

Austin / Travis County Homelessness Response System Conflict of Interest Policy

Approved by Leadership Council on: September 12th, 2022

It is the policy of the Austin/Travis County Homelessness Response System (TX-503 Continuum of Care) that a conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest, of any member of the Leadership Council (CoC Board) or any member of its Committees or Workgroups shall in all cases be avoided.

No member of the Homelessness Response System (HRS) including Leadership Council, Committees, Workgroups, shall vote or make recommendations on funding decisions concerning the award of a grant or other financial benefits that:

- Directly benefits them as an individual, or an immediate family member;
- Directly benefits any organization in which they have a direct financial interest (not including stipends, services, or housing); or
- Directly benefits any organization with which they are affiliated in an official capacity (including employment or board membership).

This includes all discussion and decisions with respect to funding, awarding contracts, and implementing corrective actions such as Performance Improvement Plans.

Neither Leadership Council members nor Committee or Workgroup members whose organizations participate in the HUD CoC NOFO Competition may vote on, nor participate in any discussions related to, ranking policies or final competition rankings during the NOFO. If it is requested of them, such members may lend their expertise toward these discussions and the development of performance targets and the evaluation tool in writing. (See [24 CFR § 578.95](#) for full regulatory citation.)

Individuals who receive services from an organization, including housing vouchers and rental assistance, are not considered conflicted and may vote or

participate in discussions related to funding, awarding contracts, and implementing corrective actions.

Each calendar year, the HRS Leadership Council members and any voting Committee or Workgroup members must sign a Conflict of Interest form affirming that they have reviewed this Conflict of Interest policy and on which they disclose any potential conflicts of interest that they face or are likely to face in fulfillment of their duties.

Members of the HRS governance structure must disclose potential conflicts of interest that they may have regarding any matters that come before the HRS in All Stakeholder Meetings, Leadership Council meetings, or during Committee and workgroup meetings as they arise, according to the procedures described below.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

Any matter in which HRS Governance members have an actual or potential conflict of interest will be decided by a vote of members with no conflicts of interest.

It is the expectation of the HRS that members review meeting agendas and inform the meeting chairs of any perceived, actual, or potential conflicts of interest prior to the meeting.

In any cases in which this does not happen beforehand, then as soon as any member becomes aware of any perceived, actual, or potential conflicts of interest, whether at the beginning of a meeting or during the course of a meeting, they must immediately disclose any such perceived, actual, or potential conflicts of interest regarding any business included in the meeting's agenda.

If any HRS Governance member becomes aware that the group in which they are participating, whether Leadership Council or a Committee or a Workgroup, is about to enter into a discussion or vote involving an entity in which that member has any financial interest (including, but not limited to, working for the entity or sitting on its board of directors), the individual member must:

- Immediately inform the meeting's Co-Chair or Lead;
- Acknowledge any potential, perceived, or actual conflict to all members of the governance group (Committee, Workgroup, or Leadership Council) prior to contributing to any discussion prior to a vote; and
- Recuse themselves from a vote on whether to enter into a transaction (including but not limited to, awarding a grant).

Members may also be subject to recusal from the meeting by a majority vote by the nonconflicted members. If there is a perceived conflict of interest around which there is any doubt as to the existence of an actual or potential conflict of interest, the matter should be decided by a majority vote of the nonconflicted members.

Furthermore, if any member perceives the existence of an actual or potential conflict of interest by another member, they may call for a majority vote of nonconflicted members to decide the matter.

Action Without Meeting:

In the case that an action must be taken prior to a scheduled Leadership Council meeting, Leadership Council may conduct a vote via email or conference call. In such instances, if a member has a potential, perceived, or actual conflict of interest, the member must:

- Acknowledge any potential, perceived, or actual conflict to all members prior to contributing to any discussion prior to a vote; and
- Recuse themselves from a vote on whether to enter into a transaction (including but not limited to, awarding a grant) by requesting to be removed from the email chain.

Abstention & Recusal:

In discussions and votes on general policies of the HRS, including when votes may impact the general distribution of resources, HRS members must disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest. In those cases, it will be left to the majority of nonconflicted members to determine if those members must recuse themselves from the discussion and/or abstain from voting.

Recordkeeping:

The minutes of any meeting in which any vote is conducted, or any discussions occur regarding funding, awarding contracts, and implementing corrective actions, must reflect the disclosure of interested members' perceived, actual, or potential conflicts of interest and their recusals and abstentions.

Advocacy Efforts:

Any HRS Governance members who are employed by or sit on the board of directors of, an organization or entity that is being addressed by advocacy efforts (including but not limited to letters of support, petitions, proposals, guidance) must:

- Recuse themselves from a vote on whether the advocacy effort should take place
- Recuse themselves from a final vote to approve the advocacy effort
- May participate in conversations and discussions about content, talking points, and/or demands of the advocacy effort

Austin / Travis County Homelessness Response System Annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure & Confirmation Form

I, _____ confirm that I have received and reviewed a copy of the Austin / Travis County Homelessness Response System Conflict of Interest Policy and that I agree to adhere to that policy and the procedures it establishes.

I, _____ furthermore certify that I have below disclosed any and all relationships, positions, funding, or other circumstances in which I am involved and believe could contribute to any conflict of interest as member of the Homelessness Response System Leadership Council arising.

Please disclose any qualified conflicts of interest (please refer to policy):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Signature

Date