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OFFICE OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



FLEXIBLE RESOURCES, DATA-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS:  
USING HMIS AND HEARTH TO END HOMELESSNESS

# Continuum of Care Governance and Management





## Presenters

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- Patrick Taylor, The Cloudburst Group





# Learning Objectives

- Provide CoCs with an overview of:
  - Effective CoC Governance
    - Duties
    - Selection Criteria
  - CoC Self-Assessment





“The art of governing consists simply of being honest, exercising common sense, following principle, and doing what is right and just.”

Thomas Jefferson





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# CoCs and the McKinney-Vento Act





## The Continuum of Care is...

- A collaborative funding and planning approach that helps communities plan for and provide, as necessary, a full range of emergency, transitional, and permanent housing and other services to address the various needs of homeless persons.
- HUD also refers to the group of service providers involved in the decision making process for the geographic area as the “Continuum of Care” – FY 2010 CoC Registration Notice (4/21/10)





## McKinney-Vento Act as Amended

- General Provisions
- Emergency Solutions Grants Program
- Continuum of Care Program
- Rural Housing Stability Program





## General Provisions

- Continuum of Care Applicant
  - The CoC's duty is to select the applicant
    - It can be many applicants (as in previous NOFAs)
    - It may be a single applicant, the Unified Financial Agency (UFA)
  - CoC selects, but HUD approves the UFA
    - UFA receives CoC funds and distributes them to other project sponsors
    - UFA requires each project sponsor to establish fiscal controls for and annual evaluation of financial records of each project





**Slide 8**

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**PDT4**

I need to review what to include in the notes.

Patrick Taylor, 8/16/2010



## Continuum of Care Program

- CoC Selection Criteria (Section 427)
  - Previous Performance
  - Plan
  - Priorities
  - Public and Private Funding
  - Mainstream Programs
  - Other Populations





## Continuum of Care Program

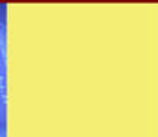
- High Performing Communities
  - Mean length of episodes of homelessness
    - Less than 20 days, or
    - At least 10% less than the year before
  - Families leaving homelessness
    - Fewer than 5% become homeless again at any time within the next 2 years, or
    - At least 20% decrease from the year before
  - Actively encouraged homeless persons to participate in services available; all in HMIS
- CoC manages these criteria





“A little kingdom I possess, where thoughts and feelings dwell; And very hard the task I find of governing it well.”

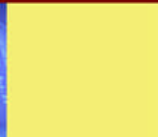
Louisa May Alcott, American novelist





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# Effective CoC Governance





## CoC Governance: Leadership

- General Principle: A good CoC has a formally designated, active leadership structure that guides the CoC.





## CoC Governance: Leadership

- Common leadership challenges:
  - Little or no leadership, no structure
  - Leadership of the “willing”
  - Informal structure, nothing written down
  - Some written documentation, but outdated
  - Other?





## CoC Governance: Leadership

- What does your CoC's leadership look like?
- What questions need to be asked?
  - Does CoC have an executive body that has been formally designated (e.g. bylaws, contracts)? How are they elected/selected? What are their terms of service?
  - Does the leadership make decisions in accordance with CoC's vision/strategic plan?
  - Other?







## CoC Governance: Working Groups

- General Principle: A good CoC has working groups or committees that manage the activities of the CoC in a diverse and structured manner.

Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and safeguards are in place to protect against potential conflicts of interest.





## CoC Governance: Working Groups

- Common working group challenges:
  - Little or no diversity; all work is done by a few
  - Committees are reactionary or short term
  - Roles undefined and/or not formalized
  - No conflict of interest policy
  - Other?





## CoC Governance: Working Groups

- What do your CoC working groups look like?
- What questions need to be asked?
  - Are there workgroups for short and long-term planning?
  - Are there workgroups for HMIS, data use / data reporting, CoC housekeeping (PIT, HIC, Needs/Gaps), performance evaluation, PR and policy, funding apps, review/ranking?
  - Is there a conflict of interest policy?





## CoC Governance: Membership and Participation

- General Principle: A good CoC has a membership that is diverse, active, and committed, that meets regularly, with participation by all stakeholders.





## CoC Governance: Membership and Participation

- Common membership and participation challenges:
  - Limited/lack of membership
  - Limited/intermittent participation (i.e. only at NOFA time)
  - Not enough other stakeholders involved
  - Other?





## CoC Governance: Membership and Participation

- What does your CoC's membership and participation look like?
- What questions do you need to ask?
  - Is membership diverse, active, and committed?
  - Is participation regular, intermittent, or non-existent?
  - Are all of the stakeholders involved?
  - Other?





## CoC Governance: Decision Making

- General Principle: A good CoC makes decisions using a pre-determined process that is formal, fair, and transparent.

Decisions are communicated promptly, and additional explanations are provided when necessary.





## CoC Governance: Decision Making

- Common decision making challenges:
  - No formal process; no communication; no explanation
  - Decisions made on the fly
  - No written record of decisions
  - No complaint process
  - Other?







## CoC Governance: Decision Making

- What does your CoC's decision making look like?
- What questions need to be asked?
  - Is there a formal process for assessing and approving projects? How are project applications and experience evaluated?
  - How are CoC membership and voting rights assigned?
  - How are decisions communicated and explained?





## CoC Governance: Planning

- General Principle: A good CoC has an active plan to end homelessness.

The CoC also plays an active role in broader community planning, making meaningful contributions to Consolidated Plan, PHA Plan, 10 Year Plan, and other plans in the CoC's geography.





## CoC Governance: Planning

- Issues to consider when planning
  - Setting goals (short/medium/long term)
  - Who sets goals; how often
  - Using data
    - Who has the data?
    - How accessible is the data?
    - How is the data used at various levels?





## CoC Governance: Planning

- How does your CoC link with broader community planning?
- HUD is very interested in broader community planning
  - Federal interagency cooperation
  - Research
  - Demonstration programs
  - HUD strategic planning 2010-2015
  - Foster CoC-level planning and program implementation





## CoC Governance: Performance and Evaluation

- General Principle: A good CoC has formal, fair, written policies to use data to monitor and evaluate program performance and compliance.

Data is used to drive program and CoC goals, make funding decisions, and make program and system changes.





## CoC Governance: Performance and Evaluation

- Common performance and evaluation challenges:
  - Not using data to assess and monitor program and strategic goals
  - Not using HMIS data
  - Sometimes using data to make decisions, but nothing formalized
  - Other?





## CoC Governance: Performance and Evaluation

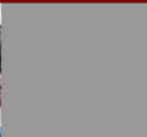
- What does your CoC's performance and evaluation look like?
- What questions need to be asked?
  - Are there written policies for monitoring grantee compliance with regulations?
  - Are there written policies for evaluating projects (and progress) against CoC and system goals?
  - Does the CoC use HMIS data to evaluate projects and program design?





## CoC Governance: Funding

- Using funding to meet goals
- Link with choices made on
  - Planning
  - Use of Data/Performance
  - Mainstream Resources
  - Other

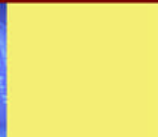






“We are having Internet Governance discussions and meetings and a very large number of people are discussing the future of the Internet who have no clue as to what the Internet is except that it is important and that they have to be involved.”

Steve Crocker, Internet pioneer





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# CoC Self-Assessment





## CoC Self-Assessment

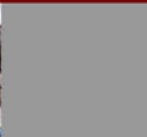
- CoCs need to be “HEARTH ready,” i.e. prepared to implement the McKinney-Vento Act as amended.
- A good first step is to conduct a self-assessment in areas such as organizational structure, planning process, infrastructure and administrative capacity, and housing and services design.





## Self-Assessment: Organizational Structure

- Mission statement
- Structure in place
- Process for governing and making decisions





## Self-Assessment: Planning Process

- Process for successful of planning efforts
- Strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness
- Planning provides direction to the CoC





## Self-Assessment: Infrastructure & Administrative Capacity

- Staffing (paid or volunteer)
- Policies to manage
  - Operations and Reporting
  - Consumer Involvement
  - DV Protections
  - Educational opportunities for youth





## Self-Assessment: Infrastructure & Administrative Capacity

- Knowledge of, access to TA opportunities
- Grantee fiscal capacity (unspent/recaptured \$)
- Grantee finances (accounting policies, match)
- HMIS (policies, understanding of, MOUs)





## Self-Assessment: Housing & Services Design

- Sufficiency of available housing and services to meet community needs
- Overall function as an integrated system
- Capacity to provide housing and services, including accessing mainstream resources







## Wrap Up

- McKinney-Vento Act as Amended means a few changes for CoCs, but many things stay the same
- CoCs need to keep abreast of various management and governance issues
- Assess your CoC





## Resources

- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as Amended by the HEARTH Act of 2009  
[hudhre.info/documents/HomelessAssistanceActAmendedbyHEARTH.pdf](http://hudhre.info/documents/HomelessAssistanceActAmendedbyHEARTH.pdf)
- HEARTH Act Changes (USGPO, see page 32)  
[hudhre.info/documents/S896\\_HEARTHAct.pdf](http://hudhre.info/documents/S896_HEARTHAct.pdf)
- Proposed rule for definition of homelessness  
[hudhre.info/documents/ProposedHomelessDefinition.pdf](http://hudhre.info/documents/ProposedHomelessDefinition.pdf)





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# Questions

