

The Way Home

Hello and thank you for your inquiry about becoming a partner in The Way Home!

The Way Home Continuum of Care (CoC) covers Houston, and Harris, Fort Bend and Montgomery Counties. The Coalition for the Homeless serves as the Lead Agency and HMIS Administrator for The Way Home CoC. There is no fee to become a partner and we welcome all who are engaged in preventing and ending homelessness to be part of the collective impact that The Way Home is having in our community.

In order to gain partnership status (which includes voting rights and the ability to be nominated as a Provider Representative on The Way Home CoC Steering Committee), the following is required:

1. Designate up to two (2) representatives from your organization who have decision-making authority to attend quarterly Provider Input Forums (schedule on the next page) and exercise voting rights. Email names and contact information of your designated representatives to lgrubbs@homelesshouston.org.
2. A designated representative must attend 75% (3 out of 4) of the scheduled Provider Input Forums as verified by sign-in at start of each meeting.
3. Organizations will sign and submit the CoC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (attached) with The Way Home CoC Lead Agency in order to validate organizational alignment with the goals and policies of The Way Home.
 - a. Government entities are exempt from signing an MOU.
4. [Click here](#) to sign up for The Way Home CoC Connection which will ensure that you/your agency receives timely communications from and about The Way Home regarding meetings, initiatives, workgroups, and more.
5. [Click here](#) to be added to our Funding Opportunities e-mail list to get notified about the newest funding opportunities available.

We are excited about your interest and look forward to working with you as we prevent and end homelessness in our community! Please visit www.homelesshouston.org/continuum-of-care for more information regarding the CoC and our recent activities. We look forward to seeing you at the next Provider Input Forum.

Eva Thibaudeau, LCSW

Chief Program Officer

Lead Agency Staff



CoC Provider Input Forum and Case Management Resource Exchange Schedule 2019

➤ **Quarterly Continuum of Care Provider Forum meetings from 9:00am until 10:30am**

Save the Dates:

- Tuesday, February 26, 2019 **United Way, 50 Waugh Dr., Houston, TX 77007 (note change of venue)**
- Tuesday, May 21, 2019 Harris County CSD, 8410 Lantern Point Dr, Houston, TX 77054
- Tuesday, August 20, 2019 Harris County CSD, 8410 Lantern Point Dr, Houston, TX 77054
- Tuesday, November 19, 2018 Harris County CSD, 8410 Lantern Point Dr, Houston, TX 77054

➤ **Case Management Resource Exchange (CMRE). All CMRE meetings will be held at United Way of Greater Houston 50, Waugh Drive, Houston, TX 77007**

Save the Dates:

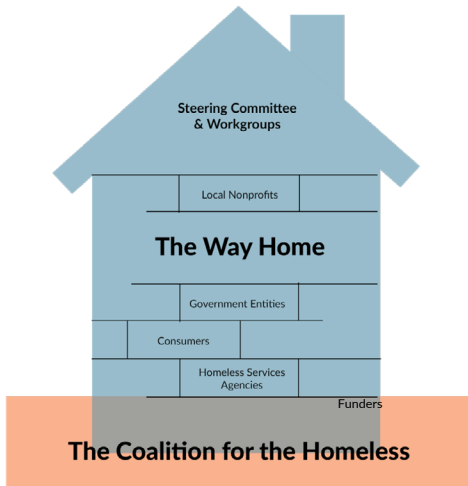
- Wednesday, February 6, 2019 from 2:30pm to 4pm
- Wednesday, May 8, 2019 from 2:30pm to 4pm
- Wednesday, August 14, 2019 from 2:30pm to 4pm
- Wednesday, November 13, 2019 from 2:30pm to 4pm

If you have any questions, please contact Senior Project Manager, Gary Grier, at ggrier@homelesshouston.org or call 832-531-6006

Welcome to The Way Home

The Way Home is the collaborative model to prevent and end homelessness in Houston and Pasadena; and Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties.

The Coalition for the Homeless serves as lead agency to The Way Home and provides the following services:



- leadership for region-wide program implementation to prevent and end homelessness
- monthly reports at The Way Home **CoC Steering Committee meetings**
- coordination of **The Way Home workgroups**
- hosting of **HMIS, Provider, and Consumer Forums**
- provide trainings and networking events for The Way Home partners
- management, training, and support regarding **HMIS**
- analysis of data to guide system-wide decision making
- implementation of the annual **Homeless Count & Survey**
- advocacy for homeless individuals and service providers both locally and nationally
- management of **funding competitions** for homeless dollars
- oversight of **program and system-wide outcomes**

WE ARE YOUR TEAM!

Michael J. Nichols, Interim President/CEO

Lynn Lohr, Chief Operating Officer

Eva Thibaudeau, Chief Program Officer

Project Management Team:

info@thewayhomehouston.org

Michael Fraley, Project Manager

RRH/PSH/Youth & Young Adult

James Gonzalez, Senior Project Manager

RRH/Domestic Violence

Gary Grier, Senior Project Manager

Income Now, Veterans, Regional Team

Lindsey Grubbs, Program Coordinator

Nancy Heintz, Montgomery County Project Manager

Amber Paaso, Fort Bend County Project Manager

Concetta Scerbo, Senior Manager of Grants &

Compliance

Funding Competitions, Performance Monitoring

HMIS Team

hmis@homelesshouston.org

Ana Rausch, Senior Research Project Manager

Kelita Beechum, Data Analyst

Ryan Clay, Data Analyst

Erol Fetahagic, System Analyst

Karen Flores, Program Analyst

Yvette Fuentes, Program Analyst

Scot More, Program Analyst

External Affairs

Sara Brown, Director of Development &

Communications

Media, PR, Web, Social Media

Renee Cavazos, Development Coordinator

Welcome Home Fund

Abbie Wright, Communications Coordinator

Web, Social Media

For more information on The Way Home specific to homeless service organizations, visit: www.homelesshouston.org/continuum-of-care

For general public information on The Way Home, visit: www.thewayhomehouston.org

The Coalition for the Homeless
Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Continuum of Care (CoC) Program

Memorandum of Understanding between the
The Coalition for the Homeless, The Way Home CoC Lead Agency

and _____(CoC Applicant)

PURPOSE

The Way Home CoC is designed to promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; to provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, States, and local governments to quickly re-house homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness; to promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and to optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

This memorandum of understanding (MOU) is entered into by The Way Home CoC Lead Agency, The Coalition for the Homeless(CFTH), and CoC Applicant. The purpose of this MOU is to set forth expectations and responsibilities of CFTH and the CoC Applicant.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

CFTH will:

- 1) Serve as the CoC Lead Agency responsible for the coordination and oversight of the CoC planning efforts, and has the authority to certify and submit the homeless assistance funding applications.
- 2) Coordinate and leverage the Homeless Information Management System (HMIS) as a data collection and coordinated intake tool, to capture client-level, system-wide information over time on the characteristics and services needs of the homeless and at-risk persons to be served within the funded programs.
- 3) Provide technical assistance and training to provider agencies to ensure compliance with The Way Home CoC regulations, standards, and guidelines.
- 4) Monitor provider agencies' programmatic and financial management to ensure compliance with The Way Home CoC regulations, standards, and guidelines.
- 5) Coordinate, integrate, and leverage resources to maximize impact of services for individuals who are homeless.
- 6) Convene, support, and facilitate The Way Home workgroups and lead the work activities that come out of those meetings.
- 7) Conduct the regional Point-In-Time Homeless Count and Survey annually.
- 8) Provide trainings and networking events for The Way Home partners including:
 - a) Host HMIS, Provider, and Consumer Input Forums
 - b) Manage, train, and support all HMIS activities
- 9) Advocate for service providers and those experiencing homelessness locally and nationally.

CoC Applicant will:

Services

1. **Have in place on-site supportive services** (provided directly or sub-contracted) or provide transportation and access to supportive services that will:
 - a. Help program participants obtain or remain in permanent housing;
 - b. Help participants increase skills and/or income;
 - c. Help participants achieve greater self-determination, enabling the participants to gain needed confidence to make the transition out of homelessness.
2. **Provide a combination of one or more Evidence-Based Practices (EBP)** or promising practices for the target client group to be implemented in case management and other supportive services provided by the grantee or sub-contracted entities
3. **Provide services in a culturally competent and inclusive context.** The population that homeless programs are designed to serve are typically marginalized and excluded from their communities and mainstream society. Bringing them into housing and meaningful services requires providers to bridge cultural, language, and other barriers. Services will be provided with adherence to the HUD Equal Access Rule;
4. Establish policies and practices that are consistent with, and do not restrict the exercise of rights provided by the education subtitle of the McKinney-Vento Act, and other laws relating to the provision of educational and related services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness;
5. Designate a staff person to ensure that children are enrolled in school and connected to the appropriate services within the community, including early childhood programs such as Head Start, Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and McKinney-Vento education services.

Applicable to The Way Home CoC Permanent Supportive Housing Projects

6. To be able to engage and help stabilize people who have a history of trauma, **permanent housing programs need to be trauma-informed.** This means training all staff who will be working with participants to understand the nature and manifestations of trauma in human life and to ensure that both housing and services are offered in safe, nonthreatening environments.
7. **Separation of housing and services** underpins the supportive housing model. Property management functions and support services are handled by separate staff, and often even by different organizations. They coordinate with one another but clearly differentiate the roles of property manager and service provider.
8. **Eligibility and continued tenancy** is not dependent on participation in services provided, rather on the requirements of tenancy. In addition, all efforts will be made to minimize evictions and program termination.

Client Eligibility – Applicable to The Way Home CoC Housing Projects

1. **Move clients into permanent housing directly from streets and shelters** without preconditions of treatment acceptance or compliance in accordance with HUD's Housing First requirements.
2. CoC funded programs must comply with business rules developed for **Coordinated Access.**
3. **Programs are required to accept tenants with zero income,** and may have the goal of helping clients obtain income through benefits or employment to contribute to rent once admitted but may not un-enroll tenants from the program solely because income is not gained.
4. **Programs may not charge more than 30% of a client's income in rent.**
5. **For Permanent Housing Projects only, clients may not be unenrolled from the program for reasons other than non-compliance with the basic lease agreement.** For example, clients are allowed to have alcohol in their homes and may not be unenrolled unless their behavior causes eviction by the landlord. In the case that a

project is a scattered site housing model, clients will not be discharged solely due to housing eviction. Rather, programs will work to quickly re-house their client elsewhere.

HMIS

The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a critical tool used for tracking program participation, and the data collected therein can be analyzed to report on program, agency, and community-level outcomes—requirements now mandated by most public and private funders of homeless services.

In addition, HMIS data is used to produce the Annual Performance Report (APR) and the Houston/Harris County Continuum of Care's submission for the Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress (AHAR). It is also used for reconciliation of the annual Point-in-Time Count each January. Additionally, the Coordinated Intake system depends upon the housing utilization tools within HMIS to determine unit availability.

Due to the importance of data collection as outlined above, all CoC projects except victim services providers, are required to participate in HMIS in accordance with the data entry guidelines set by the HMIS Lead Agency ("the Coalition for the Homeless"). These guidelines include, but are not limited to:

1. The timely and accurate entry of data;
2. Data correction on a monthly basis as described by the monthly Data Quality Report;
3. A complete exit assessment with exit destination and updated housing status; and
4. The maintenance of client information confidentiality.
5. Appoint a security officer who passes a background check;
6. Participate in site visits to evaluate compliance and data quality.

In addition to providing all HUD mandatory data, agencies should strive to collect the maximum data elements for all clients.

Victim services providers must establish and operate a comparable database that complies with HUD's HMIS requirements and local data standards as approved by The Way Home CoC Steering Committee. This database will be evaluated through periodic site visits.

CoC Participation

1. The applicant agency agrees to participate in the Annual Point-In-Time Count by:
 - a. Dedicating agency staff to perform the unsheltered count (at least two (2) agency representatives per day for agencies with more than 20 employees. Agencies with 20 staff or below, (1) agency representative per day is required)
 - b. Completing the Housing Inventory Chart for the shelter count
 - c. Participating in Gaps Analysis and Needs Assessment
2. The applicant agency agrees to participate in CoC planning, policy, and strategy activities including but not limited to Provider and HMIS Forums.

Documentation and Monitoring for CoC Funded Programs

For each program funded through the Continuum of Care Program the applicant agency agrees to provide the following documents:

1. Final Technical Submission sent to HUD for any NEW projects awarded;
2. Signed Grant Agreement for HUD Awards within five days of agreement execution;
3. Copy of APR submitted to HUD at the end of each grant year within five days of *e-snaps* submission;
4. Approved Substantial Grant Amendments within five days of amendment execution; and
5. Annual Agency Audits
6. Results of funder monitoring visits



2000 Crawford, Suite 700
Houston, Texas 77002
713-739-7514
Fax 713-739-8038
www.homelesshouston.org

The applicant agency agrees to site and monitoring visits to review project eligibility and quality threshold requirements by providing the necessary information and required documentation as requested by the Coalition for the Homeless to ensure compliance with federal funding regulations.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Both parties agree that they shall be bound by and shall abide by all applicable Federal or State statutes or regulations pertaining to the confidentiality of client records or information, including volunteers. The parties shall not use or disclose any information about a recipient of the services provided under this agreement for any purpose connected with the parties' contract responsibilities, except with the written consent of such recipient, recipient's attorney, or recipient's parent or guardian.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Both parties mutually agree to be bound by and abide by all applicable anti-discrimination statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures as may be applicable under any Federal or State contracts, statutes, or regulations, or otherwise as presently or hereinafter adopted by the agency. This is to include HUD Equal Access Rule ensuring non-discrimination for unmarried and/or non-traditional families, persons who identify as LGBTQ and transgender, or gender non-conforming clients.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

This MOU shall be effective upon adoption by each signatory agency and entity.

This MOU shall be reviewed and revised as needed to further implementation of strategic and long-term goals of the project.

This MOU can be expanded, modified, or amended, as needed, at any time by the consent of both agencies.

This MOU shall be in effect until the end of this project unless terminated by mutual agreement in writing prior to the project end date.

(AGENCY)

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

THE COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Signature: _____

Name: Eva Thibaudeau-Gracyzk

Title: Chief Program Officer/The Way Home CoC Lead Agency Representative

Date: _____