

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES ACTION COUNCIL

OPERATING POLICIES

Adopted 03-30-16

Revised and Reviewed 01-25-2017

This policy outlines the functional structure and operational goals of the Housing Opportunities Action Council (HOAC) of Benton County; and will enable the organization to support the housing-first approach to reducing homelessness outlined in the Ten Year Plan (2009).

I. Definitions

- a. Adult Service Team (AST): A coordinated delivery team convened to help homeless or near homeless individuals/families overcome or prevent the conditions of homelessness by facilitating access to comprehensive community based coordinated services leading to stabilized lives.
- b. Affordable Housing: The generally accepted definition of affordability is that a household pay no more than 30% of its annual income on housing. Households paying more are considered cost-burdened, and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, childcare, transportation, and medical care.
- c. Backbone organization: helps maintain overall strategic coherence and coordinates and manages the day-to-day operations and implementation of work, including stakeholder engagement, communications, data collection and analysis, and other responsibilities.
- d. Continuum of Care: A community plan to organize and deliver services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximum self-sufficiency.
- e. Emergency Shelter: Any facility for which the primary purpose is to provide temporary or transitional shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless.
- f. Homeless: any person who does not have a permanent place to live; which may include those at imminent risk of homelessness, if they have one or more of the following risk factors (as identified in the HUD definition):
 - i) Lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
 - ii) Where a primary nighttime residence is a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
 - iii) Those facing eviction, foreclosure, forfeiture, or tax crisis; those with shut-off notices or current disconnection of basic utilities;
 - iv) Those with an order to vacate their home for health or safety reasons by a governmental body;
 - v) Those experiencing domestic violence; or those with existing housing which is unlivable (as defined by a governmental body); or
 - vi) An unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more OR has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.
- g. Cooperating Agencies: Service agencies and stakeholders who agree to work together, in a collaborative model, to implement identified strategies in support of the HOAC. Cooperating organizations work together to develop and maintain an ongoing, transparent communication plan and shared tracking and evaluation of outcomes; and participate in standing committees and workgroups where appropriate. Each cooperating organization signs a Declaration of Cooperation affirming its commitment to the HOAC and its work.
- h. SMART Goals: Goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound.

II. Responsibilities & Operations

This section summarizes HOAC structure, responsibilities, and operations. Committees, Teams, and work groups may develop charters to articulate further detail.

- a. Lead Administrator: serves as the backbone organization for the HOAC. As such, it will serve as the fiscal agent for the HOAC, may have the authority to sign and enter into contracts on behalf of the HOAC Governing Board and accept responsibility for advancing HOAC outcomes. The Lead Administrator reports to the HOAC Governing Board. Specific responsibilities are outlined in its contract.
- b. Governing Board: consists of defined number of representatives from identified sectors, service organizations, public policy and advocacy organizations, and at-large members. Wherever possible, sector members should be recruited from organizations other than those with standing seats. Details about Governing Board formation and core duties are outlined in the HOAC charter.
- c. Standing Committees:
 1. Leadership Committee: meets in between the general board meetings. Debriefs past board meeting and plans agenda for the upcoming meeting; makes recommendations to the full Board as needed, and other duties that may arise.
 - i. Consists of the Governing Board co-chairs, 3 additional Board members, and one representative of each standing committee. The co-chairs of the Governing Board serve as facilitators
 - ii. Reports to the Governing Board
 2. SMART Team: meets at regularly identified intervals in between general Governing Board meetings to review progress-to-date on HOAC goals, propose tangible outcomes to meet long-term goals associated with long-term strategic objectives, and develop an annual work plan for HOAC based on SMART Goals.
 - i. Consists of 2-4 Board Members, and representation of cooperating agencies, and the public as appropriate to workload. One committee member will be chosen as facilitator; facilitator provides status reports to the Governing Board, and shall be a member of the Leadership Committee.
 - ii. The SMART Team makes recommendations to the full Board, it has no decision-making authority
 3. Funding Coordination Team: meets at regularly identified intervals in between general Governing Board meetings to track and report on funding streams, review the financial situation of the HOAC, and support HOAC budgeting and financial management. Additionally, the team manages requested letters of support for funding applications; only proposals meeting the goals of the HOAC will be forwarded to the Governing Board for cooperating agency support.
 - i. Membership is appointed and removed by the Governing Board. One committee member will be chosen as facilitator; facilitator provides status reports to the Governing Board, and shall be a member of the Leadership Committee.
 - ii. The Funding Coordination Team makes recommendations to the full Board, it has no decision-making authority.
- d. Coordinated Delivery Team(s): collaboration-based work groups which operate in collective impact practices; convened and sun-set as needed to implement strategic plan objectives and initiatives.
 - i. Membership is open to interested participants; representation from cooperating agencies and identified sectors is preferred. One committee member will be chosen as facilitator; facilitator provides status reports to the Governing Board.
- e. Ad hoc work groups: limited-duration work groups created to accomplish a specific one-time or variable task; convened and disbanded as needed.

III. Decision Making

The Governing Board will strive for modified consensus in all of its decision-making. Working toward consensus is a fundamental principle and includes the following understandings:

- a. Modified Consensus: all group members either fully support or can live with a proposal or decision and believe that their constituents can as well. In reaching consensus, some Board members may strongly endorse a particular proposal while others may accept it as "workable." Others may be only able to "live with it." Still others may choose to "stand aside" by verbally noting a disagreement, yet allowing the group to reach a consensus without them. Any of these actions still constitutes consensus.

Those who choose to "stand aside" may request to have their views represented in meeting summaries and any final report or decision document.

- b. Representatives: When initial agreement is achieved, some participants may need to take the agreement back to their constituencies or a higher decision-making authority for ratification. If those higher authorities or constituents express concerns or reservations, they also have an obligation to propose an alternative that will address all interests. These responses will be brought back to the group for further deliberations.
- c. When Consensus Cannot be Reached: Reaching consensus is the intended outcome of each discussion. If the group is not able to reach consensus after full deliberation and attempts to break impasse have not been effective, a vote on the proposal will be taken by show of hands. The proposal or decision passes if a super-majority (75%) of the members who are present vote in favor of it. Those in the minority are invited to write a "minority statement" describing their concerns and views, and this statement will become part of the official meeting summary.

IV. Oversight

This policy will be reviewed annually by the HOAC Leadership Committee or sooner if conditions warrant. Any changes will be reviewed and approved by the Governing Board.

- a. The Board is responsible for strict compliance with the provisions of the prudent person rule as it pertains to their duties and responsibilities.
- b. The Board is responsible for reviewing these policies regularly to insure the guidelines are appropriate to economic conditions and the goals of the Board.

Review Periods identified:

- January 2017 or approved modification, whichever comes first.
- Annually thereafter, as part of the HOAC strategic planning process.

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