

2023-24 Austin/Travis County Homelessness Response System

Governance Roadmap

Leadership Council (CoC Board)

The Homelessness Response System (HRS) Leadership Council strives to ensure that Austin / Travis County has a strong homelessness response system that is based on evidence-informed practices and meets the needs of those experiencing homelessness. Leadership Council is the board of the TX-503 Austin Travis County Continuum of Care and as such is responsible for setting the policies and procedures for the governance, operations, and written standards for assistance and coordination of the Homelessness Response System and Continuum of Care funds.

This document outlines HUD requirements for Leadership Council, as well as the larger goals for the HRS that will guide the prioritization of goals for the governance committees.

HUD Requirements

- Comply with 24 CFR § 578.7 (Responsibilities of the Continuum of Care), which encompasses but is not limited to:
 - Adopting and following a written process to select a board (Leadership Council itself or a replacement) to act on behalf of the Continuum of Care. The process must be reviewed, updated, and approved by the Continuum at least once every 5 years.
 - In consultation with the collaborative applicant and the HMIS Lead, developing, following, and annually updating a governance charter, which will include all procedures and policies needed to comply with 24 CFR § 578.5 Establishing the Continuum of Care, Subpart B - Establishing and Operating a Continuum of Care, and with HMIS requirements as prescribed by HUD; and a code of conduct and recusal process for the board, its chair(s), and any person acting on behalf of the board.
 - Overseeing and approving the work of committees and workgroups.
 - Serving as the primary decision-making body for the Austin / Travis County Continuum of Care (CoC) funding.
 - Providing oversight of CoC funds and ensuring all CoC funded agencies fulfill their responsibilities as assigned by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- Comply with 24 CFR § 578.95 in avoiding Conflicts of Interest.

Goals

- The HRS will ensure that all people experiencing homelessness are provided dignified options to meet their daily needs, including equitable access to safe affordable permanent housing, shelter, diversion, and support services, including non-judgmental substance use treatment, harm reduction, health care, transportation assistance, resource linkage, access to mainstream benefits, and behavioral health services.

- The HRS System leads with Racial Equity, focusing on the following goals:
 - Establish a system in which Black people are no more likely to be experiencing homelessness, eliminating the current disparity in homelessness rates by race in our community.
 - Ensure and increase positive outcomes for Black households in the HRS, including long-term permanent housing stability.
 - Increase the voices of people with lived experience of homelessness in setting system- level policies and goals.
 - Increase the number of Black-led organizations as service providers.
 - Ensure that funding is equitably awarded.
- Service providers within the HRS are well-equipped with the technical assistance, training, and capacity to provide high quality, effective, and equitable services.
- The HRS has strategies to create permanent housing options for every person experiencing homelessness. In the absence of enough resources to meet the need, the HRS will prioritize housing resources equitably.
- HRS interventions must meet the established Written Standards for service delivery to ensure that people experiencing homelessness are appropriately and equitably served.
- The HRS will use all available funding to meet the unmet needs as determined by the Annual Needs and Gaps and the Racial Disparity Reports. The HRS uses evidence-based practices, and is continually informed by local data analysis to inform the needs and the performance of projects, agencies, and interventions.
- The HRS will ensure that survivors of sexual assault, domestic and family violence, dating violence, human trafficking, and stalking have access to immediate, high quality, and equitable services that meet their needs in accordance with VAWA requirements and best practices for trauma-informed service delivery.

Governance Committees

Crisis Response Committee

Purpose Statement: The HRS will ensure people experiencing homelessness are provided dignified options to meet their daily needs, including referring households experiencing homelessness to permanent housing service provider, shelter, diversion, outreach, and navigation, as well as services, such as harm reduction, health care, mainstream benefits & community-based supports, and behavioral health.

The following goals will be achieved by the committee through the creation and delegation of workgroups intended to meet these goals. The creation, delegation, direction, and disbanding of all workgroups is at the discretion of the committee.

First Priority
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Complete the creation or revision of Written Standards and Best Practices for Cold Weather Shelter by September 20232. Complete Written Standards for Emergency Shelter by November 2023
Second Priority
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Complete the creation or revision of Written Standards for Diversion and Rapid Exit by February 20242. Complete Written Standards for Street Outreach and Drop-In Centers by April 2024
Other Priorities (to be completed at the discretion of the Leadership Council and Committee if all above goals have been completed)
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Work with findings from the HSD Shelter Assessment to develop policies, procedures, and opportunities for expanding crisis system capacity to respond to immediate basic needs of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness2. Provide recommendations for inclement weather shelter protocols, including prioritization of funding needs and identification of needed resources

Permanent Housing Committee

Purpose Statement: The HRS will ensure that permanent housing options are available to every person experiencing homelessness in the community. This committee will work to ensure that all permanent housing programs meet a minimum standard of service delivery. In the absence of enough resources to meet the need, the HRS will prioritize housing resources equitably.

The following goals will be achieved by the committee through the creation and delegation of workgroups intended to meet these goals. The creation, delegation, direction, and disbanding of all workgroups is at the discretion of the committee.

First Priority
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Complete the creation or revision of draft Written Standards for Rapid Rehousing by January 20242. Complete the creation or revision of draft Written Standards for Permanent Supportive Housing by January 20243. Finalize and present to Leadership Council a cohesive community strategy for managing a centralized housing portfolio, creatively using risk mitigation and landlord incentives, and developing and implementing new strategies, tools, and partnerships for property engagement and re-housing access expansion by January 2024
Second Priority
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Update Written Standards and CoC policies to include new requirements for VAWA by March 20242. Complete the creation of a RRH-PSH Transfer Policy by June 2024
Other Priorities (to be completed at the discretion of the Leadership Council and Committee if all above goals have been completed)
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Complete the creation of system-wide Case Management best practices for housing programs

Equity Committee

Purpose Statement: To eliminate racial disparities within the HRS, to increase the safety and accessibility of the HRS to LGBTQ+ clients, and to address intersections of marginalization of groups that would not be served equitably without explicit focus.

The following goals will be achieved by the committee through the creation and delegation of workgroups intended to meet these goals. The creation, delegation, direction, and disbanding of all workgroups is at the discretion of the committee.

First Priority
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Approve new questions for the APAT by December 20232. Create a draft Best Practices for Working with Trans Clients by December 2023
Second Priority
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Create an Equity Review Tool to be used by each committee or workgroup in the creation of any policies and procedures by February 20242. Provide recommendations on how to improve quality of data collection for LGBTQ+ clients by March 2024
Ongoing Priorities (to be completed ad hoc as needed)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuous piloting of APAT questions• Once complete, maintenance of and oversight with Equity Review Tool• Review annual staffing surveys conducted by ECHO staff and draft recommendations as needed

Performance Monitoring Committee

Purpose Statement: The HRS will use quantitative and qualitative data to inform funding priorities, identify opportunities to improve the performance of the HRS and service delivery, and convene stakeholders to take data-driven action to advance the goals of the HRS. This committee will work to evaluate system performance, needs and gaps, racial disparities, system flow, and program performance.

The following goals will be achieved by the committee through the creation and delegation of workgroups intended to meet these goals. The creation, delegation, direction, and disbanding of all workgroups is at the discretion of the committee.

First Priority
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Complete revised Quarterly Performance Scorecard by August 20232. Provide recommendations to ECHO on ways to improve the Coordinated Assessor Training process by November 2023
Second Priority
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Revise Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Policy by January 20242. Approve an interim scorecard for Diversion/SSO/Joint Component Scorecards in collaboration with ECHO support staff
Ongoing Priorities (to be completed ad hoc as needed)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Propose a community process to finalize scorecards for Diversion/SSO/Joint Component Scorecards• Ruling on the close-out of Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs)• Ruling on any PIP or Scorecard Appeals• Review results of revised quarterly performance scorecards• Monitor HRS system performance dashboard trends

System Improvement Committee

Purpose Statement: The HRS understands that ending homelessness requires robust support services and true collaboration between complex systems. This committee will work to evaluate the effect that other systems (e.g., education, child welfare, healthcare, mental health, criminal justice, transportation, environmental, etc.) have on the HRS and develop strategies to actively engage those systems in ending homelessness in our community.

The following goals will be achieved by the committee through the creation and delegation of workgroups intended to meet these goals. The creation, delegation, direction, and disbanding of all workgroups is at the discretion of the committee.

First Priority
1. Complete the creation of a Best Practices for Harm Reduction guide by December 2023
Second Priority
1. Complete the creation of a Best Practices for Peer Support guide by February 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Including best practices for compensation, career advancement opportunities, and certification
Other Priorities (to be completed at the description of the Leadership Council and Committee if all above goals have been completed)
1. Engage Austin's medical respite program around potential projects
2. Create a draft DFPS Transfer Policy for youth exiting foster care into the Homelessness Response System
3. Work with ECHO staff to draft recommendations on how to get stronger data on exits to justice and medical systems