

BYLAWS OF  
NEWARK / ESSEX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE SYSTEM (CEAS)/  
AND CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC) COMMITTEE

**ARTICLE I – AUTHORIZATION, NAME, PURPOSE**

**SECTION I –Name & Authorization:**

In accordance with N.J.A.C. 10:2-3 regulations governing the County Human Service Advisory Councils (CHSACs) and its standing Committees, the Essex County Comprehensive Emergency Assistance System (CEAS) and Continuum of Care (CoC) Committee (hereafter referred to as CEAS/CoC Committee) serves as the primary vehicle for planning and coordinating the delivery of emergency services to persons who are homeless (including designating core social services for the homeless and those persons at risk of homelessness) within the County of Essex. The CEAS/CoC Committee is a network of public (government) and private (private not-for-profit, for profit, consumer advocate volunteer, homeless/formerly homeless persons) entities responsible for the delivery of integrated social services including housing and prevention of homelessness, as well as the development of service priorities and spending plan priorities for homeless funds. This Committee is the primary decision-making entity that is comprised of at least sixty-five (65%) representation by the community and faith-based organizations, including consumer interests.

**SECTION II –Purpose:**

The functions and purpose of the CEAS/CoC Committee are as follows:

- a. Program planning and implementation of a plan for housing and emergency assistance services for the County of Essex, including the development of a CoC Plan to Address Homelessness.
- b. Provide all necessary technical and professional advice pertaining to homeless and housing issues as may be required by CHSAC and Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act (HEARTH).
- c. Exchange information and network with member organizations thereby forming a continuum of housing and emergency assistance services.
- d. Respond to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) homelessness competitive homeless assistance grant application through the Notice of Funding Availability/Opportunity (NOFA/O), when practicable and available.

**ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP**

**Section I –Composition of Membership:**

The CEAS/CoC Committee shall be composed of housing, shelter, social service provider agencies, public entities, and consumer (advocate, volunteer, homeless/formerly homeless persons) in Essex County, and shall include representatives as shall be deemed necessary to carry out the purpose for which this Committee is formed. Representatives from relevant organizations include nonprofit homeless assistance providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social services providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, university, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, and organizations that serve veterans and homeless and formerly homeless individuals. Individual voted into a position holds the title of Officer or Chairperson (Article 2 section 5) If a

person leaves an agency, they must notify the Membership Chair that they are leaving the agency and will remain as Consumer. If individual joins a new agency, the individual will need to notify Membership Chair (section 2-4).

**Section II –Eligibility:**

Membership shall be opened to all interested participants serving Essex County residents. Eligible voting members of the CEAS/CoC will be eligible to apply for funding. Members who meet the criteria to become voting members, which is define as attending 75% of the CEAS/CoC meetings (full body and committee) for the year, will have the opportunity to become a voting member by completing an application which will be reviewed for approval on a bi-annually basis in June and December.

No more than 3 excused absences for a fiscal year. For a member to be in good standing must be in 75% of full body and at minimum 75% on one committee. The voting member or alternate must attend 75% of the meetings in a calendar year to remain in good standing. Full body meeting a 3<sup>rd</sup> staff in attendance can attend but cannot vote. If the voting member or alternate does not attend 75% of the meetings the agency/membership is not in good standing. A non-voting proxy may attend committee meetings, but this attendance will not account towards membership status.

**Section III –Rights of members:**

Each represented agency shall have only one voting member appointed to the CEAS/CoC Committee by their Executive Director and/ or Board of Directors, although any staff member may attend the Committee meetings. Each agency will designate a primary member and an alternate member. The alternate will have voting privileges only in the absence of the appointed member.

**Section IV –Out-of-County Provider Agencies:**

Out-of-county provider agencies serving Essex County residents, with subcontracts held with the County of Essex will be considered voting members if they meet voting membership criteria.

**Section V –Retaining Membership:**

In order to remain a member in good standing agency members must attend 75% of the full CEAS/CoC monthly meetings AND participate in a subcommittee or working group. Please see Article VIII: Code of Conduct. For a member to be in good standing must be in 75% attendance of full body and at minimum 75% attendance on at minimum one committee.

**Section VI –Resignation and Termination:**

When an agency member resigns, is removed from their position as Officers/Committee Chair) or cannot serve their full term for any reason the vacancies may be filled for the remainder of the term through a simple majority vote by the voting members at the next Essex County CEAS/CoC full body meeting in which a quorum is present.

**ARTICLE III –MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

**Section I –Regular Meetings:**

All Regular Meetings in-person or virtual (if needed) of the members shall be held once a month, a time and place will be designated by the chair. The meetings shall include a report on the CEAS/CoC's activities, funding, and progress toward meeting goals. All Essex County CEAS/CoC members shall be notified of the

date and location of membership meetings.

**Section II –Special Meetings:**

Full body Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson provided that a minimum of three (3) business days' notice is given electronically or by mail to the other members. Executive session(s) may be called by the Chairperson provided that a minimum of three (3) business days or 1-day business day in an emergency situation as determined by the executive body.

**Section III –Notice of Meetings:**

Notice of the place, date and time of each Membership Meeting, shall be sent to members by email or other reasonable means of communication at least three business days before the meeting date. Meetings will be published on the County of Essex website.

**ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS and/or CHAIRPERSONS**

**Section I -**

The officers of the CEAS/CoC shall be composed elected/appointed positions of a Chair, First Vice Chair, Second Vice Chair, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Parliamentarian. Liaisons of HUD Entitlement Communities, Greg Arvay Consumer Liaison, Other officers will include, and Ex Officio Members as described in section II of this article.

**Section II**

**CHAIR**

The Chair must report directly to the designated representative of the Essex County Division of Community Action. The Chair is responsible for exercising general direction of CEAS/CoC, subject to the control of the Essex County Division of Community Action. The Chair must maintain responsible relationships and functions of the Executive Board and ensures the goals and objectives of the CEAS/CoC are followed as defined in Article I, Section II of these by-laws. The Chair is also responsible for scheduling meetings of the Essex County CEAS/CoC, ensuring that the Essex County CEAS/CoC meets regularly or as needed, and for setting the agenda for meetings in collaboration with the Executive Committee. The chair shall take nominations from the full membership for vacant or empty subcommittee positions and host presentations by all nominees. The Full membership will vote via quorum vote to confirm appointments.

**FIRST VICE CHAIR**

In the absence of the Chair, the First Vice Chair assumes the duties of the Chair. Duties also include monitoring the health and wellness of half of the standing committees. These Committees are: Unaccompanied Youth, Membership, Consumer Justice, Data Quality, and Street Outreach.

**SECOND VICE CHAIR**

In the absence of the Chair and First Vice Chair, the Second Vice Chair assumes the duties of the Chair. Duties also include monitoring the health and wellness of half of the standing committees. These Committees are: Domestic Violence, Housing and Homeless Prevention, Veterans, Coordinated Entry and Lived Experience.

**RECORDING SECRETARY**

The Recording Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the CEAS/CoC or designate another person to do so at each meeting, including all actions taken without a meeting. The Secretary shall give all

notices to membership.

### **CORRESPONDING SECRETARY**

The Corresponding Secretary maintains the CEAS/CoC email distribution list and checks periodically for accuracy. Also responsible for dissemination of any announcements submitted to the distribution list.

### **PARLIAMENTARIAN**

The Parliamentarian is to recognize members entitled to the floor to state and to put to vote all questions which are regularly moved and interpret CEAS/CoC by-laws. All meetings of the CEAS/CoC and its committees shall be governed by rules of order as prescribed in Robert's Rules of Order revised provided such rules are not in conflict with these by-laws.

### **OTHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

Membership to the executive committee will be extended to any Essex County Jurisdiction that is determined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as an "Entitlement" jurisdiction, and if not inclusive of this criteria, any municipality with the largest population of homeless persons as according to HUD's Point in Time Count Data.

### **EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS**

There will be at least two Ex Officio members on the Executive Board, one being the person serving in the role of the Continuum of Care Coordinator or proxy for Essex County, and the other being the Coordinator of the Human Services Advisory Council. If the duties for these positions are split between multiple persons in those roles then each of those can also be Ex Officio members of the Executive Board. Ex-Officio Membership should include a representative from HUD Entitlement communities, including a representative of the City of Newark's Office on Homelessness. The CoC designation being NJ-504 Newark/ Essex County Continuum of Care.

#### **Ex-officio Responsibilities**

- Attend all CoC/CEAS meetings both (executive and full membership), providing advance notification for meetings that cannot be attended,
- To stand in as a representative of the respective entitlement / County Commission (i.e. CoC Lead and Human Services Advisory Council),
- To troubleshoot Continuum of Care (CoC)/ Comprehensive Emergency Assistance System (CEAS) problems drawing on agency and partner resources,
- Provide insight and collaborate planning any initiatives, resources related to services or projects in development,
- Report on entitlement funds (ex: ESG, CDBG, HOME) relating to how current and future uses of dollars benefits/impacts the homeless population in our geographic jurisdiction,
- Communicate all pertinent information shared within the CoC/CEAS meetings (both executive and full membership) with staff/partners within your organization and networks,
- Participate in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development Notice of Funding Opportunity/Availability Newark/Essex County CoC/CEAS application review process,
- And participate in the state and federal application letter of support review process, unless applying on behalf of the respective agency/entitlement.

In the event that responsibilities cannot be met, a preliminary conversation will

be had by the CEAS Chair with the Ex-Officio member to address the deficiency in meeting responsibilities, if a solution cannot be met the CoC/CEAS Chair will petition the entitlement leader to assign someone else to fill this position.

### **Section III**

Unless otherwise provided by written agreement, any representative or officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chair or Recording Secretary. Any such resignations shall take effect at the time specified within notice or if the time be not specified therein upon its acceptance by the Essex County CEAS/CoC.

### **Section IV**

In addition, any representative, officer or committee chair may be removed from the Executive Committee by a majority vote of remaining Executive Committee for repeated absence, misconduct, failure to participate, or violation of conflict-of-interest policies. Removal shall include a probationary period where voting rights shall be lost temporarily until further review takes place for the Executive Committee. Please see Article VIII – Code of Conduct.

### **Section V**

When an officer resigns or is removed from the Executive Committee or cannot serve his/her full term for any reason the vacancies may be filled for the remainder of the term through a simple majority vote by the voting members at the next Essex County CEAS/CoC meeting in which a quorum is present. Please see Article VII – Voting Process & Article VIII – Code of Conduct.

### **Section VI**

As the Officers and Committee Chairs two (2) year terms expire without having a limit in the amount of time an individual can run. The existing Executive Committee will solicit nominees from CEAS/CoC members for election to the Executive Committee. The voting members of the full CEAS/CoC will vote for nominees to fill open board positions at the Annual Meeting held in January. The officers' terms will be staggered as half of the Executive Committee will rotate off while the remaining half will serve an additional year.

### **Section VII**

Voting members of the CEAS/CoC may have non-voting proxies attend meetings. The non-voting proxy attendance will not count toward your membership status. Attendance is just for informational purposes only. Must notify Membership Chair to be excused from the meeting.

### **Section VIII**

The Essex County CEAS/CoC will carry out its responsibilities through the work of several Committees. All CEAS/CoC voting members must participate on at least one Committee, with the exception of the Executive Committee, which must be made up of elected Officers and Chairs of the Essex County CEAS/CoC. Policies and policy decisions made by Committees and Working Groups must be approved by the Essex County CEAS/CoC before taking effect.

## **ARTICLE V – COMMITTEES**

The Essex County CEAS/CoC shall have 10 committees, however the number of committees can be increased based on the needs of the Essex County CEAS/CoC. Any new committees will be voted upon by the voting members of the CEAS/CoC.

Alternates cannot stand in for the committee member on Committees.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee shall govern the CEAS/CoC and each of its activities. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to provide leadership, policy direction, strategic planning and recommendations which will be voted upon by the eligible voting members of the CEAS/CoC. The Committee shall be made up of the following: Ex Officio Representative of the Collaborative Applicant; Ex-Officio Representative for the Human Services Advisory Counsel; Liaisons of HUD Entitlement Communities,-Greg Arvay Consumer Liaison, Chair; First Vice Chair; Second Vice Chair; Recording Secretary; Corresponding Secretary; Parliamentarian; Chair of the Performance Evaluation & Data Quality; Chair of the Housing and Homeless Prevention Committee; Chair of Coordinated Entry Committee; Chair of the Street Outreach Committee; Chair of the Unaccompanied Youth Committee; Chair of the Membership Committee, Chair of the Lived Experience Committee, Chair of the Veterans Committee, Chair of the Domestic Violence Committee, Chair of the Consumer Justice Committee.

### **Section 1 Eligibility for Chairmanship**

Must be a voting member in good standing. The Coordinated Entry Committee will be chaired by a representative from the CoC Collaborative applicant. The Domestic Violence Committee Chair nomination requires submission of resume to the executive board for approval to be eligible for votes by the full body.

### **Section 2 Requirements**

- Must hold 9 meetings in a calendar year.
- Must submit monthly meeting summary with all action items.
- Must submit monthly meeting participation.
- Maintain goals and objectives to be evaluated on annual basis.

## **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION & DATA QUALITY COMMITTEE**

The Performance Evaluation and Data Quality Committee is responsible for collaborating with the Executive Committee, CEAS/CoC funded entities and CoC Membership to establish performance targets, monitor performance, evaluate outcomes, consult with homeless service providers and work with Homeless Management Information System leads. The collaboration is to ensure that programs are performing in high standards to service the housing and sheltering needs of the community.

## **HOUSING & HOMELESS PREVENTION COMMITTEE -**

The Housing and Homeless Committee will:

- Make programmatic recommendations that promote rapid rehousing, utilizing the Housing First Model, incorporating the Interim Housing Model which transitions the current shelter system to develop standards that promote barriers to entry, comprehensive services, and the least restrictive setting possible models, including service and housing linkage.
- Coordinate and make recommendations for expanding resources for eviction prevention and temporary financial assistance; and
- Develop strategies to identify, locate, assess, and divert households from homelessness; and
- Evaluate outcomes of projects funded under the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) and Services in Supportive Housing (SSH) programs.

## **COORDINATED ENTRY COMMITTEE -**

The Coordinated Entry Committee is responsible for the establishment and operation of a countywide

assessment system that will provide an initial comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services. The system is defined to mean a centralized or coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake, assessment and provision of referrals. A centralized or coordinated assessment system covers the geographic area, is easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services, is well advertised and includes a comprehensive and standard assessment tool.

- Establish an order of priority for the chronically homeless; and
- Establish a Standardized Assessment Tool; and
- Utilize Housing First model; and
- Create written standards/procedures for Coordinated Assessment; and
- Utilize HMIS; and
- The Essex County Coordinated Entry Sub-Committee is tasked in establishing an ambitious and achievable model of enhanced service access that seeks to change and transform our homeless services system so that people in a housing crisis are quickly and correctly connected with the most effective and appropriate services from across the continuum of resources available. The main focus of homelessness prevention, community-based case management, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing. Empirical data will drive decisions regarding allocation of resources, emerging needs, and accountability to a system approach to ending homelessness.

#### **STREET OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

"The Mission of the COC/CEAS Outreach Committee is to engage, advocate and connect the Essex County unsheltered communities with available resources in order to improve and support stability and a better quality of life."

#### **UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH COMMITTEE**

The Unaccompanied Youth Committee (UYC) to represent the needs of the homeless youth population and advocate within the COC to develop a plan to address the need for stable permanent housing and prioritizing for those needs with the available resources in the Essex County community.

#### **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

The Membership Committee monitors and regulates attendance of the CEAS/CoC regular business and sub-committee meetings, as well as updating membership and reviews the overall membership roster at least quarterly in order to remove any non-active members that have not met their attendance participation threshold. Also responsible for contacting members who are in jeopardy of falling below this threshold. Responsible for maintaining an updated directory of current CEAS/CoC members and other community organizations and partners that serve Essex County homeless or at-risk populations. Continued members recruiting into our committee.

#### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTEE**

"To advocate, educate, and provide leadership in developing strategies and identifying resources to reduce domestic violence and eliminate systemic barriers within Essex County. "Members must submit their resume to the Executive Officers for review and consideration prior to sitting on the DV committee"

Identifies and implement best practices with respect to compliance and improve reporting of domestic violence victims impacted by homelessness in Essex County.

## **VETERANS COMMITTEE**

The mission of the Essex County COC/CEAS Veteran Committee is to develop and implement strategies for ending veteran homelessness in Essex County. Operating under the Housing First model, the committee advocates for homeless veterans in Essex County to local landlords and low-income housing providers to ensure that all homeless veterans in the county have an opportunity to be rapidly housed in affordable housing units. In addition, the committee collaborates with county and state politicians to create avenues for pro-veteran legislation. The committee also works together with county and state veteran employment representatives to ensure that homeless veterans are given the opportunity to increase their household income while building job readiness skills. Along with employment, the committee also works in tandem with the Department of Veteran Affairs with their Coordinated Entry Specialist to outreach to homeless veterans that are in emergency shelters and places not meant for human habitation to ensure that they are connected to housing resources, VA healthcare and veteran benefits. The committee also maintains a monthly By Name list of all homeless veterans in the county who are enrolled with a Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) agency or are enrolled in a program for homeless veterans to assess housing challenges and track favorable housing outcomes for our veterans.

## **CONSUMER JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

The Consumer Justice Committee is responsible for identifying policies and practices within government and agencies which prohibit people and families from accessing the services necessary to maintain housing stability. Through education and information sharing, this committee seeks to communicate with communities, direct to consumers and providers about existing rights and resources where they are available and to advocate for expanded rights and resources where they are not. Through its efforts to promote housing stability, the committee will explore issues related to the legal system, employment, and public assistance.

## **LIVED EXPERIENCE**

The Lived Experience committee will serve in two capacities. As the conscience of CEAS/ CoC body and also as the prolific voice of our consumers to ensure their voices are heard across the board. This will include and is not limited to assistance with grant proposals, outreach events, and moderation of community engagement for provider and consumer interaction for Essex County.

## **ARTICLE VI –VOTING**

### **Section I –Quorum:**

A presence of fifty-one percent (51%) of the voting members at any properly announced Essex County CEAS/CoC meeting shall constitute a quorum.

### **Section II –Voting:**

- At all meetings, business items will be decided by a vote. Votes shall be by raised hand at the will of the majority of those in attendance at a meeting with a quorum represented. A record will be kept of the total yes, no and/or abstain votes. Each member seat shall have one vote. No member may vote on any item which presents a real or perceived conflict of interest. Issues presented to members for a vote will be decided by simple majority of the votes cast.
- The voting process will be conducted by the Parliamentarian who will take nominations from the floor and follow Robert's Rules revised. In the absence of the Parliamentarian the Chair or their designee will conduct



the same nomination/voting process. In the case in which a conflict of interest occurs the Chair will recuse themselves and the Vice Chair will conduct the nomination/voting process, or the Executive Committee may nominate a member of the CEAS/CoC to conduct the voting process.

## **ARTICLE VII-CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Conduct & Attendance**

Essex County CEAS/CoC members must exercise care, diligence and prudence when acting on behalf of the Essex County CEAS/CoC. These individuals must complete timely work they have agreed to undertake on behalf of the Essex County CoC. In addition, they must attend both full CEAS/CoC and committee meetings and be prepared to discuss matters presented for deliberation. Absence without notice or explanation for more than 25% of the meetings within the calendar year or repeated failure to complete work assignments will be grounds for removal from the CEAS/CoC and/or committee assignments and may disqualify organizations of applying for funding.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The conflict of interest policy precludes CEAS/CoC members from participating in their official capacity in discussions and/or decision- making regarding funding or monitoring of, programs for which they are employed, serve as a board member or volunteer, have family ties or have a financial interest therein. Annually, committee members shall disclose the potential for conflict on a form to be provided by CEAS/CoC requiring members to list all organizations to which they have ties including by membership, paid and volunteer work, familial relations or financial interest. Past the annual disclosure, all members have an ongoing duty, during their term of service to disclose any potential conflict of interest, financial or otherwise and to recuse themselves entirely from any deliberations or votes effecting any corporation, organization or partnership in which that interest exists and that receives or seeks funding through the CEAS/CoC process.

When any matter in which a Member has an interest comes before a committee on which the Member serves, said member shall immediately disclose that interest to the committee and remove him or herself from all participation on the matter.

Whether a Member or the agency he/she represents has an interest on a matter shall be determined by whether that person: (a) Would derive an individual economic benefit, either directly or indirectly, from the decision on the matter by the CEAS/CoC or committee; and or (b) has a fiduciary relationship that would or may appear to conflict with obligations to the CEAS/CoC. No Member shall participate in any discussion or vote on any matter in which he or she has an interest.

### **Annual Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement Form**

Essex County CEAS/CoC members must sign a conflict of interest form annually. A new voting member/organization must sign the conflict of interest form within 30 days of joining. This affirms that they have reviewed the conflict of interest policy and disclosing any conflicts of interest that they face or are likely to face in fulfillment of their duties as Members.

### **Political Contributions**

The CEAS/CoC requires that all proposals for possible funding submitted by individuals and/or business entities seeking to provide goods or to perform services for individuals who are homeless with funding provided by the CEAS/CoC and/or the County of Essex shall contain a statement disclosing each political contribution made of \$500.00 or more made within five years preceding the proposal/application, either directly or indirectly, to any County elected political party and/or County official, political organization, or any State political party. This disclosure must include contributions made by the individual applicant, the business entity applicant, or an officer of the business entity applicant.

### **ARTICLE III -AMENDMENTS**

#### **Section I — Amendments:**

These bylaws may be amended when necessary by a simple majority of the voting members of the Essex County CEAS/CoC. Proposed amendments must be submitted to the Recording Secretary to be sent out the executive officers for review.

#### **CERTIFICATION**

These bylaws were approved at the Executive Committee meeting by a simple majority vote on May 4, 2023.

These bylaws were approved by members of the County of Essex CEAS/CoC by a simple majority vote on May 11, 2023.