

EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

COMPOSITION & STRUCTURE

GOVERNANCE

The Equity and Inclusion Committee (EIC), a committee of the Continuum of Care (CoC), is responsible for developing and implementing plans and processes to assess whether the CoC's policies and resource allocation decisions are positively impacting inequities among homeless individuals and families in the community. The committee will work closely with the Data Advisory Committee (DAC), Coordinated Entry Oversight Committee (CEOC) and the training workgroup.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to ensure that the Charlotte-Mecklenburg CoC promotes diversity, equity and inclusion in housing and service agencies in Mecklenburg County, the key tasks of the EIC shall include:

- Collecting data related to addressing disparities in the homeless services system
- Developing plans and processes to address disparities in the system
- Working with agencies/organizations to implement plans on reviewing their practices using a racial equity lens
- Working with the CEOC annually on CE evaluation
- Ensuring CoC Written Standards are written from a racial equity lens
- Host community trainings in partnership with the training workgroup related to equity and inclusion

COMPOSITION

The EIC will consist of no more than 12 members, and no fewer than 8, all of whom will have one vote. EIC composition is categorized into two sections: Ex-officio and elected. Elected positions include population-specific and service-specific areas. It is possible for one EIC member to cover multiple sections as well as different roles/areas.

- Minimum of 1 CoC Board member
- 1 person from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agency
- 1 CoC Collaborative Applicant designee
- 1 person with research expertise
- 1 person who engages in equity and inclusion work in their organization
- 7 other members from the CoC (can include other CoC Board members)
- At least 1 member should be a person with lived experience in homelessness
- The membership should be demographically diverse.

All EIC members must also be member organizations or individuals of the CoC. The EIC is committed to a diverse and inclusive committee composition in terms of race, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, and other factors. It is important to have front-line and high-level views represented on the EIC.

The Membership / Nominating Committee of the CoC will be charged with monitoring the EIC and undertaking efforts to recruit a diverse membership.

EX-OFFICIO

- **CoC Governing Board designee:**
The CoC Governing Charter outlines that each committee must have at least 1 CoC Board member.
- **HMIS Lead Agency designee:**
The HMIS Lead Agency is the agency designated by the CoC to establish and operate the CoC's Homeless Management Information System. Mecklenburg County Community Support Services serves as the local System Administrator for the HMIS in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg CoC and currently represents the CoC on the NC HMIS Governance Committee. The HMIS Lead is responsible for ensuring that projects meet national data quality objectives; that the CoC has an HMIS data privacy plan, security plan and data quality plan; and that HMIS is administered in compliance with HUD requirements.
- **CoC Collaborative Applicant designee:**
The Collaborative Applicant (CA) is responsible for providing staff support to all committees of the Continuum of Care.

ELECTED SEATS

Population Specific

To ensure that all subpopulations have equal access to the homeless and housing system, the EIC will ensure that there is representation from all subpopulations outlined below by at least one EIC member. It is possible that one committee member may represent more than one subpopulation.

- **Person with Lived Experience**
It is important to incorporate the experience of people who are currently or formerly homeless in the work of committees. The CoC Governing Charter outlines that each committee should include at least 1 seat for a person with lived experience in homelessness.
- **Victim Services Provider**
HUD defines a victim service provider to mean a private nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to provide direct services to victims of domestic violence. This term includes permanent housing providers—including rapid re-housing, domestic violence programs (shelters and non-residential), domestic violence transitional housing programs, dual domestic violence and sexual assault programs, and related advocacy and supportive services programs (HUD).

- **Single Adults**
An individual who is 18 years of age or older not currently part of a household.
- **Unaccompanied Children and Youth**
An unaccompanied child is a single individual younger than 18 that is not part of a household. An unaccompanied youth is a single individual between 18 and 25 that is not part of a household.
- **Families**
A household unit with at least one adult who is 18 years of age or older and at least one child who is younger than 18.
- **Older Adults (55 and older)**
Individuals and/or couples who are 55 years of age or older.
- **Chronic Homelessness**
A “chronically homeless” individual is defined to mean a homeless individual with a disability who lives either in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter, or in an institutional care facility if the individual has been living in the facility for fewer than 90 days and had been living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter immediately before entering the institutional care facility. In order to meet the “chronically homeless” definition, the individual also must have been living as described above continuously for at least 12 months, or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, where the combined occasions total a length of time of at least 12 months. Each period separating the occasions must include at least 7 nights of living in a situation other than a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or in a safe haven. Chronically homeless families are families with adult heads of household who meet the definition of a chronically homeless individual. If there is no adult in the family, the family would still be considered chronically homeless if a minor head of household meets all the criteria of a chronically homeless individual. A chronically homeless family includes those whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless. Recipients and subrecipients of Continuum of Care Program funds are required to maintain and follow written intake procedures to ensure compliance with the “chronically homeless” definition. The procedures must establish the order of priority for obtaining evidence as third-party documentation first, intake worker observations second, and certification from the individual seeking assistance third.
- **Veterans**
Anyone who has ever been on active duty in the armed forces of the United States, regardless of discharge status or length of service. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard: active duty begins when a military member reports to a duty station after completion of training. Reserves and National Guard: active duty is any time spent

activated or deployed, either in the United States or abroad; or anyone who was disabled in the line of duty during a period of active duty training; or anyone who was disabled from an injury incurred in the line of duty or from acute myocardial infarction, a cardiac arrest, or a cerebrovascular accident during a period of inactive duty training.

- **LGBTQ**

An individual who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning.

- **Persons with disabilities**

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (CRPD, 2006, A/RES/61/106) defines persons with disabilities to "include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".

- **Refugees and Immigrants**

It is important to incorporate the experience of those who are refugees or immigrants in the homeless and housing system.

Service-Specific

Our community provides many services through different projects and funding sources. This includes emergency shelter, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing and transitional housing as well as other housing and homelessness projects. In order to ensure that all persons experiencing homelessness have equal access to housing and homelessness resources, the EIC will ensure that there is representation from all project types outlined below by at least one EIC member. It is possible that one EIC member may represent more than one project type.

- **Prevention**

A housing category targeting households facing housing instability who have not yet lost their housing. Prevention includes community-wide interventions aimed at changing systems and structures that perpetuate housing instability; cross-sector collaboration and coordination to reduce the prevalence of homelessness; and targeted interventions including financial and legal assistance to help households maintain their housing.

- **Diversion**

A housing category targeting households who are homeless and seeking emergency shelter. Diversion helps households resolve their immediate housing crisis by accessing alternatives to entering emergency shelter or the experience of unsheltered homelessness. Diversion assistance includes problem-solving to identify an immediate, alternate housing arrangement or financial assistance such as a bus pass to stay with a family member.

- **Street Outreach**
Essential Services related to reaching out to unsheltered homeless individuals and families, connecting them with emergency shelter, housing, or critical services, and providing them with urgent, non-facility-based care (HUD).
- **Emergency Shelter**
A facility with the primary purpose of providing temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness. It includes shelters that are open seasonally and year-round. This housing type is including the Continuum of Care (CoC)'s Housing Inventory Count and reported as part of the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD).
- **Transitional Housing**
Temporary housing usually coupled with supportive services to facilitate the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing within a reasonable amount of time (usually 24 months). This housing type is including the Continuum of Care (CoC)'s Housing Inventory Count and reported as part of the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD).
- **Residential / Institutional Care**
Other non-emergency, temporary housing types including institutional and residential settings such as jails, hospitals or mental health and/or substance use treatment programs for people experiencing homelessness.
- **Rapid Re-housing**
Short-term rental subsidy (up to 24 months) designed to help households quickly exit homelessness, return to housing in the community, and not become homeless again. RRH typically combines financial assistance and supportive services to help households' access and stabilize in housing. The participating household must be the tenant on a lease (or sublease) for an initial term of at least one year that is renewable and is terminable only for cause. Further, leases (or subleases) must be renewable for a minimum term of one month. This housing type is including the Continuum of Care (CoC)'s Housing Inventory Count.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing**
Long-term rental subsidy (3+ years) designed to provide housing and supportive services to assist homeless households with a disability or families with an adult or child member with a disability to achieve housing stability. The participating household must be the tenant on a lease (or sublease) for an initial term of at least one year that is renewable and is terminable only for cause. Further, leases (or subleases) must be renewable for a minimum term of one month. This housing type is including the Continuum of Care (CoC)'s Housing Inventory Count.

- **Other Permanent Housing**
 Medium-term rental subsidy (1 – 3 years) designed to help households quickly exit homelessness, return to housing in the community, and not become homeless again. While OPH is longer than Rapid Re-housing, it also typically combines financial assistance and supportive services to help households' access and stabilize in housing. The lease for the housing unit is between the landlord and program participant. This housing type is including the Continuum of Care (CoC)'s Housing Inventory Count. In Charlotte-Mecklenburg, OPH exists through an arrangement between INLIVIAN (formerly Charlotte Housing Authority) and several local housing programs. INLIVIAN provides a number of time-limited Housing Choice Vouchers to each program in order to administer, according to guidelines.
- **Education**
 Representation from the local public-school system as well as local colleges and universities.
- **Individual who engages in equity and inclusion work in their organization**
 This individual will help engage agency stakeholders who do E&I work in the community.
- **Individual with research expertise**
 This individual is important to this committee to assist with researching best practices in E&I. This individual will also work with the HMIS Lead to help interpret our CoC's data and/or identify areas in the work that need further research.
- **Organization whose mission is to promote equity and inclusion**
 An individual from an organization whose primary focus is to promote equity and inclusion in the community.
- **Faith-based organization**
 An individual from a faith-based organization is important to this committee since they interact with individuals from all backgrounds and those who are homeless often seek assistance from them.
- **Law enforcement agency**
 An individual from a law enforcement agency is important to this committee since they interact with individuals from all backgrounds and should know the needs of all population and how to advocate for them.

Table

The table below outlines the full EIC representation, including Ex-Officio and Elected positions.

Table	
Ex-Officio	CoC Collaborative Applicant Designee
	HMIS Lead Agency Designee
	CoC Governing Board Designee
Elected: Population-& Service Specific	Victim Services Provider
	Lived Experience Designee
	Individual who engages in equity and inclusion work in their organization
	Individual with research expertise
	Single Adults
	Unaccompanied Children & Youth
	Families
	Older Adults (55+)
	Chronic Homelessness
	Prevention
	Diversion
	Street Outreach
	Emergency Shelter
	Transitional Housing
	Residential / Institutional Care
	Rapid Re-housing
	Permanent Supportive Housing
	Other Permanent Housing
	Faith-based organization
	Education
Refugee/Immigrant service provider	
LGBTQ	
Persons with disabilities	
Organization whose mission is to promote equity and inclusion	
Law enforcement agency	

OFFICERS

The EIC will have three officers, who will be selected by majority vote of the members of the EIC for one-year terms. Any member of the committee may serve as an officer. Committee officers will serve 1-year terms and may serve up to four consecutive terms. The term for EIC Officers will run from July to June. The process for EIC Officer Selection will take place each June. Interim terms of less than 12 months may occur to temporarily fill a vacant EIC Officer position prior to the end of the regular term.

- **CHAIR**

The Chair will preside at meetings of the EIC, develop meeting agendas in conjunction with the other EIC members, publicly speak on behalf of the EIC to ensure that EIC member representation covers all categories.

- **VICE-CHAIR**

The Vice-Chair will fulfill the functions of the Chair when the Chair is unavailable

- **SECRETARY**

The Secretary will take minutes and attendance at all EIC meetings. The Secretary is also responsible for distributing copies of the minutes to EIC members and to CoC Collaborative Applicant designee to post to CoC website.

EXPECTATIONS OF EIC MEMBERS & EIC MEETINGS

It is expected that EIC members participate fully in all aspects of the EIC and attend at least 75% of the EIC meetings as scheduled. Meeting attendance will be reviewed quarterly. The meeting schedule will be determined by the EIC Chair, in consultation with EIC members. All meetings are open to the public. Meeting minutes and agendas will be posted to the CoC website. At a minimum of once per quarter, the EIC will schedule a time and encourage CoC providers to attend.

VOTING PROCEDURES

For the purpose of conducting business, a quorum of the EIC will be no less than 7 of the voting members. All other EIC related decisions require a simple majority of the EIC.

TERM LENGTH & LIMITS

Terms will be staggered, creating 1 or 2-year limits for each member of the EIC. There are no term limits for individuals serving in an Ex-Officio capacity on the EIC. If an EIC member leaves before the end of the term, the replacement will be filled in the manner it was originally filled; and will serve to the end of that term, and then must be reappointed or reelected.

TERMINATION & RESIGNATION

EIC members may be dismissed by the EIC for violations of the Conflict of Interest Policy or for other violations of the CoC policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

- Missing more than 25% of the EIC meetings
- Fraud
- Failure to maintain confidentiality

Removal of an EIC member requires a majority of the EIC voting members present at an EIC meeting, but in no event shall such a vote occur if there are fewer than 7 members present. If an EIC member wishes to resign, the EIC member shall submit a letter of resignation to the EIC Chair.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

If at any point an individual/household/provider wishes to address a complaint or grievance with a provider or agency with representation on the EIC, that member must recuse themselves from participating in those proceedings or voting on the outcome of that issue. In addition, EIC members must abide by all other CoC policies.

PROCESS FOR EIC MEMBER SELECTION

Ex-officio members of the EIC will be designated by their organizations; it is possible that one individual may fulfill more than one Ex-officio role (for example, one individual might represent both education and the CoC Governing Board). All other elected EIC members will be voted on by the CoC Membership / Nominating Committee, chaired by the Vice-Chair of the CoC Governing Board. At least one month prior to the start of a new term, which runs from July 1 – June 30, the EIC Chair will solicit nominations for open seats from the community via website posting, agency distribution and CoC email list. The open seats will specify which roles/areas need to be covered, using the [EIC Application Form](#). Nominations will be collected and reviewed by the CoC Membership / Nominating Committee with input from the EIC.