

## Proposal for New Structure for the Maine Continuum of Care

We propose that the MCoC be redesigned in a way that allows for funded providers, state government and other critical partners to play a role in the ongoing design, implementation, and governance of the MCoC.

The overall goal of this structure is to create a Board of Directors that is more broadly representative of relevant community and agency partners outside of the homeless services sector and free from conflicts of interest. There would be a transitional period to the new Board during which elected current members would serve and assist in the orientation of new members.

In the proposed structure the Board of Directors is the primary governing body. The board would have an executive committee that consists of:

1. A non-conflicted (not receiving CoC funding) President
2. A Vice President elected from the general board membership
3. A Secretary elected from the general board membership

During the transitional period the general Board membership would be made up of:

- Seven seats for Non- Conflicted Community Partners such as Philanthropy, Hospitals, Universities, Public Safety/First Responders, Housing Developers, Criminal Justice, Behavioral Health, Chamber of Commerce, etc. These seats would be filled to the extent possible with Senior Leadership from these agencies/sectors.
- Four seats for Homeless Service Providers (which could be MCoC funded agencies) with specific experience- Shelter provider, Housing provider, Youth provider, Domestic Violence Prevention, and Outreach provider.
- Two seats for folks with lived experience- one youth (experienced homelessness between the ages of 14-24) and one adult (first experience of homelessness after attaining the age of 18).
- One seat for the DHHS Commissioner or designee
- One seat for the Collaborative Applicant
- One non-voting seat for the MCoC Executive Director.

**MCoC Executive Director** - This plan includes a full-time paid position of Executive Director of the MCoC, who would liaise between the MCoC BoD, the Collaborative Applicant, the HMIS Lead, and the MCoC General Membership. The Executive Director would be hired by MaineHousing and would have access to MaineHousing staff who currently support the MCoC. This position would be responsible for the overall operation of MCoC affairs, chair the general membership meetings, attend all committee meetings, and be accountable to the MCoC BoD for monitoring the activities of the Collaborative Applicant, HMIS Lead, and Coordinated Entry/Navigators to insure they are all in compliance with MCoC policies and HUD policies & guidance. The Executive Director would also oversee project monitoring to ensure that all projects are meeting stated outcomes and that any project funding that is repeatedly underutilized

is reallocated in a way that meets the current goals and objectives of the State Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness. The Executive Director would be a non-voting member of the BoD.

**Committee membership** - all MCoC committees should have representation from at least one Board member, someone with lived experience and one member from the general membership of the MCoC (during the transitional period). Committees should have a member of the Collaborative Applicant staff with specific subject matter expertise as assigned a resource to each committee. Committees should also consider inviting non-MCoC interested partners to committees as advisors - folks with specific subject matter expertise in things like data warehousing, finance, public health, governance, etc. Committee membership should be reviewed at least annually to ensure it is meeting the needs of the MCoC.

**Board President Selection & Criteria** - The Board President is chosen through a search conducted by the members of the board, the Director of the Collaborative Applicant, and the Commissioner of DHHS or their designee, and the Executive Director of the MCoC based on the following criteria. The Board president must be unconflicted. This means they cannot be from an MCoC funded entity or have a significant partnership/share in any MCoC funded entity. They should also have significant experience with systems of a scope and scale similar to the MCoC; e.g., systems management of a scale that is at least statewide in scope, and have held a senior leadership position for a minimum of 5 years. The President can serve for up to 2 terms of two years each.

**Board Vice President Selection** - The Vice President is selected from the Board's General Membership by a simple majority vote of that membership. The Board Vice President can serve for 2 terms of two years.

**Board members selection** - The general board membership is broken into two categories, during the transitional period: Conflicted & Non-Conflicted. Many CoCs do not allow any funded agencies represented on their Boards and the MCoC will be moving in that direction.

Conflicted members are those who represent agencies that are funded by the MCoC or who have a significant share or interest in an MCoC funded agency. Non-Conflicted members are those who do not have official or informal connections to an MCoC funded agency.

Conflicted members of the board will be elected for the transitional period by a vote of the MCoC General Membership (One vote per MCoC funded agency) at the General Membership meeting. Conflicted members may serve up to 12 months following the official MCoC governance transition date.

Non-Conflicted Members are chosen through a search conducted by the members of the board, the Director of the Collaborative Applicant or designee, and the Executive Director of the MCoC. They will be chosen based on the current/emerging needs of the board and the challenges the MCoC is facing at that time.

**Collaborative Applicant** - The Collaborative Applicant will have a permanent seat on the MCoC Board as a voting member.

**Board Meetings** – The frequency of the BoD meetings would be determined by the Board President and MCoC Executive Director, but would be no less frequent than 6 times a year.

**MCoC General Membership & Meetings** - The MCoC General Membership is made up of one representative from each funded project. Individual agencies with more than one funded project may have two “official” members.

The MCoC will have four General Membership Meetings annually. These meetings are to be planned by the MCoC Executive Director in collaboration with the MCoC Board President. The General Membership Meetings are facilitated by the MCoC Executive Director.

**Interested Parties** - As it stands now there are many interested partners who attend the MCoC meetings. What is not clear is why these people are attending. These partners are a potential resource that the MCoC is currently and has historically underutilized. The MCoC general membership, Executive Director of the MCoC and BoD should invest significant time and resources into understanding the reasons why these folks attend, what they hope to gain from attending and how they can enhance the performance of the MCoC moving forward.

## **NEXT STEPS**

With a YES vote, the next step would be to hire an Executive Director, who would form a Governance Committee that would begin the implementation of this plan and finish the process of drafting the complete governance charter.