



METRO DENVER HOMELESS
INITIATIVE CONTINUUM OF
CARE GOVERNANCE
CHARTER



Adopted 8/25/2023

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Introduction

HUD requires communities that receive funds under the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act to establish a local Continuum of Care (CoC) to promote a community-wide commitment to ending homelessness, provide funding for efforts to promote community-wide planning and strategic use of resources to address homelessness, improve coordination and integration with mainstream resources, and other programs targeted to people experiencing homelessness.

The name of the organization is the Metro Denver CoC (herein referred to as “the Metro Denver CoC” or “the CoC”). The Collaborative Applicant, or Lead Agency, is the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI). The CoC is identified as CO-503 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The geographic area served by the MDHI CoC includes the counties of Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson (the Region).

The Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) coordinates the CoC’s policies, strategies, and activities toward preventing and ending homelessness through a coalition of more than 180 organizations that includes public and private non-profit agencies, faith-based organizations, service providers, mainstream programs, consumers and concerned citizens. The CoC’s work includes gathering and analyzing information in order to determine the local needs of people experiencing homelessness, implementing strategic responses, educating the community on homeless issues, providing advice and input on the operations of homeless services, and measuring CoC performance.

The HEARTH Act, enacted into law on May 20, 2009, consolidated the homeless assistance programs administered by HUD under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act into a single grant program, and revised the Emergency Shelter Grants program and renamed it the Emergency Solutions Grants program. The HEARTH Act also codified into law the Continuum of Care (CoC) planning process, a longstanding part of HUD’s efforts to assist homeless persons by providing for greater community-wide coordination, decision making, and leadership.

The membership of a CoC is the group organized to carry out the responsibilities prescribed in the CoC Program Interim Rule. CoC responsibilities include:

- Planning for the CoC, operating the CoC, and ensuring that the CoC complies with HUD requirements and regulations.
- Coordinating the implementation of a housing and service system that meets the needs of the individuals and families who experience homelessness, including prevention and diversion strategies; outreach and engagement; coordinated assessment, entry, and exit; crisis sheltering; emergency sheltering; temporary housing; permanent housing; and supportive services.
- Designing and implementing a process for applying for HUD CoC Program funds.

This Governance Charter outlines the roles and responsibilities of the CoC Board of Directors, committees, Lead Agency, Collaborative Applicant, and HMIS Lead. The charter was developed by the CoC Lead Agency, MDHI, in consultation with the board's Governance Committee, with homeless, housing, and service providers in the CoC service area, and with additional CoC Board members through committee and feedback processes.

CoC Mission, Vision and Values

CoC Mission: Leading and advancing collaboration to end homelessness in our region.

CoC Vision: Dedicated to everyone in the metro region having a safe, stable place to call home.

The CoC is committed to these core values that bring people home:

Inclusive. Honoring the dignity of people with personal experiences of homelessness as partners in identifying solutions to homelessness.

Collaborative. Harnessing the power of collaboration to achieve systemic solutions to homelessness.

Innovative. Fostering flexible and creative responses to the complexity of homelessness.

Informed. Using data to address inequity, guide decision making, allocate resources, and improve accountability.

Bold. Providing courageous leadership that honors our commitment to end homelessness.

CoC Board of Directors Responsibilities

The CoC Board of Directors and MDHI are tasked with carrying out the responsibilities of a Continuum of Care (“CoC”) as defined by HUD’s Continuum of Care Program Interim Rule (24 C.F.R. § 578), which includes but is not limited to the following duties:

- Designating a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and an eligible applicant to manage the HMIS.
- Ensuring that homeless resources are invested efficiently and effectively in programs that meet the needs of the community and are high performing.
- Selecting a Collaborative Applicant or eligible agent to submit an application on behalf of the CoC.

Lead Agency Responsibilities

- Establishing and operating the coordinated entry system that provides an initial, comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services.
- Establishing and consistently following fair, equitable written standards for screening, evaluating eligibility, and administering assistance for people experiencing homelessness (or at-risk) across the geographic region.
- Planning for and conducting point-in-time counts of people experiencing homelessness within the geographic area;
- Conducting an annual gaps analysis of homeless needs and services within the geographic area;
- Coordinating and implementing a system to meet the needs of the homeless population and subpopulations within the geographic area, including:
- Consulting with state and local Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program recipients within the CoC on the plan for allocating ESG program funds; and
- Reporting on and evaluating the performance of ESG and CoC program funding recipients and subrecipients.
- Designing, operating, and following a collaborative process for the development of applications, as well as approving the submission of applications, in response to a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) published by HUD.
- Preparing, reviewing, and coordinating CoC funding with ESG and other federal funding as well as with state, county, and local funding dedicated to homelessness or the homeless crisis response system.

CoC Membership

Membership in the CoC ensures community-wide commitment to preventing and ending homelessness and must represent a diverse body of stakeholders from throughout the entire geographic area of the MDHI CoC. The intent is for the CoC to be as inclusive as possible to include the opinions and insights of various stakeholders. The CoC membership reports to the CoC Board, informs the CoC Board, holds the CoC Board accountable, and is held accountable by the CoC Board. Membership is free and open to any person or organization committed to ending and preventing homelessness.

The MDHI CoC general membership may include the following types of partners:

- Nonprofit homeless assistance providers [required by HUD to be represented among CoC members]
- Domestic violence survivor service providers [required by HUD]
- Faith-based organizations [required by HUD]
- Government entities [required by HUD]
- Businesses [required by HUD]
- Utility companies
- Advocates [required by HUD]
- Public housing agencies [required by HUD]
- Mental health agencies [required by HUD]
- Disability services
- Family and youth services
- Hospitals and health care providers
- Universities [required by HUD]
- School districts [required by HUD]
- Social service providers [required by HUD]
- Affordable housing developers [required by HUD]
- Home ownership programs
- Law enforcement [required by HUD]
- Corrections agencies
- Legal aid services
- Veteran service organizations [required by HUD]
- Persons who have lived experience of homelessness [required by HUD]
- Substance abuse treatment providers
- Other relevant and interested parties

Meetings and Agenda

The CoC holds full membership meetings at least semi-annually. The CoC's Continuum Performance Committee (CPC) and Executive Committee announces the date, time and location of these meetings, sets the meeting agenda and publishes it at least 24 hours before the meeting. Meeting agendas are posted and publicly shared, as well as emailed to all members for review prior to the meeting. Meetings may be held virtually or in-person.

Joining the CoC

The CoC invites new members to join via electronic application on an ongoing basis. The invitation is communicated by public notice and other appropriate media, which may include website announcements and email messages distributed to a wide range of community partners and members. To become and remain a member of the MDHI CoC, an individual or organization must:

- Submit a membership application, which provides relevant data and affirms the prospective member's commitment to the following:
 - Supporting the implementation of the CoC's HMIS and maintaining (as applicable) an acceptable HMIS data quality rating (established by the HMIS Lead) for all relevant resources connected to the system.
 - Supporting the CoC's coordinated entry system (known as OneHome) and using OneHome (as applicable)
 - Contributing staff capacity (as applicable) to planning and implementing the CoC's annual Point-in-Time (PIT) counts.
 - Adopting and implementing Housing First principles and evidence-based practices (as applicable).
- Attend semiannual stakeholder meetings organized by MDHI.
- If an organization, assign one individual to serve as the primary liaison to the CoC, responsible for representing MDHI within their organization, ensuring that trainings and partnership meetings are attended, and informing the organization's leadership of matters related to the CoC. Each such liaison must complete a conflict-of-interest disclosure statement.
- Support the efforts of individuals serving on CoC committees.

Please note: CoC members represent a variety of groups, including groups that are not CoC-funded and/or do not provide direct services to persons experiencing homelessness. Participation in HMIS and OneHome are required of CoC-funded programs. For non-CoC funded members, the commitment is to collectively support these CoC efforts.

Voting

CoC members organizations are granted one vote per organization. This does not preclude organizations from having more than one employee attend CoC committee, work group and/or full CoC meetings. In situations where more than one employee from an organization is present at a committee, work group, or full CoC meeting, only one person may represent the organization in a voting role. Furthermore, if there are different employees from the same organization on different committees, or work groups each employee can vote at their own committee or work group meeting (as long as only one person per agency is voting at that meeting). Individual members, including homeless and formerly homeless persons, are authorized to vote as an individual.

Benefits of Membership

CoC members may:

- Apply for funding opportunities passed through the CoC by HUD
- Vote at annual stakeholder meetings. Voting is limited to one designee per member organization.
- Have staff members appointed to CoC committees as voting members, with the authority to make formal recommendations to the CoC Board of Directors and/or Continuum Performance Committee

as applicable.

- Receive technical assistance from MDHI and its partners to support the implementation of effective program operations.

CoC Board

Number and Qualification

The Board shall consist of no less than nine (9) and up to thirteen (13) voting members (collectively, the “Directors” or, individually, a “Director”) with the precise number fixed from time to time exclusively by resolution of the Board. No decrease in the number of Directors constituting the Board shall shorten the term of any incumbent Director. Each Director must be a natural person, i.e., non-corporation, who is eighteen (18) years of age or older and living in the of the State of Colorado. No W-2 employee of the Corporation may serve as a voting Director.

The Board should be composed of individuals having the ability to contribute to the development and success of the CoC, and diverse personal and professional affiliations, knowledge, and racial and ethnic backgrounds that, to the greatest extent possible and allowed by law, is proportionally representative of people experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Denver area. A minimum of two Directors shall be people with current or past lived experience of homelessness. The Board shall, to the greatest extent possible, include a mix of individuals from the seven county Denver metropolitan area, including representatives from government entities, individuals from homeless service provider organizations, and individuals not affiliated with government entities or homeless service provider organizations.

No more than two people with substantial involvement with a single organization or municipal department shall serve on the Board at the same time.

One seat on the Board shall be reserved for a representative from the Young Adult Leadership Committee. This position holds the same responsibilities, authority, terms of service, and voting privileges as other members of the Board. An important role of this designated board seat is to ensure that youth priorities are included in the CoC’s strategic and operational planning.

Unless otherwise determined by the Board, the Directors shall normally be elected at the annual meetings of the Board in June and/or December, with the process for nomination and elections of Directors enumerated in the Board’s governing policies. Each Director shall serve a two-year term with a maximum of two consecutive terms, or a shorter period as applicable in order to stagger terms in classes so that approximately one-half of Directors’ terms expire in any given year. After serving two consecutive terms, former Directors may be elected again from a slate of nominees recommended by the Governance Committee after a hiatus of at least one year, unless otherwise approved by unanimous vote of the Board in order for the Board to continue operations. Typically, Director terms should begin in either January or July. A term beginning in January ends in December of the following year. A term beginning in July ends in June of the year after the next. If a Director begins a term in a month other than January or July, one of the Director’s terms may be extended by up to six months so that it ends in December or June.

Directors fulfilling requirements of participation, as set forth in these Bylaws and the governing policies of the Board, are eligible for re-nomination for one (1) successive term, or a maximum of four (4) consecutive years of service on the Board. The only exceptions to this term limitation shall be for:

- (a) Directors filling vacated terms of less than twelve months, who then remain eligible for two successive two-year terms,

(b) those Directors elected to serve as “Board Chair” (or “Chair”), who will serve one year as Chair, unless otherwise elected by unanimous vote of the Board to serve a second one-year term as Chair, and the following year as the “Immediate Past Chair” or

(c) those elected to serve as “Chair Elect,” who will serve one year as Chair Elect, and will serve the following year as Board Chair, and, the following year as the “Immediate Past Chair.” However, no Director who has served as Chair, Immediate Past Chair, or Chair Elect may serve on the Board in any position for more than six (6) consecutive years.

Directors shall be elected by a majority of the Board from a slate of nominees recommended by the Governance Committee. Typically, the Governance Committee should recommend a slate of nominees to the Board at the June and/or December meetings so that terms may start in July or January.

The CoC Board convenes no less than 10 times annually and written agendas and meeting minutes are kept and made public to promote transparency.

Quorum

The presence of a majority of the voting Directors eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting of the Board. Notwithstanding the absence of a quorum, a lesser number may adjourn a meeting to a later date. A meeting at which a quorum is initially present may continue to transact business, notwithstanding the withdrawal of Directors, if any action taken is approved by at least a majority of the established quorum for that meeting. The vote of a majority of the Directors present in person at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board except as otherwise stipulated in the Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws or by law. Directors shall not vote or otherwise act by proxy.

Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest, and Recusal Process

In accordance with HUD regulations, no board member may participate in or influence discussions or decisions concerning the award of a grant or other financial benefits to an organization that the member represents. Per the CoC Program Interim Rule, a person with a conflict of interest is a person who is an employee, agent, consultant, officer, or elected or appointed official of the award recipient or its subrecipients and who exercises, or has exercised, any functions or responsibilities with respect to activities assisted under the award; or, who is in a position to participate in a decision-making process or gain inside information with regard to activities assisted under the award, may obtain a financial interest or benefit from an assisted activity, has a financial interest in any contract, subcontract, or agreement with respect to an assisted activity, or has a financial interest in the proceeds derived from an assisted activity, either for him or herself or for those with whom he or she has immediate family or business ties, during his or her tenure or during the one-year period following his or her tenure on the board. Therefore, any individual participating in or influencing decision making must identify actual or perceived conflicts of interest as they arise and comply with the letter and spirit of this policy. Individuals with a conflict of interest must abstain from discussions and voting on any issue in which they may have a conflict. An individual with a conflict of interest, who is the committee chair, shall yield that position during such discussions and abstain from voting on the item.

The CoC’s general membership works in partnership with the CoC Board and CoC Lead Agency to carry out the responsibilities required of CoCs by the CoC Program Interim Rule. The following table outlines the responsibilities of the CoC Board in these efforts.

Responsibility Category	Responsibility	Responsible Party
CoC Governance and Management	Establish and designate responsibilities for the CoC Lead Agency, HMIS Lead, and Collaborative Applicant	CoC Board
CoC Governance and Management	Appoint committees and work groups	Continuum Performance Committee (CPC)/Coc Lead Agency
Overall and Project-Level Performance	Assess and improve performance	CoC Board/CoC Lead Agency/HMIS Lead/CPC
Designation of the HMIS	Designate a single HMIS for the CoC's entire geographic area	CoC Board
Designation of the HMIS Lead	Designate a single HMIS Lead	CoC Board
Planning for the CoC	Consult with ESG recipients	CoC Board/CoC Lead Agency/CoC membership through committees and work groups
Annual NOFO Application	Approve annual application to HUD for CoC Program funding	CoC Board/CoC Lead Agency/CoC membership through NOFO committee
CoC Governance and Management	Designate a Collaborative Applicant	CoC Board

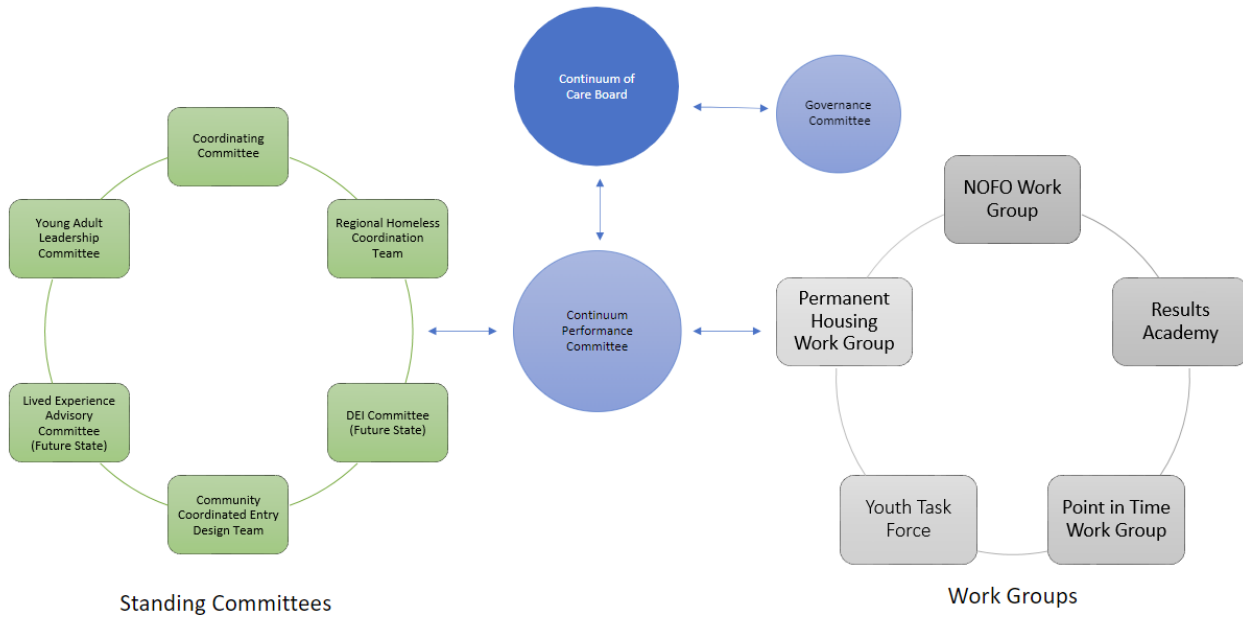
Additional responsibilities required of the CoC Board include the following:

- Set protocols for the rating and ranking process for the CoC funding competition, considering MDHI CoC system needs, system gaps, system and project performance, strategic goals, HUD threshold requirements and regulations, and HUD and local policy priorities. This is done in collaboration with the MDHI NOFA working group.
- Work with CoC Lead Agency to set all CoC Stakeholder meetings
- Work with CoC Lead Agency on by-laws for the CoC.
- Lead full CoC membership meetings.
- Receive input from the full CoC membership on priorities and goals for the CoC and set those priorities on an annual basis.
- Act as the official liaison for the consolidated planning process in coordination with ESG jurisdictions.
- Act as the appeals body for the full CoC.
- Appoint membership to the CoC NOFO working group on an annual basis.
- Designate HMIS Lead, CoC Lead, and Collaborative Applicant for MDHI CoC, with roles to be reviewed every five years.
- Hold CoC committees accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities and review the work of the committees at least annually.
- Hold CoC members and committees accountable for addressing and reducing racial inequities.

The Lead Agency Staff may establish committees, advisory bodies, work groups, and affinity groups for specific subpopulations and practices to meet the needs of the Continuum of Care and those experiencing homelessness in

consultation with the CPC. These bodies are made up of the general CoC membership to provide perspective on CoC priorities and strategies, provide venues for community feedback, develop and communicate policy recommendations to the CoC Board, and evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of CoC systems. The Lead Agency shall send notice of committee and work group meetings so that CoC members can participate in the committees or work groups with which they are involved.

Committee & Work Group Structure



The Continuum Performance Committee (CPC)

The purpose of the CPC is to review and inform policies to make recommendations to the CoC Board on matters related to the performance of the CoC. This shall include the following types of policies:

The CPC shall be comprised of no more than 11 members and no less than nine, all of which must be CoC members or be employed by CoC member organization. Two of the members shall be Continuum of Care Board Members at any given time. The other nine shall be comprised of representatives from the nine subregions: Adams, Arapahoe, Aurora, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, Jefferson County, and the Tri-Cities. A board member may serve as a subregional representative in addition to representing the board.

The subregions shall designate a representative from their local Homeless Coordination Team (HCT) to serve on the CPC of the CoC. In the event that a subregion does not designate a member, that seat shall remain vacant until the designation is made.

Board Governance Committee

The Governance Committee shall be comprised of current CoC Directors. Directors to the CoC Board shall be elected by a majority of the Board from a slate of nominees recommended by the Governance Committee. Typically, the Governance Committee should recommend a slate of nominees to the Board at the June and/or December meetings so that terms may start in July or January.

Committees

- Community Coordinated Entry Design Team
 - Partner meeting for ongoing OneHome input and feedback
- Coordinating Committee
 - Partner meeting for monthly network
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)
 - Committee responsible for analyzing and advising CoC on DEI
- Lived Experience Advisory Committee (LEAC)
 - Adult committee of individuals 25+ that help cocreate and advise the CoC's work
- Regional Homeless Coordination Team
 - Committee of municipal, county, and state leaders who work to coordinate the homelessness response across the region
- Young Adult Leadership Committee (YALC)
 - Young adult committee of individuals 16-24 that help cocreate and advise the CoC's work

Work Groups

- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Work Group
 - Committee of partners who help evaluate and rank HUD applications of funding for the CoC; participation is confidential
- Permanent Housing Work Group
 - Committee of partners who help create, maintain, and uphold CoC standards and oversight for permanent housing
- PIT Work Group
 - Work group of partners who coordinate, collaborate and oversee the annual Point in Time count for the CoC
- Results Academy
 - Group of partners, who eventually will transition into the DEI committee, responsible for helping cocreate a more equitable Coordinated Entry System
- Youth Task Force
 - Group of partners coordinating the region's response to youth homelessness

Meetings

All board meetings are open to the public. Meeting agendas and minutes shall be made public whenever possible and, except for those from the board committees, shall be available upon request.

Committees and work groups shall determine how often they will meet as a group in order to achieve their assigned tasks, unless the frequency of their meetings is specified in this charter.

Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest, and Recusal Process

In accordance with HUD regulations, no member of a CoC council or committee may participate in or influence the committee's discussions or decisions concerning the award of a grant or other financial benefits to the organization that the member represents. Therefore, any individual who is thinking about participating in or influencing decision making must identify actual or perceived conflicts of interest as they arise and comply with the letter and spirit of this policy. Disclosures of such conflicts should occur at the earliest possible time and if possible, prior to the discussion of any such issue. Individuals should recuse themselves from discussing any issue in which they may have a conflict.

Annual written disclosure statements are requested from CoC members at the CoC's annual stakeholder meetings. Members are not permitted to participate in CoC discussions until this statement is on file.

CoC Staff Roles

CoC Lead Agency

The Continuum of Care Board will appoint a Lead Agency which will be responsible for the coordination and oversight of CoC planning efforts and the implementation of OneHome, the region's coordinated entry system. The Lead Agency will provide meeting support and participate in meetings of the CoC Board, CoC membership, and all committees and work groups. The Lead Agency is responsible for scheduling meetings, developing agendas, issuing meeting materials and posting all relevant documents to the Continuum of Care website, in coordination with the committee chairs.

The designation of the CoC Lead Agency is valid for a maximum of five (5) years before the designation must be reviewed and renewed by the Continuum of Care Board. No requirement for a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be made if the duties of the CoC Lead Agency are assigned to the Lead Agency by the CoC Board. In response to negligence or poor performance of the CoC Lead Agency, the CoC reserves the right to open an RFP process prior to the five-year mark and designate a new CoC Lead Agency.

At this time, the designated Lead Agency is the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative.

Lead Agency

The Continuum of Care must designate a legal entity who is also a Continuum of Care Program eligible applicant to serve as the Collaborative Applicant. The Collaborative Applicant is responsible for collecting and combining the required application information from all Continuum of Care Program funded projects within the geographic area. The Collaborative Applicant is also responsible for submitting the annual application to HUD for Continuum of Care Program funding and to apply for Continuum of Care Planning dollars. The designation of the Collaborative Applicant is valid for a maximum of five (5) years before the designation must be reviewed and renewed by the Continuum of Care Board. In response to negligence, poor performance, or loss of eligibility, the CoC Board reserves the right to open an RFP process prior to the five-year mark and designate a new Lead Agency.

Before the submission of the annual application to HUD for Continuum of Care Program funding, the Collaborative Applicant must submit a final draft of the application to the CoC membership and other stakeholders for public comment, and to the MDHI CoC Board for approval. Depending on the timing of the submission to HUD, the CoC Board and Collaborative Applicant will create a timeline for submission to the Continuum of Care.

At this time, the designated Collaborative Applicant is the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative.

HMIS Lead

The Continuum of Care must designate a legal entity who is also a Continuum of Care Program eligible applicant to serve as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead. The HMIS Lead will maintain the community's HMIS in compliance with HUD standards and coordinate all related activities including training, maintenance, and the provision of technical assistance to contributing organizations. Responsibilities required by the Continuum of Care Interim Rule are outlined on page 5 of this Governance Charter.

The designation of the HMIS Lead is valid for a maximum of five years before the designation must be reviewed and renewed by the Continuum of Care Board. No requirement for a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be made if the duties of the HMIS Lead are assigned to the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative by the CoC Board. In response to negligence or poor performance of the HMIS Lead, the CoC reserves the right to open an RFP process prior to the five-year mark and designate a new HMIS Lead.

At this time, the designated HMIS Lead Agency is the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative.

