

**Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness**

**Governance Charter**

MI-512: Greater Grand Traverse Continuum of Care

# Overview

## Continuum of Care

A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a collaborative funding and planning approach to providing homeless services. This approach was established as part of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and later amended by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act). A CoC represents a specific geographic area with representatives primarily coming from organizations that provide services to persons experiencing homelessness.

A CoC serves two main purposes:

* To develop a long-term strategic plan and manage a year-round planning effort that addresses the identified needs of homeless individuals and households.
* To prepare an application for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act competitive grants, and to oversee the administration of those grants towards the effective implementation of the community’s strategic plan.

To support both of these efforts, CoCs are also responsible for gathering data on homelessness, including conducting a Point-In-Time (PIT) Count of all sheltered and unsheltered persons, completing an annual inventory of residential homeless programs targeted to households experiencing homelessness, and managing data collection from providers of targeted homeless assistance in a local Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS).

HUD establishes the responsibilities of the CoC as the following:

* **Operating a CoC (24 CFR 578.7 (a))** 
  + Hold meetings of the Steering Committee, with published agendas, at least semi-annually
  + Adopt and follow a written process to select a CoC Board and review, update, and approve at least once every 5 years
  + Appoint additional committees, subcommittees, or workgroups
  + Adopt, follow, and update annually a governance charter in consultation with the Collaborative Applicant and the HMIS Lead
* **Performance Targets and Monitoring (24 CFR 578.7 (a))** 
  + Establish performance targets appropriate for population and program type in consultation with recipients and sub-recipients
  + Monitor recipients and sub-recipients performance, evaluate outcomes, take actions against poor performers, and report to HUD as required
* **Coordinated Assessment (24 CFR 578.7 (a))** 
  + Establish and operate a centralized or coordinated assessment system in consultation with recipients of ESG funds
  + Establish and follow written standards for providing CoC assistance in consultation with recipients of ESG funds
* **HMIS (24 CFR 578-07(b))** 
  + Review, revise, and approve privacy, security and data quality plans
  + Ensure consistent participation of recipients and sub-recipients in HMIS
  + Ensure that the HMIS is administered in compliance with HUD requirements
* **Planning (24 CFR 578.7 (c))** 
  + Coordinate implementation of a housing and service system
  + Conduct a PIT count of homeless persons that meets HUD’s requirements
  + Conduct an annual gaps analysis of homeless needs and services
  + Consult with working groups and the Steering Committee on the plan for Continuous Quality Improvement throughout the NWCEH
* **Application for CoC Funds (24 CFR 578.9 (a))** 
  + Design, operate, and follow a collaborative process for the development of applications and approve submission of applications in response to a CoC Program NOFA
  + Establish priorities for funding projects
  + Determine if one or more applications will be submitted
  + Designate the Collaborative Applicant, who must collect and combine the required application information from all projects within the geographic area and will apply for funding for CoC planning activities
  + Rank applications as required by HUD

## Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness

The Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness (NWCEH) is a collaborative group of community organizations and individuals representing the Greater Grand Traverse Area Continuum of Care. The Independent Jurisdiction counties make up the Greater Grand Traverse Area Continuum of Care and include Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Leelanau, and Kalkaska. These 5 counties are recognized by HUD as an Independent Jurisdiction and receive direct funding from HUD.

### Formal Name

The formal name is the Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness.

### Purpose

To ensure that individuals and families have access to safe, decent, affordable housing and support ser vices designed to help them become integrated socially and economically into their communities.

### Mission

NWCEH will work collaboratively to end homelessness by addressing housing issues through a community-based process that develops a comprehensive, coordinated continuum of care to individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in the community it serves.

### Vision

We believe that having a safe, permanent home is a basic human right. Our vision is to end homelessness in the Northwest Michigan region. An end to homelessness means making homelessness rare, brief and one-time.

### Principles and Values

1. Collaboration: The action of working with someone to produce or create something. Collaboration enables entities or individuals to work together to achieve a defined and common goal.
   1. The NWCEH is a collaborative group of community organizations and individuals committed to making homelessness rare, brief and one-time across Northwest Michigan.
   2. Members of the NWCEH must understand the magnitude of the challenge, the costs if we do not meet the challenge, our strategies for ending homelessness and the importance of obtaining and allocating resources equal to our aspirations
2. Accountability: An undying commitment, and obligation to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions.
   1. The NWCEH will be accountable for the work to end homelessness across Northwest Michigan. NWCEH is accountable to the communities, agencies and most importantly to the people we have the privilege of serving.
   2. To best utilize our resources, we must understand the outcomes of our investments, evaluate progress and demonstrate accountability. We will continue to improve and expand our community-wide data system so funders and providers can efficiently collect data, share knowledge for better client outcomes and report outcomes against the goals of the CoC.

# Structure and Organization

## Geographic Area

The NWCEH serves the Greater Grand Traverse Area Continuum of Care (Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Leelanau counties).

## Structure

The NWCEH is made up of 4 main areas of organization consisting of the Backbone Support, Executive Committee, Steering Committee, and the Working Group membership.

Steering Committee

Executive Committee

Backbone Support (Coalition Staff)

Working Groups

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Backbone Support: The backbone support of the NWCEH consists of the Coalition staff. Staff members currently include the NWCEH Director, Assistant Director, and the HMIS System Administrator. The Director and Assistant Director are overseen by the Executive Committee of the NWCEH while the Assistant Director and the HMIS System Administrator are responsible to the Director for day to day oversight. Each of these roles are contracted positions held by either the HUD Collaborative Applicant (Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency) or the HMIS Lead Agency (Goodwill of Northern Michigan). The Coalition staff will be committed to using data to inform strategy and decision making throughout the coalition. Continually improving each sector of the system will be a foundation for all work set forth by the staff.

### The Coalition staff are responsible for the following within the structural model:

* Guide vision and strategy
* Support aligned activities
* Establish shared measurement practices
* Build public will
* Advance policy
* Mobilize funding
* Make connections between working groups to ensure coordination and efficiency
* Tracking progress of work using agreed-upon indicators at Steering Committee and working group levels
  + Review quarterly reports from all funded agencies to ensure spend down is adequate, and to monitor project performance and outcomes based on System Performance Measures.
  + Provide quarterly reports in a condensed version to Steering Committee members.
  + Help to create and implement improvement plans for funded agencies when/if needed based on data received from quarterly reporting
* Use data to inform strategy development and learning
* Serve as a vocal champion of the collective impact effort in the community

### Executive Committee: The executive committee of the NWCEH consists of dedicated slots for each agency that receives HUD or state funding for the work to end homelessness (Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency, Goodwill of Northern Michigan, Northwest Michigan Supportive Housing, Child & Family Services/Third Level), and two other identified community stakeholders. The Executive Committee is responsible for the following within the structural model:

* Provide quarterly reports of all HUD or MSHDA funded projects that are dedicated to the work to end homelessness. Report templates will be provided to Executive Committee members and will consist of the following:
  + Quarterly spend down
  + Quarterly System Performance Measure Reports
  + Quarterly Pay for Performance Reports (if receiving MHSDA ESG funding)
  + Progress on any active System Improvement Plans
  + Any other Coalition sponsored projects identified
* Review all intent to apply notices for HUD CoC Program funding following the release of the NOFA. Attending an annual funding allocation pre-meeting leading up to the HUD application process.
* Review MSHDA ESG application recommendations from the Backbone staff and the Steering Committee to ensure application alignment with priorities of the working groups.
  + Make final budgetary decisions for MSHDA ESG Program or any other MSHDA issued funding opportunity

### Steering Committee: The Steering Committee of the NWCEH consists of the Chair of each working group along with a chair or member of each local Human Services Collaborative Body/Group. The Steering Committee will be responsible for the following within the structural model:

* Adopt and support the work to end homelessness across Northwest Michigan
* Provide guidance, and recommendations for the work to end homelessness
* Use data to inform recommendation and strategy development
* Make connections between working groups to ensure coordination and efficiency
* Interact with the backbone staff on strategy, community engagement, and shared measurement
* Provide leadership by: considering how your own organization or those in your network can align to the common agenda, and by serving as a local champion of the work to end homelessness within your community and organization
* Play and active role by participating in the monthly Steering Committee meetings led by backbone staff, reviewing pre-read materials prior to meetings and coming prepared for engaged discussion, active listening, active collaboration and respectful dialogue
* Committing to a year long membership of the Steering Committee

*See Steering Committee Governance Agreement for more information*

### Working Groups and Working Group Chairs: The Working Groups of the NWCEH are sub-groups reporting to the Steering Committee that help choose and implement strategies to end homelessness across Northwest Michigan. Members of each working group are identified subject matter or community experts for a relevant topic or sub-population. The chairs of each working group are both subject matter experts as well as thought partners to the backbone staff who are helping to facilitate the monthly working group meetings. The primary function of the chairperson is to help the backbone staff and Steering Committee make connections across the various pieces of the effort’s work.

#### See Working Group Guiding Document for more information

# Decision Making

All decisions other than those requiring a vote from an outside funding organization as a formality will be made using the C.T. Butler/A. Rothstein formal consensus model outlined in *On conflict and consensus: A handbook on formal consensus decision-making.* All members attending a meeting at which consensus is being sought may take part in the process.

Proposals may be brought forth by committees or individuals

Once a proposal is made, the NWCEH Director will ask if there are concerns. If concerns are voiced, the Director will then ask the membership to address the concerns through solution-oriented discussion. The proposal is then edited to resolve the concerns or withdrawn. This process continues until consensus is reached, the proposal is withdrawn, or members with concerns step aside and allow the proposal to move forward without full consensus. [http://leadtogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/on-conflict-and-consensus.pdf](http://leadtogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/on-conflict-and-consensus.pdf%20)

In the rare occurrence that a vote is required by an outside funding organization as a formality, a simple majority (51% or more) of eligible voters present shall approve any action. Prior to the vote being taken, consensus shall be reached through the formal consensus model in.

## Executive Committee Decision Making

The executive Committee will be responsible for making policy level decisions that affects the Coalition at large. These decisions will be informed and under advisement of the Steering Committee Members as well as the Backbone staff.

The Executive Committee will also be responsible for making a final decision on the MSHDA ESG budget for the two funded agencies. This decision will be led by recommendations from the Steering Committee and the Backbone staff.

# Funding Allocation

## Conflict of Interest and Recusal

No member of NWCEH will play a decision-making role in the review, ranking, selection, or award of any grant funds in which they have a personal financial interest, or in which any member of their immediate family (such as parent, sibling, child or person with whom they cohabit) has a financial interest.

Steering Committee members of NWCEH will disclose potential conflicts of interest that they may have regarding any matters that come before it at a regular meeting or working group meetings. Members will recuse themselves from any matter in which they may have a conflict of interest-abstaining from discussion, unless that discussion is requested by the Steering Committee or backbone staff.

## Code of Conduct

NWCEH prohibits the solicitation and acceptance of gifts or gratuities by officers, employees, sub-contractors, members and agents for their personal benefit. Violators of this code will be subject to disciplinary action which could include termination from membership. This code is applicable to all HUD and MSHDA grant programs and all programs of NWCEH.

## Non-Discrimination

The members, officers, working group members and contractors of NWCEH will be selected entirely on a nondiscriminatory basis with respect to race, color, national origin, age, disability, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or other Federal, State, or locally protected group.

## Limited Authority

NWCEH is an unincorporated collaborative body; as such:

* It does not have any assets or liabilities;
* It may not indemnify member or participant actions; and
* No member of NWCEH, Executive Committee, Steering Committee, or Working Groups, may contract, incur debt, or otherwise create an enforceable obligation for NWCEH.

Any grievance related to NWCOC will follow HUD policies and contracts

## Resource Allocations for MSHDA Emergency Solutions Grant Program

The NWCEH process used to review and approve applications for funding through the MSHDA Emergency Solutions Grant program is:

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| **Date** | **Who** | **What** |
| Prior to NOFA publication by MSHDA | Steering Committee | The Steering Committee develops funding priorities along with recommended percentages of dollar amounts for each ESG funded service area for applicants to use as guidelines for their agency applications |
| Within 1 week of NOFA publication by MSHDA | NWCEH Director | Upon publication of NOFA, notice sent via email to the mailing list of the NWCH providing due date for notice of Intent to Apply for ESG funding through NWCEH. |
| 1 week after NWCEH NOFA announcement | Intent to Apply due to Director | Agencies intending to apply for ESG funding need to provide notice by this date. Upon receipt of the Intent to Apply, the Director will send the same application package to all agencies intending to apply for ESG funding. |
| Within 3 weeks after NOFA and/or MSHDA announcement of COC allocation | Director and Executive Committee | Representatives (1-2) of each agency seeking ESG funding meet with Executive Committee members (could be same people) to agree on dollar amounts of each application based on Steering Committee guidelines for funding priorities. Authorized applicant representatives must be in attendance to sign interim agreement. |
| 3.5 weeks after publication of NOFA | Application for Funding Due to Director | Completed applications for ESG funding received by this date will be compiled and sent along with a meeting agenda to Steering Committee members. Applications that are not received by this date will not be considered for the current funding cycle. |
| 4 weeks after publication of NOFA | Steering Committee | Meets to review all ESG funding applications, including:   * Is the application complete and are all questions fully addressed? * Does the application address emergency housing priorities set by the Steering Committee? * Has the agency met its service goals during the last funding cycle? * Has the agency used all of the ESG funding allocated for the last funding cycle? * How is the agency providing the grant match? * How is the agency paying for emergency services/shelter beyond MSHDA ESG funding?   The RAC develops any follow-up questions it has for each applicant to address. Director provides any follow-up questions to applicants immediately after meeting. |
| Immediately after Steering Committee finalized recommendation | Director | Completes/Finalizes ESG Exhibit 1 application based on recommendations of Steering Committee |
| Virtual | NWCEH Membership/Steering Comittee | ESG Exhibit 1 sent to all NWCEH members in meeting packet at least 1 week prior to meeting. RAC members present recommendation along with justification to full membership for approval. Discussion. Vote taken. If not approved, goes back to Steering and Executive Committee for adjustment and a special meeting is scheduled to approve revised recommendation. This process continues until an ESG Exhibit 1 is approved. |
| Immediately after approval | Director | ESG Exhibit 1 application submitted to MSHDA |

## Resource Allocations for HUD Continuum of Care Program

The Greater Grand Traverse Area Continuum of Care (GGTACOC) which covers Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau Counties is recognized by HUD as M-512. NWCOC member agencies within the GGTACOC service areas apply directly to HUD for funding and the GGTACOC is responsible for approving and prioritizing project applications and submitting a coordinated COC application.

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| **Date** | **Who** | **What** |
| When Grant Inventory Worksheet (GIW) sent to NWCEH Director | Director | GIW sent out to all HUD funded agencies to review and approve for next funding cycle. |
| Within 1 week of HUD NOFA release | Director | Upon notification by HUD, notice sent via email to all GTACOC members and published in primary print media in Traverse City providing due date for notice of Intent to Apply for HUD funding. |
| Immediately after NOFA release | Director | Begin COC coordinated application |
| When due by HUD | Project Applicants | Submit project applications through HUD esnaps system and notify Director that applications are submitted. |
| Immediately after Project Application due date | Director | Transfer Project Applications into COC coordinated application and send applications to GGTACOC Resource Allocations Committee (RAC) members |
| Within one week of Project Application due date | NWCEH Steering Committee | Meets with applicants to review and prioritize applications  Applicants present their applications to Steering Committee:   * Applicants are allotted 5 minutes to present their applications. The order of presentations is determined by random selection. * Another 5 minutes is allotted for Steering Committee members to ask questions of applicants * Applicants are present and may be a part of this discussion. Given the tight timeline, an agency representative who is authorized to make decisions and adjustments to the application must be present. * Full group discussion ends and the Steering Committee finalizes its recommendation to the NWCEH Executive Committee. * Authorized applicant representatives sign statement stating that they will not disagree with the Steering Committee recommendation. |
| By HUD application due date | Director | Submits final COC coordinated application through HUD esnaps including project applications, project prioritization, and coordinated application. |