

SOMERSET COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE
COMMITTEE BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I - ORGANIZATION

Section 1. Name: The name of this organization shall be the Somerset County Continuum of Care Committee, hereinafter referred to as the SCCoCC.

Section 2. Service Area: The SCCoCC shall consist of service providers in the Somerset County area.

Section 3. Address: The principal office of the SCCoCC shall be the office of the Somerset Community Development Division, located at 27 Warren Street, 4th Floor, Somerville, New Jersey, 08876, unless changed by the SCCoCC.

Section 4. Description: The SCCoCC is a voluntary association that provides information, services and advocacy for and on behalf of Somerset County's homeless population and County residents that are at risk of being homeless.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSES

The purposes of the SCCoCC are:

- To develop and implement a coordinated community-based strategy for preventing homelessness when possible, to rapidly re-house those who become homeless, and ultimately to reduce homelessness in Somerset County through the provision of adequate permanent supportive housing, stabilization of at-risk households, and educational and economic opportunities to promote self-sufficiency and other mainstream and social services.
- To coordinate Somerset County's resources to effectively identify and address the needs of the County's homeless and at-risk populations.
- To create and maintain systemic approaches to ending homelessness through collaboration with community and government organizations.
- To create and use data and performance measurement tools to evaluate and improve the County's response to homelessness.
- To apply for funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act Continuum of Care (CoC) Program and other funding programs for the homeless.

ARTICLE III - PARTICIPATION

Section 1. Open Participation: Meetings are open to the general public. Interested persons may attend and participate in discussion. Anyone who attends any meeting will be considered a "Participant," but will not have voting rights. Participants may submit a written request for SCCoCC membership after attending at least three of the last six SCCoCC meetings. The Chair

and Vice-chair of the SCCoCC will confirm membership. Membership confirmation does not require a vote by the SCCoCC.

Section 2. Membership: Members of the SCCoCC represent and may include service providers, local businesses and developers, faith-based organizations, homeless persons, nonprofit organizations, representatives from public agencies, and interested individuals. Any person that was a member of the Comprehensive Emergency Assistance Services Committee (CEAS) will automatically be a member of the SCCoCC. The Somerset County Board of County Commissioners shall also have the ability to appoint two members to the SCCoCC.

Section 3. Meetings: The SCCoCC full committee shall meet every other month as scheduled by the SCCoCC as a whole. The Executive Committee shall attend those meetings and hold meetings on the months between those meetings. All meeting dates shall be announced, posted on the County's website, and at other sites as determined by the SCCoCC. Special meetings of the members may be called by a majority of the SCCoCC or by the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Attendance: Attendance will be recorded at each SCCoCC and Committee meeting. Members of the SCCoCC are expected to be present and active participants in SCCoCC and Committee meetings.

A. Continuum of Care Grantees: All SCCoCC grantees are required to participate (or in the case of an agency, have at least one representative participating) on a working Committee and attend at least four (4) of the six (6) meetings prior to submitting an application for new or renewal funding through the Continuum of Care, or other funding through the SCCoCC.

B. Other Members: All other SCCoCC members are required to attend at least one-half (1/2) of all meetings in a calendar year.

Section 5. Representation and Voting:

A. Associations: Each association (e.g. social service provider, business, faith-based organization, public agency, etc.) that has attended at least one-half (1/2) of the six (6) meetings prior to a vote and has participated regularly in the business of the SCCoCC is entitled to one (1) vote.

B. Individuals: Individuals who join, who are not connected with and have not been connected with any agency or association otherwise represented at the SCCoCC within the past year, have attended at least one-half (1/2) of the six (6) meetings prior to a vote, and have participated regularly in the business of the SCCoCC are entitled to one (1) vote.

Section 6. Minutes: Minutes shall be kept of every meeting. The minutes shall be distributed to the entire SCCoCC following each meeting for comments and corrections and shall be approved at the following meeting.

Section 7. Conflicts: Individuals participating in or influencing SCCoCC decision-making must disclose any actual or perceived conflict of interest as early as possible. Any member with a

conflict shall abstain from voting on a matter for which they or their member organization has a financial or other vested interest. If the SCCoCC Chair or a Committee chair has a conflict, that individual shall designate a temporary chair for the discussion of that particular agenda item.

ARTICLE IV - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. Executive Committee: The purpose of the Executive Committee is to provide leadership, policy direction, and strategic planning for the entire SCCoCC. The Executive Committee shall govern, control, and manage the SCCoCC and each of its activities.

Section 2. Members of the Committee: The first Executive Committee shall be composed of former CEAS Committee members/participants who volunteered to research and guide the implementation of the SCCoCC. Moving forward, the Executive Committee shall be made up of not less than five (5) and not more than fifteen (15) participants. One-third (1/3) of the membership shall represent public agencies and two-thirds (2/3) of the membership shall represent private entities. The SCCoCC shall make a concerted effort to include on the Executive Committee, representatives from the following groups:

- 1) Government agencies throughout Somerset County
- 2) Faith-based and other community-based organizations
- 3) Social service providers
- 4) Nonprofit and for-profit housing developers
- 5) Local businesses and law firms
- 6) Local universities or colleges
- 7) Law enforcement
- 8) County Superintendent's office and/or school district homeless liaisons
- 9) Medical service providers
- 10) Funders
- 11) Homeless and/or formerly homeless individuals

Section 3. Term of Office: Members of the Executive Committee shall be appointed for two (2) year terms. Terms will be based on a calendar year. One third (1/3) of the terms shall expire each year.

Section 4. Officers: Biennially, the SCCoCC full committee shall nominate two members for the position of Chair and Vice-Chair who shall be confirmed by a quorum vote at its first scheduled meeting of the corresponding calendar year. A representative of a private organization that provides services in Somerset County shall serve as Chair.

Section 5. Executive Committee Membership: The Executive Committee shall be appointed by the Governance Committee. The Governance Committee shall seek recommendations for qualified candidates from the SCCoCC. Members of the Executive Committee must agree to uphold the mission of the SCCoCC, as defined by Article II of these bylaws.

Section 6. Executive Committee Meetings: The Executive Committee shall meet as often as deemed necessary, but no fewer than four (4) times per calendar year. Notice of meetings and

any applicable documents shall be provided to all members of the Executive Board at least five (5) days in advance of a meeting.

Section 7. Duties of the Executive Committee: The responsibilities of the Executive Committee shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Attend Executive Committee meetings
2. Review and comment on local legislation affecting homelessness
3. Gather and report community input on homelessness
4. Set program performance standards and monitoring policies for projects receiving HUD funding through the SCCoCC
5. Establish policies for prioritizing projects that are recommended for funding by the SCCoCC
6. Review and approve referrals from the Performance and Evaluation Committee for ongoing programs and new projects
7. Review appeals
8. The Executive Committee may be responsible for other duties that are in the best interest of the SCCoCC.

Section 8. Quorum and Voting: A majority of members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum. Although the Executive Committee shall strive to achieve consensus, the affirmative vote of a majority of its membership shall be required for the approval of any matter. Members must be present to vote and shall be entitled to one (1) vote per entity. A vote by phone or e-mail may be taken and recorded at the discretion of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V - SCoCC OFFICERS

Section 1. Chair and Vice-Chair:

Biennially, the SCCoCC full committee shall nominate two members for the position of Chair and Vice-Chair who shall be confirmed by a quorum vote at its first scheduled meeting of the corresponding calendar year. A representative of a private organization that provides services in Somerset County shall serve as Chair.

Section 2. Duties of the SCCoCC Officers: The Chair and Vice-Chair of the SCCoCC shall:

- 1) Preside at all SCCoCC meetings
- 2) Serve as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee and attend all meetings of the Executive Committee.
- 3) Serve as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Performance and Evaluation Committee and as members of each of the other Committees
- 4) Provide reports to the entire SCCoCC as needed
- 5) Call special meetings of the SCCoCC as needed
- 6) Publicly represent the SCCoCC

- 7) Design and coordinate the HUD Continuum of Care grant application process.
- 8) Draft letters of support on behalf of SCCoCC members
- 9) Perform any other duties as determined by the SCCoCC

ARTICLE VI - SCCoCC COMMITTEES

Section 1. Planning Committees. The SCCoCC shall establish and convene Committees to address specific aspects of the SCCoCC planning process. These Committees may be formed and disbanded as needed by a vote of the SCCoCC. Each Committee shall designate a Chair and Vice-Chair. Assessments regarding the need for a particular Committee, appointments and chair designations shall all be made annually. Committees shall meet as needed, shall keep the SCCoCC informed of their progress and shall provide findings and recommendations to the entire SCCoCC and to the Executive Committee as needed. Committees may include, but shall not be limited to:

A. Performance, Evaluation and Technical Review: The Performance, Evaluation and Technical Review Committee is responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and prioritizing projects applying for funding through the SCCoCC pursuant to the performance standards and policies established by the Executive Committee. This Committee shall also be responsible for Somerset County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), including its implementation, the ongoing assessment of data collected and reporting of the use and quality of HMIS, in order to evaluate whether the SCCoCC's programs are effectively and efficiently meeting the needs of the community and producing the desired outcome of ending homelessness.

- The Performance and Evaluation Committee shall be appointed annually to serve for the duration of the CoC Program funding cycle.
- The Chair and Vice-Chair of the SCCoCC shall continuously serve as the chair and vice-chair of the Performance and Evaluation Committee.
- SCCoCC grantees cannot join this Committee.

B. Unmet Needs and Underserved Populations: The Unmet Needs and Underserved Populations Committee is responsible for enabling an improved response to the unmet needs of the County's underserved and high barrier homeless populations. This Committee shall identify the underserved populations present in the County, determine the unique needs of these populations and evaluate how well they are being met through the execution of a needs assessment that will draw from available data and the experiences of clients and service providers, and propose strategies to fill any critical gaps in programs and services. The Unmet Needs and Underserved Populations Committee will also coordinate with the Community Outreach Committee to help facilitate outreach targeted to underserved populations and connect members of these populations with the services available to them.

C. Mainstream Resources and Access to Services. The Mainstream Resources and Access to Services Committee is responsible for developing a systemic approach for helping homeless individuals and families access services and enroll in mainstream benefits. This Committee shall review existing services in the County, identify gaps in services to homeless individuals and

families currently in the system, and those not currently in the system who are in need or will be in need of services.

D. **Community Engagement:** The Community Engagement Committee is responsible for fostering improved communication and stronger partnerships between agencies, organizations, service providers and community members for the expansion of both provider and client knowledge. This Committee shall create the infrastructure for a monthly outreach opportunity during which individuals will have the chance to meet with service providers. Responsibilities pertaining to this task include recruiting agency partners and community volunteers, finding suitable locations, and creating a schedule. The Committee will also be responsible for making possible the inclusion of clients onto Committees, creating opportunities for community education regarding homelessness, and enabling client feedback on and input into programs and services wherever possible.

E. **Education and Youth:** The Education and Youth Committee is responsible for coordinating with local school districts and other organizations providing services for homeless youth in order to review existing services for homeless youth, assess needs, identify gaps, and develop a coordinated, community-wide plan to improve outcomes for children and youth.

Section 2. Workgroups/Advisory Committees: The SCCoCC shall establish and convene workgroups and/or advisory committees to address specific needs or projects of the SCCoCC. Workgroups and advisory committees may be formed and disbanded as needed by a vote of the SCCoCC. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the SCCoCC shall designate a chair of all active workgroups and advisory committees. Workgroups and advisory committees shall keep the SCCoCC informed of their progress and shall provide findings and recommendations to the SCCoCC and/or to the Executive Committee as needed. Assessments regarding the need for a particular committee, appointments and chair designations shall all be made annually. The SCCoCC's active workgroups and advisory committees may include, but shall not be limited to:

A. **Governance Advisory Committee:** The purpose of the Governance Advisory Committee is to recognize and seek qualified nominees for the elected leadership of the SCCoCC's Executive Committee and to periodically review the composition of the Executive Committee. The Governance Committee shall seek nominations from the entire SCCoCC before making final determinations. Representatives from the County's top-performing emergency, transitional, and permanent housing providers shall serve on the Governance Advisory Committee. The Governance Committee shall meet as often as deemed necessary but no less than once per calendar year.

B. **Point-In-Time Count (PITC)/Project Homeless Connect (PHC) Workgroup:** The PITC/PHC Workgroup is responsible for the successful execution of the annual Point-In-Time count and coordinated Project Homeless Connect event. During the last week of January, the SCCoCC takes a census of homeless individuals and families living in the community. The results of the PITC are used in the SCCoCC's planning process and to access additional funding for the expansion of affordable housing and services for the homeless population in Somerset County. PHC is a one-day, one-stop event, held on the same day as the PITC, during which the community offers food, clothing and various services to Somerset County's homeless population.

C. Community Outreach and Participation Workgroup: The Community Outreach and Participation Workgroup is responsible for engaging the community, promoting community awareness of homeless issues through education and advocacy in order to better coordinate services and programs for the homeless population in Somerset County, and for encouraging service providers to join the SCCoCC and to attend Committee meetings.

D. Consumer Advisory Committee: An advisory committee of persons who are formerly homeless, currently homeless and at risk of becoming homeless to incorporate the voice of homeless individuals and families in the SCCoCC's work. Members of the Consumer Advisory Committee shall have the opportunity to participate at meetings as well as to review and comment on new projects prior to review by the Performance and Evaluation Committee.

Section 3. Limitations on Planning Committee, Workgroup and Advisory Group

Authority: All planning committees, workgroups, and advisory committees shall provide recommendations to the entire SCCoCC and/or the Executive Committee (as indicated below) in writing, prior to the meeting at which the recommendation shall be discussed.

A. SCCoCC Approval: The entire SCCoCC must approve all recommendations of the planning committees, workgroups, and advisory committees before any action may be taken, except for recommendations of the Performance and Evaluation Committee, which shall be submitted to and approved by the Executive Committee directly. (The Performance and Evaluation Committee must keep the entire SCCoCC informed of its progress.)

B. Executive Committee Approval: The Executive Board must approve all recommendations of the Performance and Evaluation Committee before the consolidated application can be submitted to HUD on behalf of the SCCoCC, as well as any other recommendation requiring funding through the SCCoCC.

ARTICLE VII - ANNUAL HUD APPLICATION PROCESS

The Performance and Evaluation Committee shall facilitate the review of SCCoCC grantees and new projects and shall meet annually with the Executive Committee to review performance standards and monitoring policies and to coordinate a schedule for the submission of SCCoCC's consolidated application on behalf of the SCCoCC.

The Executive Board shall, with input from the Performance and Evaluation Committee, set program standards, monitoring policies, and priorities for reviewing and prioritizing projects to be funded by the SCCoCC and shall review (and revise, if necessary) its policies and priorities annually. The Performance and Evaluation Committee shall distribute these policies and priorities to all members of the SCCoCC annually and shall apply those policies and priorities in ranking applications for funding through the Somerset County Continuum of Care grant application.

ARTICLE VIII - APPEALS

Appeals should be directed to the Chair of the Executive Committee:
Somerset County Community Development Office
27 Warren, 4th Floor
Somerville, NJ 08876
Division Main Telephone: 908-541-5756
Fax Number: 908-575-3935

ARTICLE IX - ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended at a regular or special meeting of the Somerset County Continuum of Care Committee by a majority affirmative vote of the members present and voting and with final approval by the Executive Committee. Amendments must be in written form and distributed to the members of the entire SCCOCC and the Executive Committee at least two (2) weeks prior to presentation and vote.