

The Road Home

Tacoma/Lakewood/Pierce County Continuum of Care

c/o Pierce County Human Services
1305 Tacoma Ave South, Tacoma WA 98402

About the Road Home Continuum of Care Committee (CoC):

The Road Home Committee was established to oversee community planning to address issues of homelessness. Racial disparities in experiences of homelessness are clear and stark, driven by the complex array of inequities within our system and social dynamics-biases and prejudices, overt discrimination, systemic and institutional racism, and many other related intersectional forces-that impact our responses to homelessness and collectively help cause and create homelessness in our country.

The CoC brings together a diverse group of stakeholders to assess and address racial disparities to promote the commitment to the goal of preventing and ending homelessness. The CoC has invested in partners that focus on getting people housed. Together, the CoC and its partners use the following strategies to create a suite of housing and service resources that make up the Homeless Crisis Response System. The System takes a Housing First approach, is more coordinated and client-centered, and uses emerging best practices:

- Coordinated Entry (CE) - The coordinated pathway to housing referrals;
- Mobile Street Outreach;
- Short-Term Housing Solutions and Diversion;
- Emergency Shelters (Day and Overnight);
- Transitional Housing for Targeted Populations; and
- Permanent Housing.

The Committee uses a variety of federal, state, and local funds to support efforts by nonprofit providers and local governments to re-house homeless individuals and families rapidly while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness.

Value Statement:

The Continuum of Care's guiding principles include a commitment to exercising racial equity, diversity, and inclusion – with shared power and vision in all decisions and practices by this body and all funding entities – to create an equitable service delivery system to prevent and eliminate homelessness in Pierce County.

The Continuum of Care values these practices in the homeless system because people of color are much more likely to experience homelessness in Pierce County than those who are White. Race influences homelessness. This is a result of centuries of structural racism that have historically excluded oppressed people, particularly Black and Native Americans, from equal access to housing, community supports and opportunities for economic mobility.

Mission:

The mission of the Road Home is to promote community wide commitment to ending homelessness through policy and resource alignment by implementing activities to achieve the goals and objectives of the Plan to End Homelessness.

Vision:

The vision of the CoC is an equitable service delivery system in which all participants collaborate to achieve the prevention and elimination of homelessness in Pierce County.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Road Home CoC Committee is:

- To assess the scope of racial disparities in experiences of homelessness by comparing HMIS data to local populations and census data.
- Assess whether programs and systems are providing connections to services and housing at equitable rates and achieving equitable outcomes for clients across races and ethnicities.
- Assess whether identified racial disparities are being or perpetuated by processes or barriers within homeless services system.
- Build a shared understanding of the scope and drivers of racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness.
- To increase public awareness of the Plan to End Homelessness;
- To engage community partners who will work in collaboration with other sectors of relevant organizations and of projects serving homeless subpopulations to implement the Plan;
- To ensure that the CoC is in compliance with the HEARTH Act, and demonstration results in reducing the length of homelessness and returns to homelessness; and
- To implement strategic and outcomes-based interventions and create a dynamic and responsive homelessness continuum of services;

CoC Priorities or Responsibilities:

1. **Regular meetings.** Hold meetings of the full membership, with published agendas, at least monthly. CoCs may conduct membership meetings more often for purposes of activity planning, ongoing communication, staff training, etc.

2. **Invitation for new members.** Issue a public invitation for new members from within the CoC's geographic area at least annually.

3. **Committee selection.** Adopt and follow a written process to select a CoC committee to act on behalf of the CoC. The CoC must review, update, and approve the selection process at least once every five years. The CoC committee must meet all requirements as specified in 24 CFR part 578.5(b) and as discussed in more detail in Section 4.1 of this user guide. Many of the operating responsibilities of the CoC may appropriately be assigned to the board.

4. **Additional committees.** Appoint additional subcommittees, or work groups as needed.

5. **Governance charter.** In consultation with the collaborative applicant and the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) lead, develop, follow, and update annually (1) a governance charter that includes all procedures and policies needed to comply with 24 CFR part 578.5(b) and with HMIS requirements as prescribed by HUD and (2) a code of conduct and recusal process for the board, its chair(s), and any person acting on behalf of the board.

6. **Monitoring.** Monitor recipient and subrecipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and take action against poor performers.

7. **Evaluation.** Establish performance targets appropriate for population and program type in consultation with recipients and subrecipients, then monitor recipient and subrecipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and take actions against poor performers.

8. **Centralized or Coordinated Assessment.** Establish and operate a coordinated assessment system, in consultation with the recipients of Emergency Solutions Grants program funds.

9. **Written Standards.** Establish and consistently follow written standards for providing CoC assistance, in consultation with the recipients of Emergency Solutions Grants program funds.

CoC Committee Supports:

- **CoC Sub-Committees:** The Road Home CoC will establish standing Sub-committees, Work Groups, and Ad-Hocs to carry out some of the Committees responsibilities and as needed through planning efforts. Committee Members are encouraged to participate in these Committees to carry out the work of the Governance Charter.
- **Collaborative Applicant:** Pierce County Human Services has been designated as the Collaborative Applicant for the Pierce County CoC. The Collaborative Applicant shall work with the Road Home CoC Executive Committee to hold monthly meetings with published agendas, provide support and recommendations to the committee for final decisions, and develop a collaborative process for the creation of applications and approve the submission of applications in response to Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to HUD.
- **HMIS Lead:** Pierce County Human Services is the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) lead and is responsible for ensuring that HMIS is administered in compliance with HUD requirements, and ensuring consistent participation in HMIS of all contributing organizations.

More information is available on the Pierce County Human Services Continuum of Care Program webpage.

Interested parties should submit questions or applications via the online form to Valeri Knight, Pierce County Human Services Program Specialist 3 or by email or phone at valeri.knight@piercecountywa.gov and (253) 798-6931.