

Homeless Services Network

~ preventing and ending homelessness ~

Membership & Bylaws

(Updated April 21, 2010)

HOMELESS SERVICES NETWORK PURPOSE:

The Homeless Services Network is a coalition of agencies and organizations committed to preventing and ending homelessness.

HOMELESS SERVICES NETWORK OPERATING PRINCIPLES:

The Network is committed to eliminating homelessness in Mecklenburg County by:

- ◆ Collaborating, communicating, and coordinating services
- ◆ Advocating with and for homeless people
- ◆ Planning and managing responses to needs through a continuum of care
- ◆ Participating in and supporting the 10 Year Plan: *More Than Shelter! Charlotte-Mecklenburg's Ten Year Implementation Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness—One Person/One Family at a Time*

Membership is open to organizations in support of the purpose stated above. The following organizations are members as of the reorganization date of 8/27/09. Please see below for how to join this Network.

ACCESS

A Child's Place

A Way Home

Center for Community Transitions (formerly Energy Committed to Offenders)

Charlotte Emergency Housing

Charlotte Housing Authority

Charlotte Mecklenburg Housing Partnership

Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools

Charlotte Rescue Mission

City of Charlotte Neighborhood and Business Services

Community Link

Crisis Assistance Ministry

C W Williams Community Health Center

Family Promise

Friendship Community Development Corporation

Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont

Home Aide

Hope Hands & Heart Outreach Ministries

Hope Haven

Hope House

Jacob's Ladder

Legal Aid of North Carolina, Charlotte

Legal Services of Southern Piedmont

Lutheran Family Services

Mecklenburg County Area Mental Health
Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services
Mecklenburg County Community Support Services/ Homeless Support Services
Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation
Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office/Jail
Men's Shelter of Charlotte
Nexus
Regional HIV/AIDS Consortium
The Relatives
Saint Peters Homes- McCreesh Place
The Salvation Army
Samaritan House
To Serve With Love
United Family Services
United Way of Central Carolinas
Urban Ministry Center
YWCA Central Carolinas

The Network invites all interested persons and organizations to attend meetings and to join the email list-serve and encourages broad community participation in fulfilling its mission and purpose.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE 1 – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Homeless Services Network.

ARTICLE 2 – PURPOSE

The purpose of the Homeless Services Network is preventing and ending homelessness.

ARTICLE 3 – DEFINITION OF HOMELESS

For the purpose of this organization, the definition of "homeless" is as follows: Persons who are homeless are individuals or families who currently lack or cannot legally secure their own consistent living quarters in a structure intended for residential use other than a community shelter.

ARTICLE 4 – MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1 New members shall be received as "member-elect" until such time as they can demonstrate the following:
- Organization is a non-profit tax exempt or recognized legal entity
 - Board of the new agency (member-elect) or current member of HSN sign a letter of recommendation
 - Provide an agency or organizational mission statement

- Have a current member recommend the new member
- Submit a determination letter to verify 501 status, if appropriate
- Attend meetings regularly (at least 75% of the time or 9 of 12 meetings)
- At the first meeting after the 9th meeting the new organization will be voted in as a full voting member of HSN with all rights and privileges

Section 2 Voting membership shall consist of the organization leader (or their representative/designee) of member organizations.

Section 3 Qualifications for voting membership:

- Organization or its program(s) are committed to preventing and ending homelessness.
- Organization has been in operation for at least one year.
- Organization is a nonprofit, faith based, or a public or private entity.
- Organization must be regularly represented at Network Steering Meetings.
- Organization supports official activities of the network and its operating principles as stated above
- Organization must be current on financial obligations to the Network

Section 4 Any organization operating within Mecklenburg County whose purpose wholly or in part is to prevent or end homelessness may request membership or be nominated through the Executive committee. The Executive committee will present the request to the total membership at the next general meeting. Approval for membership will be granted upon a majority vote of the membership.

ARTICLE 5 – OFFICERS

- Section 1 *Chairperson* – The chairperson will convene and conduct all scheduled or called meetings. The chairperson will issue invitation to all agencies approved for membership, present applications for membership for approval, and conduct such business as deemed necessary by the membership. The chairperson may appoint committees as required.
- Section 2 *Vice Chairman* – The vice chairperson is to serve in the absence of the chairperson. Normally, the vice chairperson will be nominated to fill the position of chairperson when appropriate.
- Section 3 *Secretary* – The duties of the secretary are to maintain records of each meeting and to inform the membership of all meetings and distribute information through the email list-serve.
- Section 4 *Treasurer* – The duties of the treasurer are to establish and manage those financial requirements determined by the membership.
- Section 5 *Terms* – Officers will serve one year terms which begin January 1st and may be re-elected to serve an additional year.
- Section 6 *Elections* – The Executive Committee will serve as the nominating committee and present recommendations in November of each year for a slate of officers. The membership will vote on the proposed slate of officers. Nominations may be made from the floor. If the chairperson resigns, the vice chairperson succeeds to the chair. If the vice chairperson, the secretary, or the treasurer resigns, a special election will be held to fill the positions within two meetings of the resignation.

ARTICLE 6 – MEETINGS

Meetings will normally be held not less than once a quarter. Notice of meetings with agenda and minutes of previous meetings shall be e-mailed at least one week prior to the meetings. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson as needed. A quorum (a majority of the voting members) must be present to approve/adopt actions or conduct business.

The Executive Committee provides day to day governance for the Homeless Services Network, including decision-making regarding charges, responsibilities, and structure of committees, program development, fundraising, and speaking on behalf of the Network to the community. Certain matters will come before the whole organization for approval as appropriate.

ARTICLE 7 – COMMITTEES

- Section 1 *Executive Committee* – The Executive Committee shall include current officers, the past Chair, the co-chairs of the Ten Year Plan/Continuum of Care Committee, and may include others at the discretion of the chairperson.

The Executive Committee shall have and exercise the authority of Homeless Services Network between regular meetings and may act in emergency situations while communicating promptly with the full membership about such action. The Executive Committee shall meet as needed, and shall report relevant business to the membership at the next meeting. All Executive Committee meetings are open to all voting members of HSN. The Executive Committee shall maintain and execute the agenda for each steering committee meeting.

Section 2

Standing Committees shall be as follows with the Chairs appointed by the Executive Committee.

1. **Nominating Committee** (consisting of Executive Committee members)
2. **10 Year Plan/Continuum of Care Committee** – The Continuum of Care and the 10 Year Plan are two active ongoing processes made up of non-profit and governmental organizations along with the faith community and corporate leaders in Charlotte/Mecklenburg County. Activities of both tie into other planning processes pertaining to ending homelessness. The combination of this collaboration and coordination should create a transparent recommendation process and decision-making that operates year round and offers strong communication in the resolution of ending homelessness in our community. This committee will be co-chaired by the chair of the CoC and the representative of A Way Home.
3. **Advocacy Committee** – Unifies the efforts of the Homeless Services Network through individual and class advocacy on behalf of persons who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless through contact with elected officials, government organizations, corporate leaders, the faith community, other non-profit organizations, and the citizens of Mecklenburg County. Works in coordination with Executive Committee.
4. **Data Management and Research Committee** – Coordinates and facilitates the collection of data related to persons who are homeless, at risk for becoming homeless, and services provided to those persons. Coordinates the aggregation and organization of such data as needed for HSN and community reporting and research purposes.
5. **Coordination of Services and Housing or COSH** – Facilitates the meeting of front line staff and administrators who will look at what is currently happening in the referral process for housing services within the network and share information; evaluate gaps being identified and move it from small front line scale to a larger community issue. This group has been expanded to take on the current activities of the Shelter Rapid Re-Housing group which includes receiving referrals for housing projects in the community that serve homeless individual and families. This group will also identify resources for consumers that have an immediate need but do not fit in any of the existing shelter/housing programs. Additionally, this group is charged with collecting information on gaps in services (particularly housing).

6. **Health** – Focus of this group is three tiered: Medical Respite including discharge planning; Access to providers; SOAR; Emergency medical response and coordination around community health issues specifically for the homeless
7. **Ad Hoc Task Groups** – Appointed by the Chairman/Executive Committee to focus on immediate issues such as shelter overflow, housing for special populations, affordable housing, supportive services, McKinney-Vento programs in our schools, and employment issues that are needed, etc.

ARTICLE 8 – DECISION MAKING

- Section 1 All member entities shall have one vote. All issues shall be decided on the basis of simple majority except in the case of public positions taken by the Homeless Services Network. In order for Homeless Services Network to issue a public position, two-thirds of the membership must agree to consider the question, and three-fourths of the membership must agree on the representation to be made.
- Section 2 The Executive Committee shall have the authority to act on behalf of the membership in time-critical situations only.
- Section 3 The chairperson or their designee shall be the official spokesperson for the organization.

ARTICLE 9 – BYLAW AMENDMENT

Bylaws may be changed by having a written motion for change at a meeting. At the next scheduled meeting, the membership will vote on the amendment. A two-thirds vote of the total membership is required for amendment.

ARTICLE 10 – LIABILITY

As an unincorporated association, Homeless Services Network does not extend indemnification to its members; liability, where it exists, shall accrue separately to the individual and organizational members.

ADDENDUM:

ATTACHMENT A

Code of Conduct for The Homeless Services Network serving as the oversight body for the Charlotte/Mecklenburg Continuum of Care (CoC)

1. All members of the Charlotte/Mecklenburg HSN/CoC are prohibited from the solicitation and acceptance of gifts or gratuities for their personal benefit in excess of minimal value while conducting any business relating to the Charlotte/Mecklenburg CoC;
2. Any possible conflict of interest regarding the officer or member, their family members or partner, an organization in which any of the above is an officer, director, or employee, and or a person or organization with whom any of the above individuals is negotiating or has an arrangement concerning prospective employment shall be disclosed by the person or persons concerned.
3. In instances when there is an obvious conflict of interest as outlined above, the officer and/or member shall call it to the attention of the Executive Committee and shall not vote on the matter.
4. Violations of the Code of Conduct shall be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee and may result in the loss or suspension of membership in the Charlotte/Mecklenburg HSN/CoC.