ending homelessness in Summit County;
- C. Establish and monitor HUD CoC and ESG project performance targets and metrics; Evaluate Infrastructure Organization performance annually;
- D. Approve Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC policies: Including HUD CoC and ESG funding recommendations and written standards for providing assistance;
- E. Approve Selection of and provide direction to: HUD Collaborative Applicant, and HMIS Lead, and Infrastructure Organization(s).
- F. Select board members annually and fill vacancies; subject to the board of directors composition, member selection, membership ratification and related requirements.
- G. One board member will be elected by full membership to serve as full membership liaison. Ensure that relevant organizations and projects serving various homeless
- H. Ensure that relevant organizations and projects serving various homeless subpopulations are represented in planning and decision-making.
- I. Build community awareness inclusive of the needs of all homeless populations found in the CoC.

The board has no authority to act contrary to this Charter, contrary to any applicable law, rule or regulation, or beyond the mission of Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC as set forth in Article I of this Charter.

6.04. BOARD COMPOSITION

- A. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC board shall have a minimum of 15 and maximum of 20 seats.
- B. Members must be able to represent an array of community sectors, special needs populations, and geographic areas throughout the CoC.
- C. Board seat designations include (but are not limited to):
 - 1.Homeless/Formerly Homeless Person
 - 2.Homeless Service Provider
 - 3.Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority*
 - 4.Summit County Department of Job and Family Services*
 - 5.Education Representative
 - 6.Health
 - 7.Law Enforcement
 - 8.Business
 - 9.Elected Official
 - 10. Summit County Health Department*
 - 11. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Summit County Office Representative*
 - 12. Foundation Representative
 - 13. Funder Representative - United Way of Summit County*
 - 14. Faith Community Representative (non-direct service provider)
 - 15. Technology Business

* denotes appointed board seat for named organization

6.05. PROCESS FOR BOARD SELECTION

- A. Nominations for board members will be accepted from the full Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC membership;

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- B. Executive Directors Committee will reach out to candidates to confirm willingness to serve and verify qualifications. Members may not nominate themselves.
- C. Results of nominations are reviewed by the Executive Directors Committee to ensure that adequate representation is available for each of the required constituencies (community sectors, subpopulations, geography);
- D. The board will select nominees annually based on recommendations of the Executive Directors Committee prior to the last full membership meeting of the year and to fill vacancies as needed;
- E. The full Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC voting membership shall be asked to ratify the slate of new board members in its entirety at the annual meeting;
- F. Board composition is reviewed annually;
- G. Members of the board serve as liaisons to other community stakeholders;
- H. Election of the board members should be staggered to ensure continuity; half will be up for election each year.
- I. Regular attendance and participation in board activities is required. Members of the board of Directors must actively participate in 75% of meetings in order to remaining in good standing. Members failing to meet the attendance and participation standard shall be subject to removal and replacement.
- J. Seating inaugural board: The inaugural board of directors of the Akron/Barberton Summit County CoC will be created through nominations of the Executive Directors Committee. The Executive Directors Committee will select first slate of board member nominees. The full Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC voting members shall be asked to ratify the full slate of board members. Fifty percent (50%) of the board members will be elected to a term of one year in the initial election.

Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC board members are elected to two-year terms. Officers of the board are elected annually.

6.06. BOARD MEMBER SELECTION CRITERIA

Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC board members are selected to represent various constituencies. In order to adequately represent that constituency, board members shall meet basic qualifications including the following:

- A. Meet eligibility to be a voting member;
- B. Sufficient knowledge and a working relationship with the constituency group;
- C. Capacity to read and assess detailed information;
- D. Ability to work effectively on team;
- E. Capacity to consider the benefit of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC as a whole;
- F. Ability to meet the timelines/demands of funding sources;
- G. Respectful acknowledgement of the rights of homeless persons; and
- H. Eligible to conduct business with a governmental entity (i.e., not debarred or suspended);
- I. Significant knowledge of the CoC process and homeless assistance programs in our community.

6.07. BOARD ELECTIONS AND TERMS OF OFFICE

- A. Except as provided for in Section 6.05, board membership is determined annually by election by a majority vote of the existing board membership and is ratified by Akron/Barberton/ Summit County CoC voting membership at its annual meeting.
- B. Upon placement on the board of directors, board members who are not current Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC members will be required to join the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC as a voting member.
- C. Except for the initial board members will serve two-year terms subject to re-election with one-half of the seats subject to election each year. The representative seats on the board of directors will also serve as liaisons to Advisory Committees and other community groups whose primary purpose is to address homelessness.

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- D. There is an established 10-year term limit for all board members.
- E. In the event of a vacancy, the board may appoint such qualified person(s) necessary to fill the vacancy. The person(s) appointed shall serve the unexpired term of the previous board member, and is subject to re-election by the board and approval by the full Akron/Barberton/ Summit County CoC voting membership.

6.08. BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT

The members of Akron/Barberton/ Summit County CoC board are entrusted with specific responsibilities related to use of public funds invested in addressing a serious community concern, homelessness. Members are expected to observe the highest standards of ethical conduct in the execution of these responsibilities.

In the performance of their duties, Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC board members are expected to carry out the mandate of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC to the best of their ability, and to maintain the highest standards of integrity for actions with other members of the board, Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC representatives, service recipients, service providers, and members of the public.

1. A member of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC has a duty of good faith to the CoC and its mission.
2. The CoC prohibits the solicitation and acceptance of gifts or gratuities by members for their personal benefits.
3. A member has a duty to use care, skill, and diligence when carrying out official acts.
4. A member has a duty to act within the boundaries of his or her authority.
5. A member may not divulge or profit from confidential information learned while performing official duties.
6. A member must avoid a "conflict of interest". Even the appearance of a conflict of interest can be harmful. In particular, a member will abstain from a vote that involves the financial gain or loss of funds to that member's organization, agency or person and this will be so noted in the minutes.
7. A member is committed to honest and ethical conduct, including the ethical handling of actual or apparent conflicts of interest between personal and professional relationships.
8. A member has a duty to participate in the operations of the Continuum only as authorized by the Community Committee (Full CoC membership).

6.09. GENERAL CONDUCT

Members of the board are expected to conduct themselves with courtesy and respect, without harassment, physical or verbal abuse.

Personal relationships should not result in special considerations, including bias or favoritism that influence the performance of their official duties in a manner contrary to the interest of the broader Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC.

Board members are expected to exercise adequate control and supervision over matters for which they are individually responsible.

6.10. STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES

Board members must assure that the resources entrusted to them are used for conducting official business only. Member of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC board must abide by the Conflict of Interest Policies established for board operations.

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6.11. PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

In line with the rules and By Laws of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC, board members have a responsibility to protect any confidential information provided to, or generated by, the activities of the board. Members of the board shall not use confidential information of Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC for any purpose or disclose such confidential information to any third party, except as necessary to perform their duties and responsibilities as members of the board of directors.

6.12. PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND MEDIA RESPONSE

Members of the board shall refrain from making public comments or speaking to the media on behalf of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC, unless the board of directors has empowered them to speak on the group's behalf. When making public statements or speaking to the media on issues related to homelessness, members of the board shall make clear whether they are speaking in their own name or on behalf of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC.

6.13. REVIEW OF VIOLATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT CHARGES

When an allegation of misconduct is received by the board of directors, an Ethics Review Committee will be assembled. This committee may not exceed 5 members, and must include a minimum of two persons from the official Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC membership. The Ethics Review Committee shall conduct a review of the matter and make a recommendation to the board of directors for resolution. The board of directors shall not be bound by the Ethics Review Committee's recommendation.

If requested by a majority, the Committee may also give guidance to the CoC concerning other aspects of conduct, including actions of staff, consultants or other persons charged with implementation of duties relative to the responsibilities of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC

6.14. BOARD LEADERSHIP

1. The members of the CoC board leadership shall be a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Secretary/Treasurer who shall perform the duties that usually pertain to their respective offices including:
 - (a) Chair: The Chair shall serve as the Liaison to the CoC, shall appoint all committee chairpersons and, serve as ex-officio member of all committees.
 - (b) Vice Chair: The Chair-Elect shall assume all duties of the Chair in the event of the President's absence and carry out other duties assigned by the Chair. The Vice Chair shall succeed to the office of Chair. In addition, the Vice Chair will be responsible for membership and publicity.
 - (c) Secretary/Treasurer: The Secretary shall handle all correspondence as required and prepare reports as designated by the President. The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of the meetings of the board and for their distribution.
2. The Officers shall be elected by the Continuum of Care at the meeting to be held during the last quarter of the calendar year, and they shall serve for one year, or until their respective successors qualify.
3. Officers may serve two consecutive terms in their respective offices.
4. Any vacancies occurring during the year may be filled by the Executive Committee as defined in Section 6.07.E.

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6.15. DOCUMENTATION

The board shall conduct and transact business in a fair and transparent manner. To this end, the board shall maintain records of the board actions, consideration, and decisions and make them available to members of the public in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) of Regulations Section 149.43. Except in unusual circumstances or as required to protect the Continuum of Care, the board, or member agencies from pending legal action, meetings of the board will be open to members of the public wishing to observe. If a visitor to a board meeting is verbally or physically disruptive to the proceedings, they may be asked to leave.

6.16. RESPONSE OF THE BOARD TO COMMUNITY CONCERNS/OBLIGATION TO REPORT

Upon receipt of a written concern, Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC board of directors, the chairperson in consultation with one additional board member who is assigned to that duty, and the Chair of the Ethics Committee will determine what action to take. The Chairperson must report complaints and actions to the board of directors monthly. Members must exercise adequate control and supervision over matters for which they are individually and collectively responsible, and shall take such measures as are necessary and appropriate in considering the concerns of the community.

6.17. ABILITY TO CONDUCT BUSINESS/DEBARMENT OR SUSPENSION

Members of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC board must be eligible to transact business with federal and local government. At the time of nomination and at least annually thereafter, potential members of the board must be cleared through the public registry listing persons and businesses that are barred from, or suspended from transacting business with federal, state, or local government.

6.18. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND RECUSAL POLICY

Purpose of Statement

The primary purpose of the Conflict of Interest Policy is to protect the Akron/Barberton/Summit County Continuum of Care, its members, and the agencies with which they represent. When the CoC is in negotiations to enter into a transaction or arrangement (verbal or written contract), the conflict of interest policy is to aid in the protection of the CoC and its members and governing bodies when a transaction or arrangement may provide a private benefit to an officer, director or a member organization. This includes a transaction or arrangement that may provide excess benefits. This policy is not intended to supersede, nor replace any applicable local, state and/or federal laws governing a conflict of interest that is applicable to Not-for-Profit and charitable organizations. This policy will remain in force during the interested person's tenure and for a period of one year following her/his tenure.

Definitions

1. **Interested Person(s):** Any director, elected or appointed principal officer, agent, consultant, a member agency's board, employees, committees and/or sub-subcommittees that possess delegating power with the governing board of the CoC, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.
2. **Financial Interest:** Any person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:
 - a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the CoC has a transaction or arrangement,
 - b. A compensation arrangement with the CoC or with any entity or individual with which the organization has a transaction or arrangement,
 - c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the CoC in negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

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Requirements

All individuals within the membership of the CoC must comply with this agreement. Disclosure of any and all possible conflict of interest must occur prior to the discussion of any such issue that may be the cause of the conflict of interest. Written disclosure statements will be provided to each committee member annually. Members will not be permitted to participate in the CoC until the signed statement is on file with the City of Akron or designated agency.

Committees

Any individual that participates in or has an influence in any CoC Committee decision-making process must identify any conflict of interest as it may arise, regardless if it is real or implied.

Individuals with a conflict of interest shall remove themselves while the discussion takes place and must abstain from voting on the item(s) that is(are) causing said conflict of interest. An individual with a conflict of interest and holds the position of committee chair shall yield that position during discussion and abstain from voting on said issue that is causing the conflict of interest.

The Committee shall:

1. Avoid any conflict of interest, real or implied.
2. Avoid any activity with vendors, grantees, or other individuals and/or entities that would create a conflict of interest and/or compromise the decisions or the ability to effectively carry out the duties for which it is responsible or that would conflict with the best interest of the Committee or the Continuum.
3. Declare all gifts, fees or honoraria regardless of whether it is a promotional item or an item of nominal value.
4. Decide whether items in #3 above would pose a conflict of interest.
5. Avoid influencing the selection of officers, staff, consultants and vendors based on a personal and/or business relationship.
6. Issue disciplinary action, up to and including termination from the Committee if a violation is discovered.

Procedures

1. **Duty to Disclose:** In connection with a possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committee(s) with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.
2. **Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists:** After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.
3. **Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest:**
 - a. An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
 - b. The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
 - c. After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the CoC can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

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- d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the CoC's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make a decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

4. Violations of the Conflict of Interest:

- a. If the board or other committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, real or implied, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- b. If and/or after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstance, the governing board or other committee determines the member has failed to disclose a real or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

6.19. FINANCIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST - GIFTS

- A. Prohibits the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by board members (or by the organizations that they represent) that provide benefit in excess of minimal value from persons, organizations, or corporations with vested interest in the outcomes of decisions made by the board on behalf of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC or its member agencies.
- B. Board members shall not participate in the selection, award, or evaluation of a contract if a conflict of interest exists. A conflict would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ, or employed during the prior six (6) months, has a financial or other interest in the organization under consideration for an award, or evaluation. Board members will not solicit monetary value from funded recipients, sub-recipients, contractors, or vendors.
- C. Board members will not accept gratuities from funded recipients, sub-recipients, contractors, or vendors except for unsolicited gifts of nominal value. It is determined that a conflict of interest does not exist when the value of the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value (less than \$15) and such gifts are not repeated more than twice annually. The board member must maintain a record of gifts received, including source, date, value, and type of gift.

6.20. RESTRICTIONS ON PROCUREMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICE

- A. Board members may not personally and substantially benefit from participation on the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC board. The Procurement Integrity Act U.S.C. § 2104; ("PIA") provides guidance on activities that constitute personal and substantial benefit. Examples of activities that may violate the PIA include but are not limited to:
 - drafting, reviewing, or approving the specification or statement of work for which the individual intends to apply;
 - preparing or developing a solicitation that the individual or an organization that the individual has a formal relationship with; evaluating bids or proposals that will be awarded to the individual or an associated entity;
 - selecting a source; negotiating price or terms and conditions; or
 - reviewing and approving an award from which the individual or the associated entity will derive any financial benefit.
- B. Board members are not to receive preference in the execution of the business of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC or the services provided by the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC. For example, the board member or their family must be granted services or access to support through the regular, established processes without special consideration.

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6.21. RECUSAL POLICY

Board members and persons acting on behalf of the board must remove themselves from the decision-making or evaluation process when a person or organization conflict exists. Board members must recuse themselves during the decision-making or evaluation process, and may not participate in absentia through electronic or other means.

6.22. OBLIGATION TO DECLARE POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

To avoid apparent conflicts of interest, board members will declare any real or potential conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts. The person must disclose this information in writing before participating in the deliberation and decision-making or evaluation process. This policy applies to both personal and organizational conflicts.

6.23. TERMINATION POLICY

Any board member individual member of the board of directors or the entire board of directors may be removed, with or without cause, by the vote of a majority of Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC voting membership.

6.24 VOTING RIGHTS

Each member/member agency shall have one vote upon any motion before the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC. A voting member of The CoC must have been present to at least 75% of meetings and must be in attendance of at two out of two (100%) of the semiannual meetings, during a calendar year. Member's right to vote shall include, but are not limited to the approval and authorization of submission of the Continuum of Care application, the election of officers, and to authorize and approve publication and/or release of information.

No member shall vote on any issue where there would be a conflict of interest. Please see Code of Conduct policies for further details.

ARTICLE VII. ADVISORY COMMITTEES

7.01. COMMITTEES, TASK GROUPS, AND LIAISONS

- A. Except as otherwise authorized by the board of directors, advisory committees of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC will be comprised of members of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC and at least one board member and any other members invited by committee chair.
- B. Each committee will have a Chairperson and either a Co-Chairperson or a Vice-Chairperson elected by committee members annually.
- C. Each committee will establish regular recurring meetings and publish an annual calendar on the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC website and distribute calendar to the full Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC membership.
- D. Each committee will distribute a written agenda to all committee members at least 24 hours prior to each meeting.
- E. Each Committee will record meeting minutes of each official committee meeting and distribute to all committee members and publish on the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC website.
- F. Each Committee may meet at any time during the intervals between Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC meetings at a location determined by the committee members, or at the request of the board of directors. Each committee will report the results of its meetings to the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC at semiannual meetings.

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- G. Each Committee will mirror the attendance and voting privileges of the full memberships. In order to maintain attendance and voting privileges at any CoC Committee, Committee members shall attend 75% of ongoing committee and any Ad Hoc committee meetings.
- H. The Committee Chairperson is responsible for timely notification of meetings, and will have the authority to call committee meetings, to determine that a quorum is present, and to determine who has met eligibility to vote on matters before the committee, provided that reasonable notice is given to all members of the committee.
- I. City of Akron staff, with assistance from Committee Chair, shall be responsible for tracking attendance and maintaining compliance with these rules.
- J. The board of directors may, by majority vote of a quorum, create sub-committees necessary for the proper and efficient functioning of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC as long as these committees do not interfere with or duplicate the duties of any existing Committee.
- K. The board of directors may, by a majority vote abolish a task group, or committee if it is determined to be unnecessary for the proper and efficient functioning of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC .
- L. The board can establish an Ad Hoc or Action Committee to achieve specific or time-limited objectives.

7.02. STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC has established several Standing Advisory Committees that are responsible for ongoing work and providing advice on key issues and community initiatives. These Standing Advisory Committees are needed each year and are established for ongoing, long-term activities. The following Advisory Committees at a minimum, are established as Standing Advisory committees that incorporate members of the full membership and may only be disbanded by a change to this Charter approved by a direct action of the full voting membership.

Lead Agency:

The City of Akron's Comprehensive Planning Division of the Department of Planning and Urban Development is the lead agency. The CoC meets on a monthly basis or more often under certain circumstances. The Akron/Summit County CoC is an unincorporated association of community organizations that assist and serve the homeless population.

Board of Directors:

The board of directors are elected and appointed with approval of the full membership of the CoC. The Akron/Summit CoC currently does not have paid staff.

Community Committee:

Membership is comprised of all community stakeholders including homeless shelter, housing, service providers, foundations, and businesses. Members share information related to homeless population and receive an update on the progress of implementing the Continuum of Care Strategic Plan. This standing committee meets semiannually to review and discuss various homeless issues, policies, and other homeless related trends. This committee represents the general membership of the CoC.

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Steering Committee:

Members of the CoC Steering Committee are assigned by the member organizations in which they represent. The steering committee assists in the development and implementation of the Continuum of Care strategy. The committee is composed of subcommittee chairs and other interested members, serve as the monitor of the Continuum of Care process. The committee ensures and verifies that the strategies are being met and provides overall direction, leadership, and recommendations to the Executive Directors Committee and the board of directors.

The committee invites speakers and individuals to educate and provide additional information regarding best practices from across the country that could be implemented within the Akron/Summit County CoC. Any recommendations would be provided to the entire membership to the full membership of the CoC.

The Steering Committee meets monthly or more frequently if needed.

Executive Director Committee:

The Executive Director Committee looks at the global perspective of the CoC; its objectives, strategies, and impact within our community. They also look at national trends and update the CoC. They are also an interagency to council and HUD.

HMIS Advisory Committee:

The HMIS Advisory Committee is comprised of decision makers at agencies that participate in HMIS It's duties are to oversee policies and standards, evaluation criteria and reporting systems for HMIS implementation. This committee also serves as the final validation criteria submissions to HUD for AHAR, PULSE, HIC, PIT and other reporting purposes.

The HMIS Advisory Committee meets quarterly or more frequently if needed.

HMIS Users Group Committee:

The HMIS Users Group Committee reviews the level of data integrity in the database, reviews upgrades to the system, and determines additional customization or functionality needed in the system related to client data entry. They guide the development of HMIS training materials and configuration changes to HMIS through feedback related to ease of use and feasibility.

The HMIS Users Group Committee meets quarterly or more frequently if needed.

Review & Ranking Committee:

The Review and Ranking Committee is responsible for reviewing all CoC applications, both new and renewals. After the review process is complete, the committee then ranks, from highest to lowest, all projects into two tiers: Tier 1 and Tier 2. Ranking is completed using the CoC approved scoring tool. All projects within Tier 1 shall be funded while projects in Tier 2 shall be funded in order of performance (highest to lowest), based on the amount of funding that is awarded by HUD. Funding is not guaranteed for Tier 2 projects. Emphasis will be placed on permanent supportive housing and sub-populations served.

The Review & Ranking Committee meets on a quarterly basis.

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Point-in-Time Committee (Ad-Hoc):

The Point-in-Time Committee coordinated activities related to the annual point-in-time count of the homeless population. The committee ensures that volunteers are trained, shelters provide accurate data, data collected is efficient to comply with the Housing Inventory Chart, review with HMIS data, and coordinated items to be distributed to the homeless populations.

The Point-in-Time Committee meets as needed.

Other Ad Hoc Committees:

Other Ad Hoc Committees are created when a need arises, whether temporarily or semi-permanent. The board of directors creates Ad Hoc Committees. This may be at the request of a board member(s), committee members, governmental requirements and/or the community. The purpose of Ad Hoc Committees is to tackle a specific issue that does not fall within the duties of the other committees and is temporary in nature. The board reserves the right to disband, increase/decrease length of time for ad hoc committees, or if needed, make the committee permanent.

Ad Hoc Committees, when created, will meet on a regular and consistent basis that is based on the need at hand.

7.03. AD HOC COMMITTEES OR TASK GROUPS

Periodically, the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC needs to complete specific, time limited tasks in order to comply with regulatory demands or to advance the goals and objectives of the full body. At the request of the board of directors, selected group of members and community volunteers may be asked to form a temporary Task Group or Ad Hoc Committee to complete the identified task. These groups perform specific functions associated with completion of the task and are guided by and report to one of the established Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC groups which may include the full Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC, the board of directors, or a standing Advisory Committee. Task groups are temporary in nature and are not expected to offer continuous or year-round support to the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC.

7.04. COMMUNITY LIAISONS

In order to coordinate with the various groups concerned with homelessness and its underlying causes, members of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC may be designated as official liaisons to each established group and are active participants in those groups.

ARTICLE VIII. EMPLOYMENT STATUS

8.01. OVERVIEW

By virtue of service on the board of directors, the full Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC body, Advisory Committees, and/or other action groups are not deemed employees of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC nor its Infrastructure organization(s); are not entitled to benefits and compensation from member agencies as a result of their service to the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC.

ARTICLE IX. INFRASTRUCTURE ORGANIZATION(S)

9.01. OVERVIEW

In order to realize collective impact and provide centralized infrastructure with dedicated staff and a structured process that leads to a common agenda, shared measurement, continuous communication, and mutually reinforcing activities among all participants, the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC will utilize a backbone or infrastructure organization or organizations to assume operational responsibilities for the HUD Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC and beyond^[FB6].

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9.02. SELECTION PROCESS

- A. The City of Akron currently serves as the Collaborative Applicant for the CoC and has since the inception/establishment of the CoC.
- B. Info Line currently serves as the HMIS Lead agency and was asked to do so by HUD funded agencies in the CoC in 2003 when HUD issued the requirement for communities to implement a HMIS.
- C. If the board of directors deems at any time the requirements of these two components are not being met as outlined by HUD in the HEARTH Act or other legislation, they may recommend the full Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC membership or board of directors create its own Unified Funding Agency (Collaborative Applicant) or issue an RFP for replacement services.
- D. The board of directors will complete a formal performance evaluation of the infrastructure organization every year.

9.03. INFRASTRUCTURE ORGANIZATION(S) RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Serve as HUD Collaborative Applicant
- B. Submit HUD CoC program application
- C. Submit other funding applications
- D. Contract or hire Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC staff
- E. Conduct funded project monitoring and performance evaluation
- F. Report progress to full Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC membership and board of directors
- G. Support board of directors and Advisory Committees
- H. Implement initiatives as directed by the board of directors to enhance the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC performance.
- I. With advisory committees, monitor best practice homeless initiatives and make recommendations
- J. Raise funds
- K. Expand and maintain the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC membership through proactive engagement of key stakeholders, outreach to and coordination with other community groups, new member orientation, creation of outreach materials including but not limited to an interactive website and community education.
- L. Serve as Fiscal Agent for infrastructure financial support
- M. Serve or contract with HMIS Lead
 - 1. Plan and conduct Point in Time Count
 - 2. Operate HMIS System and Ensure Compliance
 - 3. Monitor Data Quality
 - 4. Data Reports (Housing Inventory Chart, Annual Homeless Assessment Report, other publications, performance reports)
 - 5. Follow HMIS Policies & Procedures
- N. Serve as the Point of Contact for the Community

9.04. DESIGNATING HMIS LEAD

Info Line, Inc. is the HMIS administering agency and/or the applicant /sponsor of Akron/ Summit County CoC Dedicated HMIS project grant, Akron/Summit County HMIS, is an agent of Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC, manages HMIS operations on behalf of Summit County and provides HMIS administration functions at the direction of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC. Active participation by Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC members, either through committee/sub-committee structure or other meetings, in the management of the HMIS process, including establishing policies, procedures and protocols for privacy, data sharing protocols, data analysis, reporting, data integrity/validity, is essential to the viability and success of the HMIS.

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the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC has endorsed the concept of a central HMIS system that is capable of integrating data and storing data from various existing homeless systems. An integrated data system is a requirement for HUD CoC Program and ESG funding. Policies for compliance with the applicable HUD regulations will be developed and reviewed at least annually by the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC and HMIS Lead.

HUD requires periodic review of the HMIS Lead to be conducted. These reviews shall include assessment of the organization capacity to fulfill HUD mandated HMIS functions, fiscal accountability, and assessment of alternate applicants.

9.05. SELECTION OF COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT

The City of Akron will be the legal entity to complete the HUD CoC Program application, referred to as the Collaborative Applicant. The Collaborative Applicant is responsible for collecting and combining the required application information from all applicants and projects and submitting this combined HUD CoC Program application on behalf of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC. The Collaborative Applicant is the only applicant that is able to apply for HUD planning funds to support the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC in carrying out all of its responsibilities. The Collaborative Applicant provides these functions on behalf of the broader Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC. The CoC board always retains responsibility, including the final approval of the application.

9.06. DESIGNATED POINT OF CONTACT

The CoC Lead Agency or the CoC Chairperson will be the designated HUD Point of Contact (POC) to the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC using a similar process. In the event neither is able to serve in this capacity the CoC board of directors will designate the POC taking into consideration two critical aspects: 1) the POC must have functional knowledge, access, and regular communication with the internal structures of the Collaborative Applicant organization; 2) to be effective, the POC must possess a comprehensive understanding of the HUD regulations and detailed procedures associated with compliance with the CoC, ESG, and VASH programs.

ARTICLE X. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER HUD AND OTHER FEDERALLY FUNDED HOMELESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CONSTITUENCIES

10.01. ESG ENTITLEMENT AREAS

Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) are awarded to Summit County ESG entitlement areas "ESG Area" by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the purpose of providing Essential Services and Shelter Operations to persons who are homeless or at risk of being homeless in the ESG entitlement Areas. The ESG Area makes these funds available to local service providers, as well as itself, via a Request for Proposals (RFP) or other process upon notification from HUD of the amount of ESG funds allocated to the ESG Area for the program year. The public notification of the RFP is placed in a local newspaper, on the ESG Area websites and electronically distributed by the Continuum of Care homeless service providers. The ESG Area may reserve up to 7.5 percent of the HUD award to administer the program.

The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC directly participates with jurisdictions that are directly funded by HUD ESG, with the State of Ohio Department of Housing and Community Development for the areas in the CoC that are eligible for State ESG funds, and with non-entitled areas that prepare Consolidated Plans. In each case, the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC consults with the jurisdiction to develop cooperative plans and strategies that leverage ESG and other resources to provide emergency shelter, prevention, and rapid re-housing services.

The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC assists the ESG entitlement areas (ESG Area) in coordinating the prioritization and use of funds. This coordination includes each ESG area covered by the State of Ohio and the ESG Areas in Summit County. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC, as the CoC entity, is responsible for assisting with the evaluation of ESG project performance.

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In cooperation with the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC, the ESG Area determines, based on the amount of funding received and the need of the client, the level of assistance and the duration of assistance that a household can receive.

The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC participates in setting local priorities, reviewing and rating proposals, certifying need, and annual review of ESG programs. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC Governance Charter serves as ESG governance and includes information about the responsibilities of the CoC and ESG area, HUD regulations, cross-jurisdiction strategies, and policy statements.

The general goal of ESG is to assist families and individuals out of homelessness by providing financial support for rental assistance, payment of utilities, transportation services and other essential services deemed eligible by HUD and necessary for the continued housing of a homeless or at risk of becoming homeless person, and/or families. ESG can be used to fund local homeless emergency shelter operations or physical rehabilitation of certain properties used for serving homeless persons.

To this end, the entitlement areas within the CoC geographic footprint and the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC have established the following cross-jurisdictional strategies for use of the ESG funds in ways that:

- A. Further the accomplishment of actions identified in the Consolidated Plan of each jurisdiction.
- B. Foster greater access to permanent housing, especially helping people access housing that is affordable at 30% area median income.
- C. Leverage existing resources to achieve the match and case management requirements and to avoid duplication of services.
- D. Coordinate across jurisdictions for development of standardized eligibility and assessment standards and by convening semiannual CoC planning meetings.
- E. Support federal and local goals for priority populations, including but not limited to veterans, persons with disabilities, families and others.
- F. Allow for variations in ESG entitlement programs that respond to the needs and resources of the individual jurisdictions.
- G. Comply with eligibility and verification requirements and locally established standards (HMIS, housing status, habitability standards, homeless definitions, etc.).
- H. Allows each program to take responsibility for program administration including compliance with public notice requirements and timely reporting.
- I. Encourages all sub recipients to participate in collaborative assessment, coordinated entry, data management, and reporting systems established by the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC in accordance with HEARTH regulations.
- J. Supports timely and accurate data collection and reporting through contractual obligations with sub recipients, and through establishing common standards for vendor relationships with the HMIS Lead.

The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC plan for ESG assistance recognizes the multiple ESG Areas contained in Summit County. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC works to avoid a duplication of services to ensure sub recipients do not receive multiple grants for the same services in a single service area. Sub recipients serving multiple areas may receive ESG support from the corresponding ESG Area to serve eligible clients from that service area.

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ESG sub recipients are responsible for assuring the provision of matching resources. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC encourages sub recipients to leverage additional resources for effective operation of ESG programs. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC consults with ESG Areas and sub recipients to coordinate plans for effective use of funds. HUD CoC Program-funded organizations are required to report the sources of match and leverage funds annually. These resources are verified through an annual review of agency Independent Audit as conducted in accord with HUD regulations.

10.02. ESG PROJECT RECIPIENTS AND SUBRECIPIENTS

ESG project recipients may include non-profit organizations, public housing agencies; or governmental entities that receive HUD CoC Program-funding. Recipients have a grant agreement with and receive funding directly from HUD; sub recipients have agreements with and receive funding from recipients.

ESG recipient and sub recipient organizations certify to ten program assurances concerning:

- A. Confidentiality;
- B. consistency with the applicable Consolidated Plan;
- C. discharge policies and protocols;
- D. education assurances for households with children;
- E. essential services;
- F. HMIS participation;
- G. inclusion of homeless persons in decision-making and Section 3 activities as practicable;
- H. restrictive covenants for facilities receiving ESG funds for renovation or major rehabilitation;
- I. matching funds;
- J. safe and sanitary facilities; and
- K. supportive services.

ESG recipient organizations must meet additional requirements established annually by contractual agreement with the ESG Area; for participation in Akron/Barberton Summit County CoC review and reporting requirements for project evaluation.

10.03. AKRON/BARBERTON SUMMIT COUNTY CoC LEADERSHIP IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Members of the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC actively participate with CoC Leaders from other areas. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC is a member of The Ohio Data Warehouse and other CoC collaboratives at the State level which include CoC leaders and HMIS Lead agents from the 9 CoCs in Ohio. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC leadership and other CoC stakeholders join in attending national homeless conferences, conference calls, and other professional partnerships that aid in the provision of systemic change to end homelessness in our community/CoC. The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC leaders also participate in groups and activities that are not

CoC-specific but have impact on the services and strategies offered through the Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC.

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ARTICLE XI. OTHER COC POLICIES & GOVERNANCE

11.01 COC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The Akron/Barberton/Summit County CoC is comprised of multiple homeless assistance programs which represents a cross section of federal departments and their mandated objectives to end homelessness. All CoC members will agree to abide by local policies and procedures which govern the administration of these programs. These policies and procedures include but are not limited to:

- Home Again (Homeless Prevention & Rapid Re-housing)
- Akron/Summit County Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
- Central Intake (Homeless Hotline)
- Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

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