SANTA CRUZ COUNTY HOUSING FOR HEALTH PARTNERSHIP
GOVERNANCE CHARTER
Adopted June 18, 2021

Table of Contents

ARTICLE 1: PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

The Santa Cruz County Housing for Health Partnership (the Partnership) aligns and develops resources, stakeholders, and collective wisdom across the greater Santa Cruz community to promote public health and work toward preventing and ending homelessness within the county.

The Partnership serves as the community's designated Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) governance entity in compliance with the requirements of federal regulations governing receipt of CoC funding, 24 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 578. This charter was developed in partnership with the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) lead agency, the CoC collaborative applicant, and the HUD Coordinated Entry implementation lead. Elements of this charter that reflect federal requirements are identified with a blue parenthetical note (CoC Requirement).

ARTICLE 2: STRUCTURE

The Partnership consists of:

1. A **Policy Board** responsible for high level planning and decision-making. The Board sets overall policy direction and provides system oversight. The Board delegates implementation, operational, and planning responsibilities to specific Operational Committees and Working Groups. See Article 3.
2. **Operational Committees and Working Groups** providing recommendations, input and guidance on key operational issues, resource needs, and areas for policy change and improvement. Operational Committees have decision-making authority as delegated by the Board. Operational Committees have formally established memberships with participation expectations. **Working** Groups form as needed and evolve over time based on evolving community needs, priorities, and opportunities. Working Groups bring together particular individuals with roles and responsibilities relevant to a specific focus area. Working groups coordinate local efforts and provide input and advice to the Policy Board or Operational Committees.   See Article 4.
3. The **General Membership** consisting of any individual in the community interested in joining the collective effort to prevent and end homelessness in the community. Membership expectations are set by the Policy Board. The Policy Board may request formal input or votes from the General Membership on specific topics. The General Membership nominates and selects three people to sit on the Policy Board. See Article 5.
4. **Staffing** for the Partnership is provided by the Santa Cruz County Human Services Department, Housing for Health Division (H4H). See Article 6.

ARTICLE 3: POLICY BOARD

1. Responsibilities of the Board

The Policy Board has the following responsibilities:

a. Create and/or adopt guiding principles, system objectives, equity goals and community-level plans for addressing homelessness, starting with the *Housing for a Healthy Santa Cruz* Strategic Framework and including revisions and updates.

b. Review and approve six-month work plans to implement the *Housing for a Healthy Santa Cruz Framework and subsequent revisions to the Framework.*

c. Review and approve funding recommendations developed by Operational Committees or other entities.

d. Approve applications for HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding and any funds from the State of California or other sources that require CoC oversight, management, approval or coordination. (CoC Requirement).

    i. Designate a Collaborative Applicant for CoC funding. The current Collaborative Applicant is H4H.(CoC Requirement).

    ii. Designate a Committee composed of non-conflicted members to review, rate, and rank CoC applications and present a final Project Priority List to the Policy Board for approval (CoC Requirement).

e. Review and approve operational standards, policies and high-level procedures for components of the housing crisis response system including, but not limited to, Coordinated Entry. (CoC Requirement).

    i. Designate a Coordinated Entry Management Entity and an Evaluation Entity. (CoC Requirement).

f. Conduct high level evaluation of the system and make high level recommendations for continuous improvement. (CoC Requirement).

    i. Conduct high level tracking of progress towards goals and outcomes in *Housing for a Healthy Santa Cruz and subsequent Framework revisions* and related six-month work plans, as well as progress towards other emerging priorities and activities.

    ii. Designate an entity to manage the HUD mandated Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and provide oversight for HMIS. The current HMIS management entity is H4H (CoC Requirement).

    iii. Approve the methodology and publication of the final results for the bi-annual Point in Time (PIT) Count. (CoC Requirement).

g. Provide direction to staff related to high-level communications and reports to stakeholders on results of investments and operations of the system and progress on Framework goals.

h. Review applications for membership to Operational Committees that have decision-making authority and make appointments to those Committees.

i. Ensure appropriate consultation and coordination with CoC, HUD Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), and other funding recipients when such efforts are required by HUD or other funding agencies.

j. Provide guidance to staff on how to support local jurisdictions in their completion of HUD Consolidated Plans, Annual Plans, and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports (CAPER).

2. Board Membership

The Policy Board consists of 15 community leaders and stakeholders who represent different entities and constituencies with significant experience and/or resources to address the issue of homelessness. Slots on the Board fall into 3 categories: jurisdictional representatives, Operational Committee or Working Group representatives, and partner system representatives.   At least one member of the Board must have had lived experience of homelessness at some point in their lives. The Policy Board nominating entities will strive to ensure two or more Policy Board members will have lived experience.

Stakeholder Group or Entity	Number of Seats	Eligible Representatives
A. Jurisdictional Representatives	**9**	
City of Santa Cruz	2	May be filled by elected officials, government staff, or other citizens.
City of Watsonville	2	
City of Scotts Valley/City of Capitola (alternating appointments)	1	
County of Santa Cruz	4	
B. Operational Committee or Working Group Representatives	**3**	At least 1 must be a person with lived experience.
C. Partner System Representatives	**3**	May come from non-profit, for-profit, public agencies or philanthropic entities.
Health Sector	1	
Workforce/Business/Foundation Sector	1	
Education Sector	1	

The CoC regulations require that the CoC Board must "be representative of the relevant organizations and of projects serving homeless subpopulations; and include at least one homeless or formerly homeless individual." Board members will complete a brief checklist noting which organizations and groups they represent. Members may represent more than one stakeholder group.

3. Appointments to the Board

HUD CoC regulations require that the process for appointing Board members will be reviewed, updated, and approved at least once every five years. Members will be appointed by an existing or to-be-created entity or body that represents that sector, as follows:

a. Jurisdictional Representatives will be appointed by the jurisdiction's respective elected body (City Council or County Board of Supervisors). Jurisdictional representatives may be elected officials, staff of the jurisdiction, or community representatives determined by the appointing body to represent

the interests and concerns of the jurisdiction. For members appointed by the County, no more than two may be elected officials. City jurisdictions may appointment up to two elected officials.

b. Operational Committee or Working Group Representatives will be appointed by the General Membership and must include at least one person with lived experience of homelessness.

c. Partner System Representatives will be appointed by entities representing the work of the designated sector and will be recruiting and recommended by H4H staff. The existing Policy Board will confirm sector representatives to be added to the Board. Criteria for selection of representatives will include:
   i. Organization brings funding or other policy/systems change levers to the table
   ii. Organization or individual within organization is motivated and committed to taking action to address homelessness
   iii. Nominees represent the interests and concerns of the appointing organization and of the field of interest.

4. Board Terms

Board Members will serve two-year terms. Each appointing body may determine if they will impose term limits on their representatives. If a member leaves before their two-year term is completed, their appointing body will appoint a replacement to serve out the remainder of their term.

5. Board Member Responsibilities

Each member will sign a written set of commitments for serving as a Board member, including:
a. A code of conduct (CoC Requirement), including agreement to abide by HUD (Title 24 Code of Federal Regulations {CFR} part 578.5) and Policy-Board adopted conflict of interest regulations and recusal processes for the Board, its chair(s), and any person acting on behalf of the Board.
b. Standards for Board service including expectations for attendance, preparation, and other responsibilities.
c. All regular Members of the Board shall attend all meetings. A pre-designated alternate may be established. Alternates shall receive and remain informed about all meeting materials but shall only attend when the primary member has an unavoidable reason for not attending.
Board members who fail to uphold their responsibilities may be removed by an action of the Board.

6. Officers

The Board will elect two co-chairs. Co-chairs may represent any of the three categories of representation but may not both be representatives from the same category type.

The co-chairs are responsible for working with staff to develop meeting agendas and to chair Board meetings. Staff will assist with meeting facilitation and the presentation of agenda items.

The co-chair terms will be two years. A co-chair may be appointed for a subsequent term at the discretion of the Board. The co-chair terms will be staggered so that they do not both change in the

same year. To provide for staggering, one of the first two co-chair terms under this Charter will be a special one-year term; thereafter, the term will revert to two years.

7.   Meetings of the Board

a.   Brown Act
The Policy Board is subject to the Brown Act and all meetings will be conducted in alignment with those requirements.

b.   Frequency
The Board will meet at least every other month at a regularly scheduled time. Meetings may be held with more frequency in the first year of Board operations.

c.   Decision-Making
Board decisions and actions are made through consensus. However, in cases where consensus cannot be reached, the decision will be subject to a simple majority vote.

d.   Quorums
The Board must have a quorum to take any action, either by consensus or by vote. A quorum is defined as a majority of current members. When all 15 Board seats are filled, 8 members shall constitute a quorum.

e.   Meeting Notification
A meeting notice and agenda shall be publicly posted at least 72 hours prior to each Board meeting.

f.   Public Comment and Standing Agenda Items
Each Board meeting shall include opportunities for public comment, in accordance with the Brown Act. Operational Committee and Working Group reports shall be standing agenda items.

ARTICLE 4: OPERATIONAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

1.   Authority

The Partnership Policy Board may create Operational Committees with decision-making authority as delegated by the Board or Working Groups advisory to the Policy Board and Operational Committees.

   a.   Decision-Making Operational Committees. For Committees with decision-making authority, the Board shall appoint a Chair that is a member of the Policy Board. Seats on decision-making Committees must be filled by a process where members apply for Board approval and appointment. The Board will task decision-making Committees with a specific work plan detailing objectives, activities, and specific decisions to be made. Decision-making Committee members must sign the same Code of Conduct and responsibilities documents as Board Members. Committees make decisions following the same guidelines as the Policy Board and Committee meetings also follow Brown Act guidelines for public participation and comment opportunities.

b. Working Groups. Working Groups are not required to have Board members as chairs and membership of these groups may be self-selecting or managed by H4H as staff.

Committees and Working Groups may be Standing (ongoing) or Ad Hoc (short term). This Charter describes an initial set of Standing Committees and Working Groups which may be modified by Board Action.

Any Committee may create working groups designated to work on specific tasks. Working groups do not require any approval by the Board.

All committee members may receive support and training to enable them to participate in the work of the Committee. Members who are not compensated through their employment may be compensated for their work by H4H through stipends, depending on the availability of funding.

2. **System Operations, Data and Evaluation (Smart Path to Housing and Health) Committee**

a. Responsibilities

The System Operations, Data and Evaluation Committee is a decision-making committee with authority delegated by the Board through an annual work plan. Given its expansive scope, this Committee may form work groups to carry out its work. At a minimum, this committee is required to consult with and include Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Continuum of Care (CoC) grant recipients related to the responsibilities outlined below.

System Policies and Standards

i. Develop operational standards, policies and high-level procedures for components of the system, including how people access and are prioritized for each component (CoC Requirement):
   a. Coordinated Entry (Smart Path)
   b. Housing Problem Solving and Prevention
   c. Outreach
   d. Temporary shelter and transitional housing
   e. Rapid rehousing and other time-limited subsidy program models (standards to include policies for determining what percentage or amount of rent each program participant must pay)
   f. Permanent supportive housing and other housing dedicated for people experiencing homelessness
   g. Supportive services dedicated to people experiencing homelessness

   Standards must include required system policies such as those required under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). (CoC Requirement)

ii. Oversight and evaluation of the HUD mandated Coordinated Entry System (CES). (CoC Requirement)

iii.   Establish a mechanism for client and community feedback and complaints to be handled at the system level and used to make system level improvements, when appropriate.

Data and Performance Measurement

i.   Building from HUD's required System Performance measures, establish performance measures and targets for the system and its component parts, as listed above. Targets to be brought to Policy Board for approval.

ii.   Evaluate the housing crisis response system and develop continuous strategies for improvement; implement Results-Based Accountability (RBA) across the system.

iii.   Develop and manage systems for collecting and managing data needed to track performance and evaluate the system, including:
   a.   Review, revise, and approve a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan for the HMIS. (CoC Requirement)
   b.   Conduct the HUD required Point in Time Count (PIT), not less than every other year and with a goal of moving to annual. (CoC Requirement)
   c.   Conduct a regularly updated inventory of the system and map of the resources available to respond to homelessness, including maintaining and updating the HUD required Housing Inventory Count (HIC) (CoC Requirement)
   d.   Quantify system gaps and needs on a regular basis (CoC Requirement)
   e.   Produce regular reports to funders (including HUD), local leadership, community members and other stakeholders as needed to understand and assess the performance of the system. (CoC Requirement)
   f.   Coordinate with local jurisdictions to identify the information they need and facilitate needed data collection and sharing between organizations.
   g.   Maximize data transparency between County, cities, service providers and the general public.
   h.   Ensure compliance with HUD HMIS requirements.
   i.   Ensure consistent and active participation of agencies in HMIS including required and desired participating agencies.

b.   Membership

The System Operations, Data and Evaluation Committee shall have 15 representatives. Membership must represent a cross-section of expertise in program types and subpopulations as well as geographical diversity. Membership must represent the relevant organizations and projects serving homeless populations, such as 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. include representation in the areas identified below according to HUD guidelines.

System Operations, Data and Evaluation Committee members shall be appointed by the Policy Board and must include a chairperson who is a Board member and responsible for reporting to the Board on behalf of the Committee.

c.   Meetings

The System Operations, Data and Evaluation Committee shall meet monthly.

3.   Cross Jurisdictional Finance Working Group

a.   Responsibilities

The Cross Jurisdictional Finance Working Group is an advisory group that holds responsibility for:

    i.   Working toward aligning funding to support a Board-approved coordinated framework to address homelessness.

        a.   For funding sources for which the Partnership Board has approval authority (e.g., CoC funding, State HHAP funding), the Funding Work Group will assist the Board with creating local non-conflicted application review committees or panels as needed. (CoC Requirement)

        b.   For funding sources for which the Partnership Board does not have approval authority, the Funding Committee will coordinate with, advise or provide guidance to share with the approving bodies for those sources, in alignment with the Partnership's overall strategy (e.g., coordinating with the County Health Services Agency on use of Health Care for the Homeless funding, or providing recommendations to the City of Santa Cruz on use of Community Development Block Grant {CDBG} funds for homeless services).

    ii.   Coordinate and advocate with partner systems of care (e.g., behavioral health, workforce development, others) to reduce barriers and facilitate access and quality support for people experiencing and at-risk of homelessness, align strategies and resources, and share data and information.

   iii.   Seek resources to support increased household incomes and employment among people at-risk of or currently experiencing homelessness.

b.   Cross Jurisdictional Finance Working Group Membership

Membership in this Working Group will change over time to include key representatives from public funding agencies and private philanthropic entities.   The Policy Board will provide guidance to Housing for Health staff on key parties to include in Working Group conversations. The Working Group should strive for inclusion of key city, county, and private sector funding representation on an ongoing basis with additional participants as appropriate for topics.

c.   Meetings

The Funding Committee shall meet at least quarterly.

4. Lived Experience Working Group

a.   Responsibilities

The Lived Experience Working Group provides recommendations and advice to the Policy Board and Operational Committees on system operations, data, evaluation, and any other topics relevant to improvement of the community's response to homelessness.

b.   Membership

The Lived Experience Working Group will consist of a minimum of 8 members but no more than 13 who are either currently experiencing homelessness or who have experienced homelessness. H4H will staff this Group and identify members though outreach to the community.

c.   Meetings

Meetings will be coordinated by H4H staff and will be held at accessible and equitable locations. Meeting frequency will be at the discretion of the Working Group but will occur at least six times per year.

5. Youth Advisory Working Group

a.   Responsibilities

The Youth Working Group provides recommendations and advice to the Policy Board and Operational Committees on system operations, data, evaluation for all elements of the system that impact transition age youth, and in particular for those components funded by the HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). (CoC Requirement)

b.   Membership

The Youth Advisory Board currently consists of 8 members with a plan to expand up to 13. The YAB is staffed by H4H and Encompass Community Services, who identify members though outreach to the community.

c.   Meetings

Meetings are coordinated by H4H and Encompass Staff.   Meeting frequency will be at the discretion of the Working Group but will occur at least six times per year.

6. Housing and Capital Working Group

a.   Responsibilities

The Housing and Capital Working Group provides recommendations and advice to the Policy Board and Operational Committees on the development of housing and other capital infrastructure (e.g., emergency shelters) needed to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness.

  i.   Seek resources to expand affordable housing for extremely low-income households and advocate for the inclusion of people experiencing homelessness in new housing developments

ii.   Conduct legislative and policy advocacy to expand the supply of affordable housing

iii.   Manage a cross jurisdictional housing pipeline working group to plan for and track progress on the planning, siting, development, and service provision for housing designed or dedicated to serving people experiencing or previously homeless.

iv.   Advise on siting and development of shelters and other temporary programs

v.   Advise on tenant protection policies and practices

vi.   Advise on use of federal Housing Choice Vouchers and other Housing Authority programs to address needs of people experiencing homelessness

vii.   Advise on land use and other policies to increase the supply of affordable housing, including updating of Housing Elements

b.   Membership
The Housing and Capital Working Group will initially include County staff from multiple departments and expand membership participation over time to work on specific project and areas of focus. The goal is to expand membership over time to enhance the scope and impact of this working group.

c.   Meetings
This Working Group shall meet at least quarterly.

7.   Ad Hoc Committees or Working Groups

The Board shall empanel Ad Hoc Committees or Working Groups as needed to address emerging or new issues. Ad Hoc Committees shall have decision-making authority and Working Groups will serve an advisory function.

ARTICLE 5: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

The full membership of the Partnership is open to any interested individual who wishes to join with a personal commitment to contribute to the goal of preventing and ending homelessness within Santa Cruz County. Members join by submitting their name and contact information to the H4H staff and completing a membership participation agreement. The Partnership must issue a public invitation for new members at least once per year.

HUD regulations require that the CoC general membership is representative of a broad range of organizations, including: "*nonprofit homeless assistance 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, and organizations that serve veterans and homeless and formerly homeless individuals*." Members will complete a brief questionnaire asking them to indicate which stakeholder groups they represent. A single member may represent multiple groups.

Members are encouraged to participate in committees, working groups, and to attend general membership meetings. Members who miss two general membership meetings may be removed from the membership.

Responsibilities of the General Membership include, but are not limited to:
- Identifying volunteers to support the annual Point in Time Count and other data gathering efforts
- Conducting an annual feedback survey on efforts of the Housing for Health Partnership
- Supporting community education and outreach efforts
- Voting or providing feedback on items as requested by the Policy Board

The full membership holds bi-annual meetings, with published agendas. (CoC Requirement)

The full membership selects the three Operational Committee members to the seats on the Policy Board. Members submit applications to H4H which are then presented to the Membership at one of its bi-annual meetings. In the event there is more than 1 application for a given seat, the Membership shall conduct an election for the open seat.

ARTICLE 6: PARTNERSHIP STAFFING

The County of Santa Cruz Human Services Department (HSD) Housing for Health (H4H) Division will staff the Partnership. Staffing responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Implementation of the overall vision and direction set forth in the Strategic Framework, with oversight from the Policy Board, through:
    - Developing and presenting six-month work plans for approval by the Policy Board
    - Managing funding processes (developing recommendations, applying for funds, managing grants, issuing RFPs, managing contracts)
    - Setting performance measures and tracking progress
    - Gathering and analyzing data
    - Conducting ongoing housing crisis system and program evaluation and planning
    - Developing policies and standards for programs and components that are part of the response system
- Identifying and inviting participation from Partner System Representatives
- Staffing the meetings of the Policy Board, Operational Committees, and General Membership meetings, including developing agendas, drafting and presenting staff reports and other materials, taking and publishing meeting notes, and meeting logistics (scheduling, room reservations, meeting announcements, etc.)
- Providing training and technical assistance to any Operational Committee members who may need support to participate, including members of the Youth Advisory Board and Lived Experience Board.
- Providing compensation and other support to members per guidance from the Policy Board
- Coordinating and aligning the work of County and city staff working on homelessness
- Supporting training and capacity building throughout the system

- Maintaining an information clearinghouse on issues related to homelessness in Santa Cruz County.

- Reporting and communication with the public
- Responding to input and concerns from the public, including people with lived experience of homelessness

ARTICLE 7: CHARTER AMENDMENTS

On an annual basis, the Policy Board in conjunction with the HMIS lead, CoC collaborative applicant, and other stakeholders, shall review and update this Charter as needed. Amendment of the charter requires a majority vote if consensus cannot be reached.