



## Madison/Dane County HSC Board of Directors Code of Conduct

**Board Members of the Homeless Services Consortium are expected to adhere to the following:**

### **Meeting Conduct**

Participants must be willing and able to listen carefully to what others are saying. That is, everyone must make a good faith effort to understand each other.

Participants must be trusting and brave enough to speak their truth; participants should make every effort to be clear but there is no requirement or expectation to always present well-formed arguments on the spot.

Participants must prioritize the group's mission over their own individual interests.

Participants may disagree with ideas but must never attack or disparage individuals for expressing those ideas. Productive struggle is a part of the process.

### **Dual Roles**

It is important to have a diversity of perspectives and experiences represented on the Board of Directors. In addition to representing the collective mission of the Board, members may also feel they represent one or more other entities or interests, such as:

- A homeless service agency
- Another employer or group with an interest in the work of the HSC
- A perspective of lived experience of homelessness
- An HSC committee
- The HSC general membership (in the case of the membership chair)

It is natural that Board Members will have dual or multiple roles during their terms on the Board. During Board Meetings and other HSC activities (such as Committee meetings) participants should be transparent about the roles they occupy and are representing. This helps the group better understand the areas of interest, expertise, and focus that each member brings. There is typically an opportunity to share such affiliations during introductions at the beginning of a meeting. Some dual roles may also represent a conflict of interest, which must be disclosed as described below.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

At all times, the best interest of the CoC should influence the decisions made by Board Members. Personal relationships should not result in special considerations, including bias, nepotism or favoritism that influences the performance of their official duties in a manner contrary to the interest of the broader CoC.

Annually, Board members will update a Disclosure of Conflict of Interests form.

Board Members who have affiliations with agencies or have immediate family members with affiliations with agencies (employment, financial support over \$2000 annually, receiving services, board member, currently engaging in a grievance process, etc.) will recuse themselves from discussion and votes that impact said agency.

## **Public Statements**

A Board member may not act in an official capacity or communicate publicly on behalf of the HSC unless they are specifically designated to do so by the HSC Board. If a Board member is designated to communicate on behalf of the HSC, their communications must be limited to the content and scope authorized by the Board. Except where specifically designated, a Board member communicating to the HSC membership or in any other public forum must clearly identify their statements as personal opinions, and indicate that they are not speaking on behalf of the HSC Board of Directors or expressing views or positions of the HSC.

All requests for communication, including but not limited to requests for public comment, petition signatures, political advocacy, and letters of support, are to be submitted to the Executive Committee of the HSC Board of Directors. Such requests will be responded to as follows:

- If the request is for a letter of support needed for a funding opportunity *and* the deadline for the request falls before the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board, the Executive Committee may respond. Any such requests and their responses will be reported to the full Board at the next Board meeting.
- All other requests are to be reviewed by the full Board at a Board meeting and a response approved by consensus.
- If the deadline for the request does not allow for review by the full Board at a regularly scheduled Board meeting, the Executive Committee may inform the requesting entity that the request cannot be fulfilled and if so, will report this to the Board at the next Board meeting. If they deem it appropriate, the Executive Committee may instead call a special Board meeting to review the request.

## **Time Commitment and Participation Requirements**

Board Members will attend monthly board meetings and contact the President if unable to attend, in order to establish quorum. Board members will be terminated automatically for four (4) absences within a calendar year. In extreme circumstances, a Board member may appeal automatic termination due to absence by submitting a written appeal to the Executive Committee of the Board.

Board Members will select a Board-approved HSC Committee at the beginning of their term and commit to attending that committee during the course of their Board term. Board members may switch the HSC Committee they attend if needed to balance Board representation or to accommodate scheduling issues.

Board Members will come prepared to every Board Meeting by reading documents and materials provided in advance.

Board Members will stay informed about activities of the HSC and will ask questions or request information needed to fulfill their responsibilities.

Board Members will participate in and take responsibility for making decisions on issues, policies, and other Board matters.

Board Members will take fiduciary responsibilities to the consortium seriously, staying informed and contributing to wise decisions for the well being of the consortium.

Commitment to the Board of Directors will typically involve 4-5 hours each month.

## **Non-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy**

Board Members shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin/ancestry, religion, sex, age, family/familial status, disability/handicap, actual or perceived sexual orientation, lawful source of income, gender identity, marital status, domestic abuse/sexual assault/stalking victims, military discharge status, physical appearance, political beliefs, student status, domestic partnership, tenant union association, genetic identity, citizenship status, Section 8 housing voucher participant, non-religion, homelessness, or membership in any other protected class.

Board Members will maintain an environment that is free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that tends to create a hostile or offensive environment.

**Addressing Violations of the Code of Conduct**

Reports of violations of the Code of Conduct may be received by any member of the Board Executive Committee. The President (or another Executive Committee member if the President is recused) will lead the Board Executive Committee in an investigation and review of all information to support or negate the report, and the Committee will make a determination within thirty (30) calendar days. If the violation involves any member of the Executive Committee, that member must recuse themselves from the review and determination. The determination of the Executive Committee will be communicated to the involved party in writing by the President (or the Committee member who led the review process if the President is recused) by the decision deadline.

If the Executive Committee finds that a violation has occurred, the party in violation of the Code of Conduct will be terminated from their seat on the Board. If they wish to appeal the decision they have five (5) calendar days to submit a written appeal to the full Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will meet within twenty (20) calendar days to review all materials and determine by majority vote whether a violation occurred. A closed session may be requested, in which case the City Attorney will be consulted to determine if it would be permissible under open meetings law. The involved party must recuse themselves. The determination made by the HSC Board of Directors is final and will be communicated in writing to the involved party by a designated Board Member within five (5) calendar days of the decision being made.

If the Executive Committee finds itself in a 2-2 tie over whether a violation has occurred, the matter will be brought to the full Board of Directors for review within twenty (20) calendar days. The involved party must recuse themselves. The determination made by the HSC Board of Directors is final and will be communicated in writing to the involved party by a designated Board Member within five (5) calendar days of the decision being made.

**By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and will abide by the Code of Conduct of the Homeless Services Consortium Board of Directors. All Board of Directors members must sign this Code of Conduct to serve.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date