



**Arizona**

**Balance of State**

**Continuum of Care**

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# Governance Charter

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Approved 09/29/2020

Note: due to COVID-19, meetings in 2020 have primarily been held using web-based technology. This will continue until guidance regarding gatherings change.



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# Arizona Balance of State Continuum of Care Governance Charter\*

## Table of Contents

1.	PURPOSE .....	1
2.	MISSION .....	1
3.	STRATEGIES .....	2
4.	ORGANIZATION.....	2
	A. Membership: .....	2
	B. The Governance Advisory Board: .....	3
	Officers .....	3
	Operation of the Governance Advisory Board.....	4
	Responsibilities .....	4
	C. AZBOSCOC Standing Committees:.....	4
	D. Responsibilities of the AZBOSCOC Standing Committees:.....	5
	HMIS Committee Responsibilities .....	5
	Coordinated Entry Committee Responsibilities.....	5
	Veterans Programs Committee Responsibilities .....	6
	Project Review and Evaluation Committee Responsibilities.....	6
	Point In Time Count Committee Responsibilities.....	6
5.	ADOH ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....	6
6.	HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (HMIS).....	7
7.	REPORTING .....	7
8.	CONFLICTS OF INTEREST .....	7
9.	SPOKESPERSON .....	8

\* As outlined in the Federal Register 24 CFR Part 578, Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing; Continuum of Care Program; Interim Final Rule.

## 1. PURPOSE

*Homelessness is unacceptable in Arizona. All individuals and families have the right to safe, affordable housing in healthy communities with access to a network of supportive services. The AZBOSCOG Governance Advisory Board is committed to social justice in all CoC activities.*

This Charter identifies the mission, purpose, composition, roles, responsibilities, and committee structure of the Arizona Balance of State Continuum of Care (AZBOSCOG).

The AZBOSCOG is a collaboration and inclusive community-based process. The Continuum is responsible for planning and managing homeless assistance resources and services effectively and efficiently. This includes a system of outreach, diversion, coordinated entry, engagement, and assessment; emergency shelter; rapid rehousing; transitional housing; permanent housing; and prevention strategies to address the various needs of persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The Continuum geographic area includes thirteen (13) counties: Apache, Coconino, Cochise, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Mohave, Navajo, Pinal, Santa Cruz, Yavapai, and Yuma.

The AZBOSCOG assists persons at-risk of homelessness and persons who are homeless through coordination, development, planning, education, advocacy and evaluation of housing and services. The AZBOSCOG provides planning and operational support to the continuum of care process including providing leadership for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Per this Charter, the Arizona Department of Housing, as Collaborative Applicant the authority to submit the Continuum application and to apply for planning funds [578.9]. No Unified Funding Agency is established for the AZBOSCOG.

## 2. MISSION

The mission of the AZBOSCOG is to end homelessness within the communities it represents and serves. To achieve the end of homelessness, the CoC is a collaborative network that assists eligible entities in obtaining the necessary funding needed to help vulnerable, low-income individuals and families attain and maintain economic self-sufficiency. CoC activities are carried out in alignment with *Home, Together--The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* developed by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness ([https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/Home-Together-Federal-Strategic-Plan-to-Prevent-and-End-Homelessness.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Home-Together-Federal-Strategic-Plan-to-Prevent-and-End-Homelessness.pdf)).

### 3. STRATEGIES

The AZBOSCOG utilizes the following strategies to address homelessness in the Balance of State geographic area:

- Coordinate a housing and service system within the geographic regions that meets the needs of those experiencing homelessness, including unaccompanied youth, individuals, and families. At a minimum, this system encompasses:
  - ✓ Outreach, engagement, diversion, and assessment;
  - ✓ Coordinated Entry;
  - ✓ Shelter, housing, and supportive services; and
  - ✓ Prevention strategies.
- Identify housing needs of those at risk of facing homelessness.
- Increase access to permanent housing through rapid re-housing, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, and move on strategies.
- Increase access to other mainstream resources to promote housing stability.
- Coordinate services with emergency shelters including domestic violence shelters.
- Evaluate performance of services within the Balance of State through monitoring, data collection and analysis.

### 4. ORGANIZATION

#### A. **Membership:**

The AZBOSCOG is comprised of representatives from Local Coalitions to End Homelessness (LCEH), statewide partners, and other key stakeholders.

- The LCEHs are county-based and represent geographically and culturally diverse communities throughout the State of Arizona. The LCEH includes members who are representative of local programs, community agencies, and other community stakeholders. The CoC planning dollars are used to further the goals of the AZBOSCOG by allocating funds to each LCEH to support local (county) efforts related planning, meeting, coordinated entry, case conferencing, and attending LCEH quarterly meetings in Phoenix. The LCEH designates a lead agency to enter into a contract with ADOH for these planning dollars. As of September 2020, the following counties have established an LCEH:

Apache/Navajo	Cochise	Coconino County
Gila County	La Paz County	Mohave County
Pinal County	Yavapai County	Yuma County

- Partners representing statewide agencies and efforts include: The Arizona Department of Education (McKinney Vento services), The Arizona Department of Economic Security (Emergency Solutions Grants and Domestic Violence) AHCCCS (integrated health care services), Arizona Complete Health (the regional behavioral health agency for southern Arizona), Arizona Health Choice (the regional behavioral health agency for northern Arizona), and Veteran organizations (Southern Arizona VA Health Care System, Northern Arizona Veterans Health Care System).

- The AZBOSCOG coordinates with the other two (2) independent continuums in Arizona through periodic conference call meetings and other meetings as needed including doing joint presentations at conferences.

**B. The Governance Advisory Board:**

The Governance Advisory Board (GAB) is responsible for providing planning, coordination, guidance and direction for the use of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) HEARTH CoC resources. The GAB has thirteen members. The following are permanent sector representations:

- The Special Needs Administrator from the Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH). This individual is a co-chair for the GAB. At the Special Needs Administrator's discretion, the ADOH Continuum of Coordinator may act on behalf of the Special Needs Administrator as a co-chair.
- One (1) individual who has lived experience (homeless or formerly homeless).
- One (1) individual representing the Arizona Department of Education's (Homeless Liaison).
- One (1) individual from the Arizona Department of Economic Security who has direct responsibility for the Emergency Solutions Program and Domestic Violence Services.
- The remaining nine (9) members are recruited through an open recruitment process that takes place in December of each year. An announcement is widely distributed through email and the Arizona Department of Housing Bulletin process. Individuals interested in becoming members complete the GAB application form and submits to the AZBOSCOG Coordinator. A maximum of five (5) seats can be held by CoC sub-recipients in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest. No agency can have more than one (1) person on the Governance Advisory Board.

Selection of new members is completed through current members' review of the applications submitted by individuals who have an interest in serving on the board. Selection is made through discussion and consensus of current board members. Factors that are taken into consideration include sector and geographic representation of the potential member.

- New members serve a two (2) year term.
- Members of the Governance Advisory Board may serve two (2) consecutive two (2) year terms and then must wait one (1) year before serving again.
- Governance Advisory Board may add new members by a majority vote of the existing members. (This occurred once in April 2019 when membership was expanded from 11 to 13).

***Officers***

The Governance Advisory Board has two officers, The ADOH Special Needs Administrator is the permanent co-chair for the GAB. (As noted above, the ADOH Special Needs Administrator may designate the ADOH CoC Coordinator as a co-chair.) The Co-Chair is nominated and voted upon

by the members during the annual GAB planning retreat which takes place in March/April of each year.

#### ***Operation of the Governance Advisory Board***

- Governance Advisory Board meetings are held at a minimum, on a quarterly basis. A minimum of two (2) of the meetings are face to face.
- The vote of a majority of members present and voting at a meeting at which quorum is present is enough to constitute an act of the Governance Advisory Board.
- Members that fail to attend regularly scheduled meetings due to an unexcused absence shall be subject to removal from the Governance Advisory Board by a vote of the Board if they attend less than seventy-five percent (75%) of meetings.

#### ***Responsibilities***

- The GAB reviews the Governance Charter annually (generally at the planning retreat) to ensure it remains consistent with the CoC's objectives and responsibilities in accordance with the HEARTH Act and HUD regulations. The Charter includes procedures and policies needed to comply with HUD and HMIS requirements, including a code of conduct and recusal process.
- Provide direction and leadership for the annual NOFA application and data collection processes.
- Formal decisions of the AZBOSCOG regarding project selection for funding.
- Policies related to reallocation of funds.
- Strategic planning and goal setting.
- Approval of the selection of membership for standing committees.
- Align and coordinate AZBOSCOG with other homeless assistance and mainstream resources.
- Establish priorities and make decisions about the allocation of AZBOSCOG resources.
- Evaluate both system wide and individual program performance related to established measurements.
- Receive reports and recommendations from ad-hoc workgroups.
- Ensure that all necessary activities (i.e. Point In Time Count) are being implemented throughout the geographic area of the CoC.
- Disseminate information to the LCEHs.
- Approves policies and procedures for the AZBOSCOG.

#### **C. AZBOSCOG Standing Committees:**

The following standing committees facilitate the work of the CoC: HMIS, Coordinated Entry, Social Justice/Racial Equity, and Veteran Programs. In addition, there are two annual ad hoc committees including Project Review and Evaluation and Point In Time Count. These two committees are formed each year for their respective specific purposes.

Representation for the standing committees are composed of LCEH members and other content experts. Committee membership occurs through invitation and individuals volunteering to participate. All standing committees have a chair and a secretary that are identified by the committee membership. ADOH staff chairs the HMIS committee since ADOH is the HMIS Lead Agency.

In addition to the standing committees, ad hoc workgroups are established from time-to-time to complete specific tasks. The chair of these ad hoc groups will provide updates about activities to the Governance Advisory Board as needed.

**D. Responsibilities of the AZBOSCOG Standing Committees:**

**NOTE:** The chairs of the HMIS and Point In Time Count committees serve as liaison between the AZBOSCOG and the Governance Advisory Board.

***HMIS Committee Responsibilities***

- Operate as outlined in the HMIS Governance Charter working with ADOH as the HMIS Lead Agency.
- Meet the HUD requirements to record and store client-level information on the characteristics and service needs of persons experiencing homelessness.
- Utilize a HUD approved software system.
- Provide expertise to ensure effective operation of HMIS.
- Review of HMIS policies and procedures a minimum of annually.
- Assure compliance through review of quarterly data quality reports.
- Review how HMIS is functioning on a provider level.
- Develop data quality plans, security plans, and policies and procedures by which HMIS will be governed.

***Coordinated Entry Committee Responsibilities***

- Establish policies and procedures that align HUD requirements and expectations.
- Review and revise policy and procedures annually.
- Establish training strategies for implementation with LCEHs.
- Monitor quality of Coordinated Entry, By Name List, and Case Conferencing activities at the

LCEH level.

#### ***Veterans Programs Committee Responsibilities***

- Ensure effect communication among agencies serving veterans through a variety of programs including CoC, SSVF, GPD, and VASH.
- Create efficient referral services and identify and address gaps in services.
- Review the utilization of the By-Name List of all known veterans experiencing homelessness.

#### ***Project Review and Evaluation Committee Responsibilities***

- Develop and update annually the evaluation tool(s).
- Review, score, and rank renewal projects and new projects that will be submitted during the annual NOFA process.
- Assess and evaluate compliance and performance of ESG projects.

#### ***Point In Time Count Committee Responsibilities***

- Plan for and conduct, annually, a point in time count of persons who are homeless within the geographic area that meet the following:
  - ✓ Persons who are homeless and living in a place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans will be counted as unsheltered.
  - ✓ Persons living in emergency shelters and transitional housing projects will be counted as sheltered persons who are homeless using the HMIS.
- Review point in time count surveys and data collection tools.
- Support the logistics of the Point In Time count and annual Housing Inventory Count(HIC).

#### ***Social Justice/Racial Equity Committee Responsibilities***

- Provide guidance to the LCEHs and advise the Governance Advisory Board related to the AZBOSCO activities that align to the commitment of social justice/racial equity.
- Review data periodically to inform the committee's work.

## **5. ADOH ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH) is the collaborative applicant, as well as the HMIS Lead Agency, providing backup staff to the various committees and work groups of the AZBOSCO and performing necessary functions such as business and operations management for the AZBOSCO, HMIS administration, performance monitoring, engagement and education of stakeholders, and submission of the funding applications.

- Fiscal agent for the AZBOSCO and performing financial management responsibilities as required by the HEARTH Act.



- Staffing of committees when necessary.
- Production of planning materials.
- Coordinate needs/gaps assessments.
- Collect and report performance data.
- Monitor program performance.
- Coordinate resources, integrate activities and facilitate collaboration.
- Prepare the collaborative application for CoC funds. This includes but is not limited to the following:
  - ✓ Adhere to the HUD published NOFA for the Continuum of Care each year.
  - ✓ E-SNAPS registration and completion and submission of the Grant Inventory Worksheet (GIW).
  - ✓ Prepare the Consolidated CoC application including project priority list.
- Apply for planning grants.
- Build awareness of CoC related issues.
- Recruit stakeholders.

## **6. HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (HMIS)**

ADOH is the Lead Agency for the AZBOSCOG HMIS system. ADOH collaborates with the contracted HMIS software provider and the HMIS Committee to ensure all HMIS activities are carried out in accordance with the HEARTH Act. All participating agencies within the AZBOSCOG must comply with HMIS requirements for CoC funding - VASSVF (Veterans Supportive Services for Veteran Families), PATH (Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness), RHY (Runaway and Homeless Youth), as well as all state homeless service funds. HMIS policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis in accordance with HMIS data standards and the HEARTH Act.

## **7. REPORTING**

- Proceedings of all committee meetings are documented in minutes.
- Minutes of all meetings are circulated and approved in a timely manner.
- Approved minutes are posted on the ADOH website.

## **8. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Each member of the Governance Advisory Board will disclose their relationship to any agenda item requiring a vote during discussion of the agenda item. No member of the Advisory Board may vote upon any matter that financially benefits them or the organization for which they are an employee.

This includes all decisions with respect to funding, awarding contracts, and implementing corrective actions.

**9. SPOKESPERSON**

The Arizona Department of Housing Special Needs Administrator is the spokesperson and point of contact for the AZBOSCO.